

# BIODIVERSITY

Communications Toolkit

## Human Life - Attitudes and behaviour among people

Research has shown that, despite widespread concern for wildlife, relatively few people, organisations or businesses actually engage in biodiversity conservation or enjoy the benefits it brings in economic, health and quality of life terms:

- About 86% of the population strongly believe that the natural heritage is an important feature of Scotland's national identity.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- About 81% of people agreed that they would like to have some information on how to improve the natural environment of their neighbourhood.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- About 90% strongly agree that protecting the variety of wildlife and plant life in Scotland for future generations is very important.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- About 82% strongly agree that it is important to protect the variety of wildlife habitats in Scotland, but less than a fifth have a good understanding of what the term "biodiversity" means.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- About 80% of people do care about the environment but only about 20-40% actively do something to help the environment.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- In 2005, 75% of the population made at least one visit to the outdoors and 43% visited at least once a week for leisure and recreation purposes.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- About 50% of the population go out walking or do other activities in the outdoors.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public attitudes. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No.110  
[www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/F04AB09.pdf](http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/F04AB09.pdf))
- About 66% do some sort of recycling at least once a week, around 30% do some gardening for wildlife in their garden once a week and around 30% are members of an environmental or volunteering body.  
(Source: George Street Research (2005) Promoting key messages about the natural heritage baseline survey of public

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Some attitudinal research has revealed that:

- People react against being 'talked at' and told what to do without the other party fully acknowledging its own role in sustainable consumption. People want to be part of a dialogue.  
(Source: [www.ncc.org.uk/nccpdf/poldocs/NCC041rr\\_green\\_choice.pdf](http://www.ncc.org.uk/nccpdf/poldocs/NCC041rr_green_choice.pdf))
- Ninety per cent of people/the public said they were happy to do their bit for the environment but discussion groups revealed that people feel they lack power to change things and believe government and industry need to do more to make sustainable consumption easier for consumers.  
(Source: [www.ncc.org.uk/nccpdf/poldocs/NCC041rr\\_green\\_choice.pdf](http://www.ncc.org.uk/nccpdf/poldocs/NCC041rr_green_choice.pdf))
- Only a small minority of the population, around one in 15 (7%) habitually undertake a range of sustainable behaviours. In contrast, almost half (48%) regularly undertake some sustainable activities but not others. 45% of the population undertake only a few – and in some cases none – of the sustainable behaviours.  
(Source: Bad Habits and Hard Choices: In Search of Sustainable Lifestyle)
- The British public believe the environment is being damaged by human activity; feel well informed about the kinds of things they personally could do to help; don't actually do many of these things; are looking for a strong lead from central government.  
(Source: Bad Habits and Hard Choices: In Search of Sustainable Lifestyle)
- More than one in three (38%) think that government does not have the right to require people to behave in a more sustainable way, including close to one in five (18%) who strongly take this position. However, almost half (48%) believe government does have the right to intervene in this way, including a significant minority of one in four (24%) who do so strongly.  
(Source: Bad Habits and Hard Choices: In Search of Sustainable Lifestyle)
- Consumers assume that environmentally friendly products are automatically the most expensive.  
(Source: Bad Habits and Hard Choices: In Search of Sustainable Lifestyle)