



America, the Ocean, and Climate Change:

New Research Insights for Conservation, Awareness, and Action

presentation of findings

A research collaboration of
The Ocean Project, Monterey Bay Aquarium,
and National Aquarium in Baltimore
with support from NOAA

Findings presented by
Bill Mott, Director
The Ocean Project

June 8, 2011
World Oceans Day
United Nations, New York

TODAY'S PRESENTATION

- Background
- Key Findings
- Implications



OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

Collaborative public opinion research initiative created to help ZAMs inspire their visitors to take action on behalf of conservation

- Obtain deeper and more up-to-date understanding of target audiences
 - Awareness of and attitudes about the ocean and conservation
- Identify strategic opportunities for ZAMs with specific audiences and issues (not just “the public”)
- Track changes in public awareness, attitudes, and opportunities over time



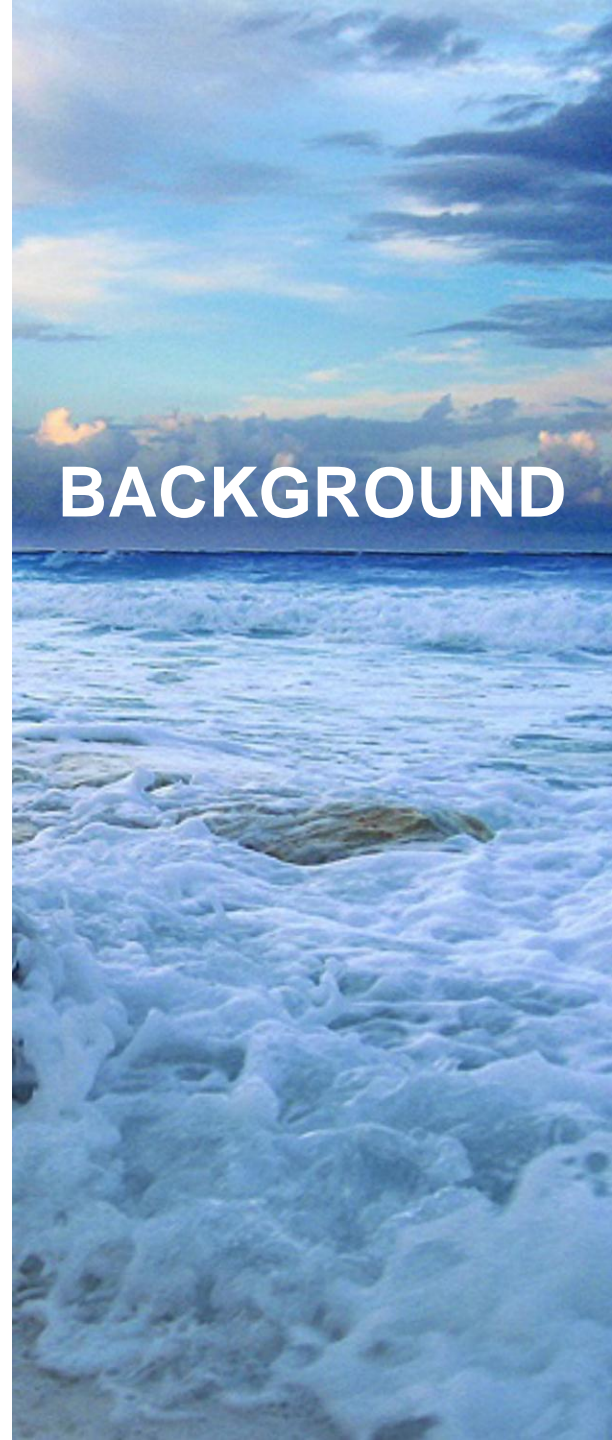
BACKGROUND

METHODOLOGY

- Initial data collection
 - Aug–Nov 2008, 22,000+ adults plus additional data on youth
 - Largest environmental survey ever
- Tracking data collection
 - Tracking surveys, 2009, 2010, and 2011, all with representative samples of U.S. adults
 - Comprehensive annual survey just completed
 - 12,000+ adults, 1,500 youth

Primarily online collection methodologies, controlled with intercepts and RDD; Validation of sample population ensures high confidence data

More details: www.TheOceanProject.org



KEY FINDINGS

- Ocean conservation is core value but not top-of-mind concern
- Ocean as a whole not seen as threatened over the long term
- Oceans not connected to climate change and concern about climate change declining
- Short attention span around other threats, e.g. oil spills
- Strong interest in being seen as “green”
- Gap between "demand" and "supply" information
- ZAMs seen as trusted messengers (expected to fill that action information gap)
- Power of the Internet
- Increasing support for a focus on engaging youth

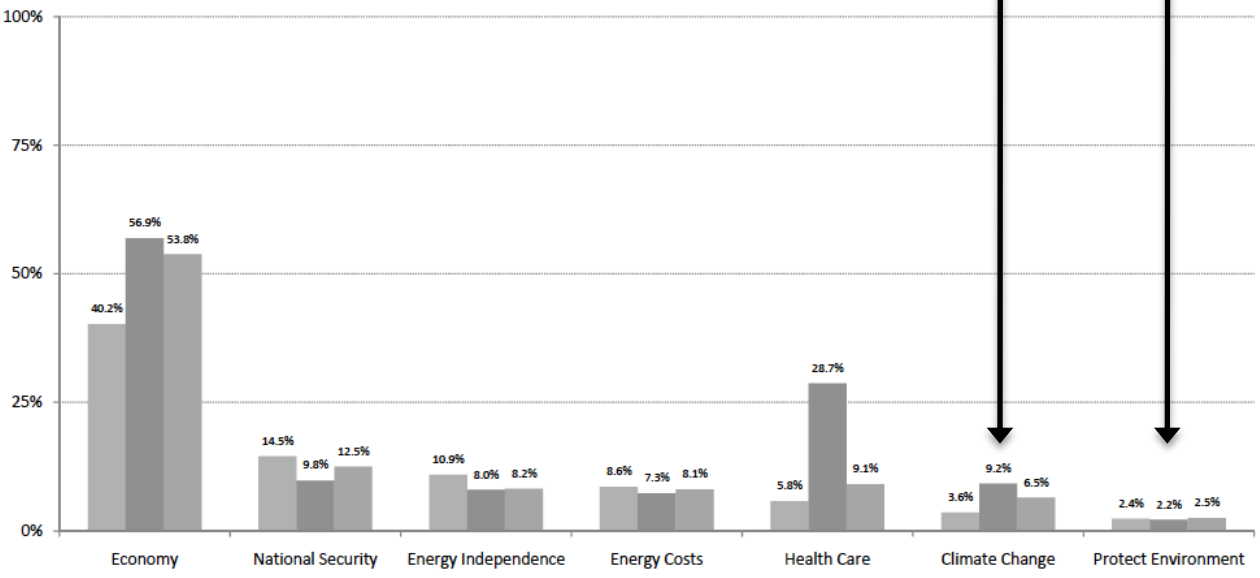


KEY FINDINGS

“TOP-OF-MIND” CONCERNS

Protect Environment
Climate Change

KEY FINDINGS



What are the three most important issues currently confronting the United States?



CONSERVATION A CORE VALUE

In terms of long-term strategic thinking, protecting the ocean is important to the health and well-being of the United States.

Mean **65**

Strongly
Disagree

0

Strongly
Agree

100

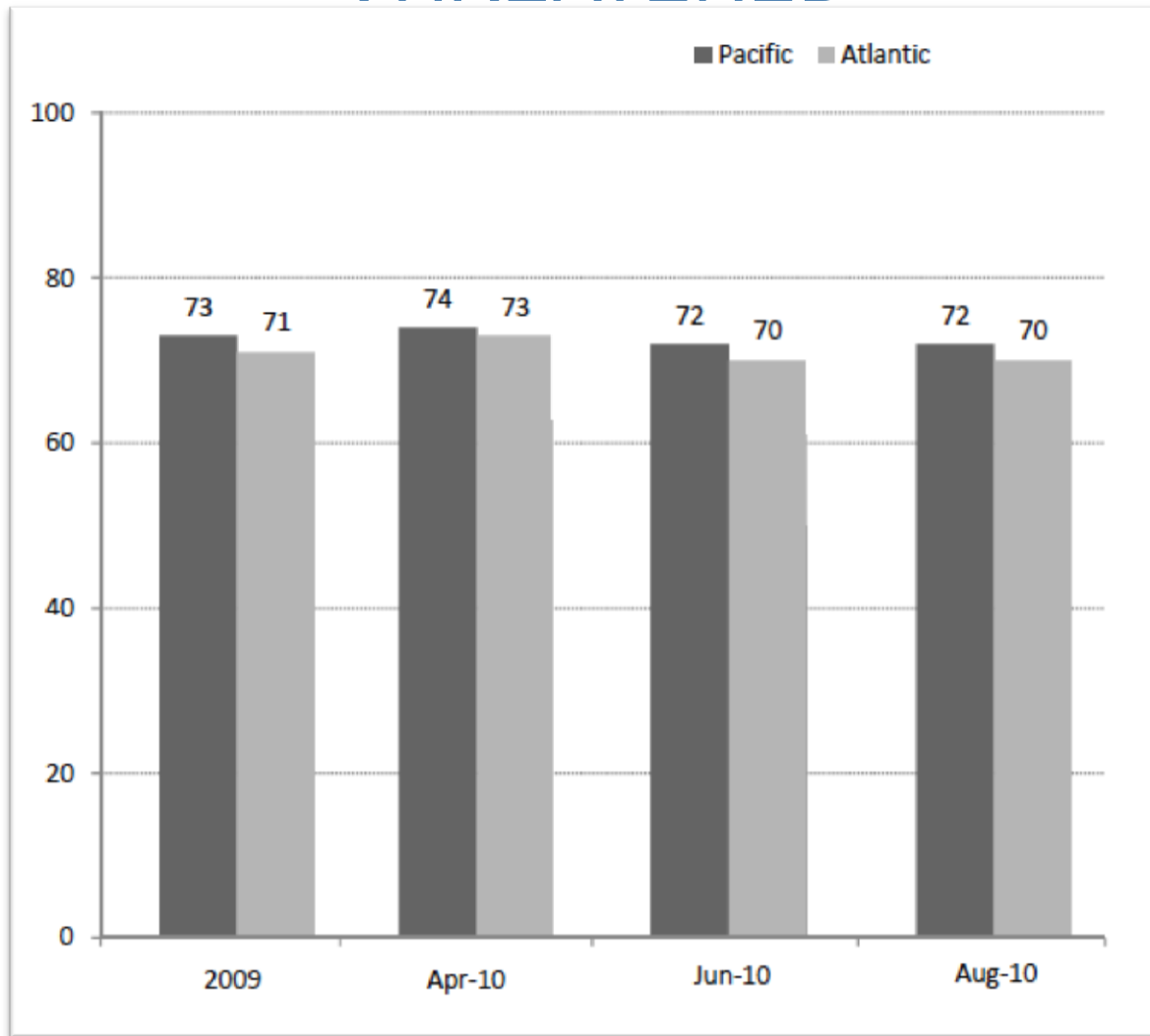


A scalar variable indicates a level of agreement with a proposition.

KEY FINDINGS



OCEANS NOT SEEN AS THREATENED



Is the ocean overall in good health?



KEY FINDINGS

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE OCEAN

How is climate change negatively impacting the health of the ocean?

November 2008

1. DNK
2. Rising water levels

September 2009

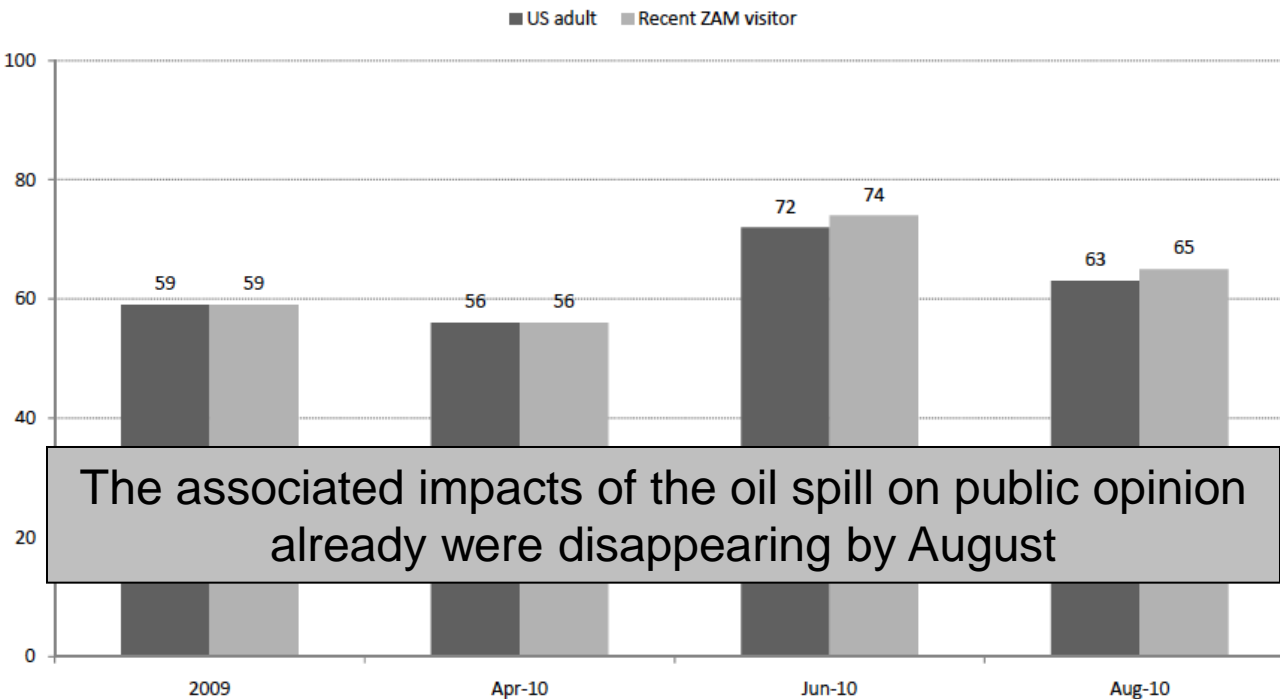
1. DNK
2. Rising water levels
3. Creating more hurricanes

* In both the 2008 and 2009 studies, “DNK” was indicated approximately 8x more frequently than the sum of all other impacts combined.



KEY FINDINGS

SHORT ATTENTION SPAN



The associated impacts of the oil spill on public opinion already were disappearing by August

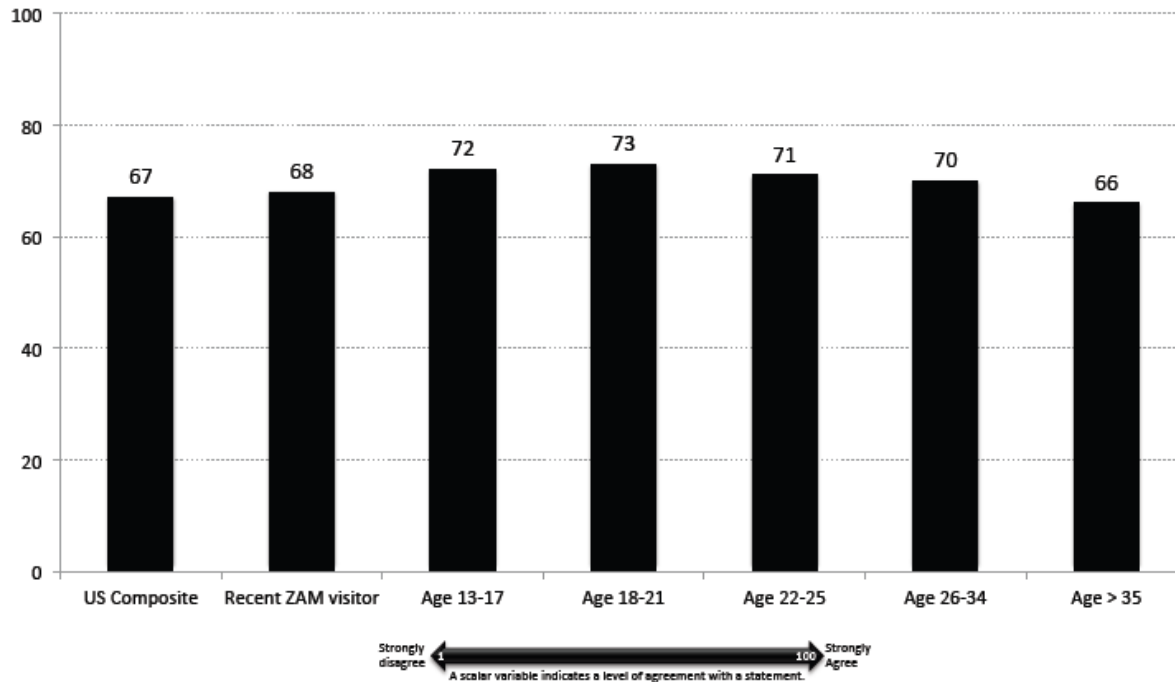
Protecting the ocean is the most important part of protecting the environment

KEY FINDINGS



WANT TO BE SEEN AS “GREEN”

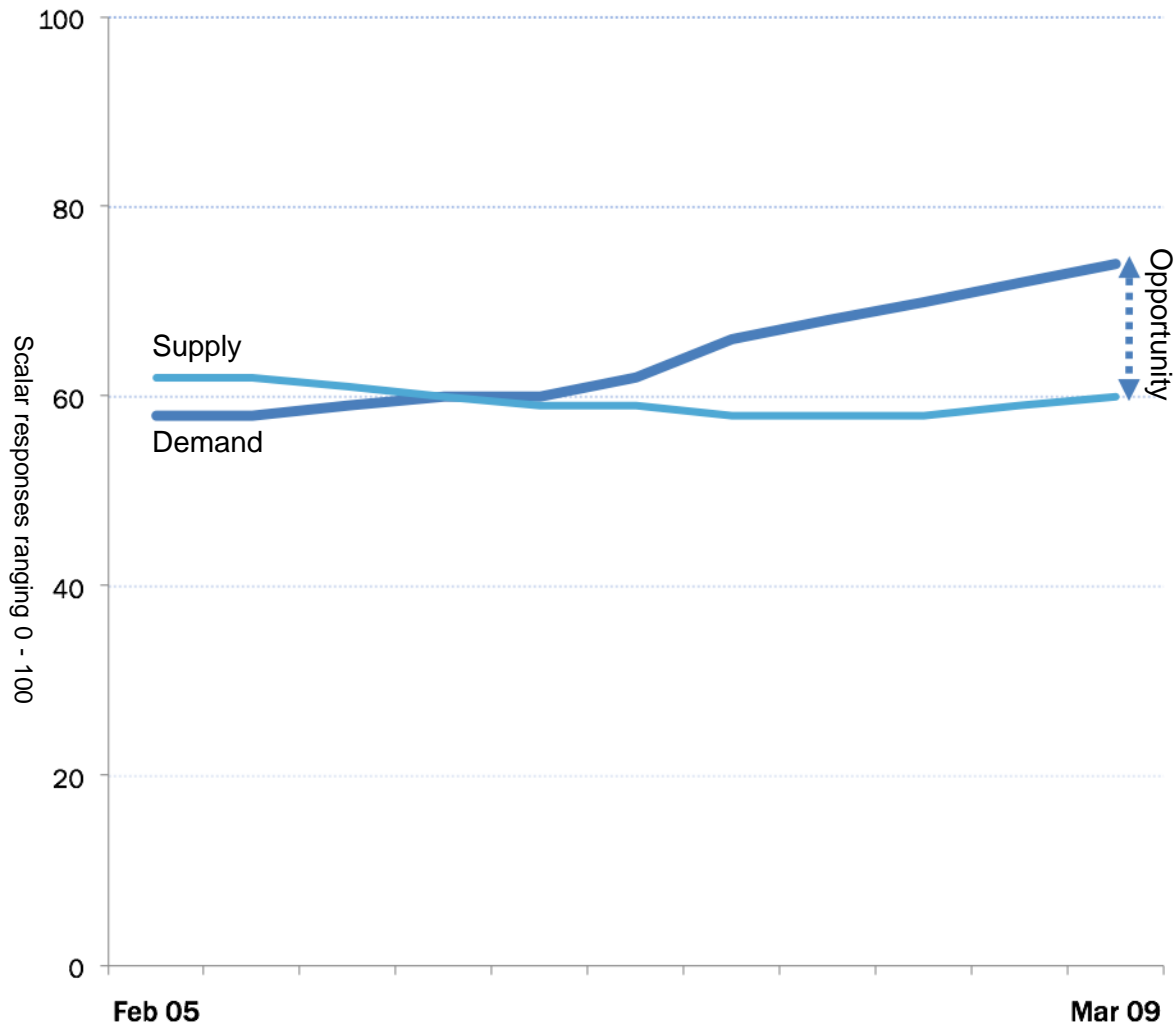
I am “green-friendly.”



KEY FINDINGS



Conservation Recommendations: “Supply Vs. Demand”



KEY FINDINGS



TRUST

“I trust government agencies such as the EPA to protect the quality of our ocean.”

35

“I trust nonprofit agencies such as aquariums to protect the quality of our ocean.”

60

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

0

100

KEY FINDINGS



TRANSLATING TRUST TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Aquariums should suggest or recommend specific behaviors or ways for the general public to protect the environment.

73

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

0

100

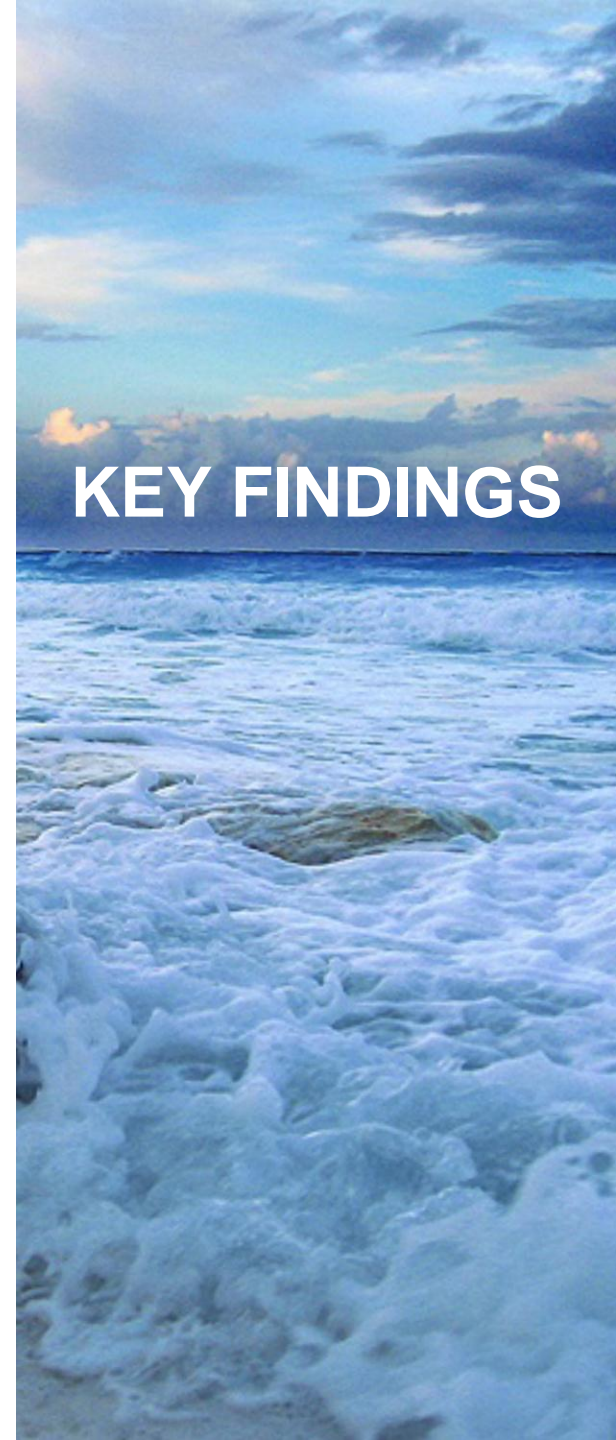
KEY FINDINGS



POWER OF INTERNET

Which of the following sources of information have you used within the last month to learn more about the environment?

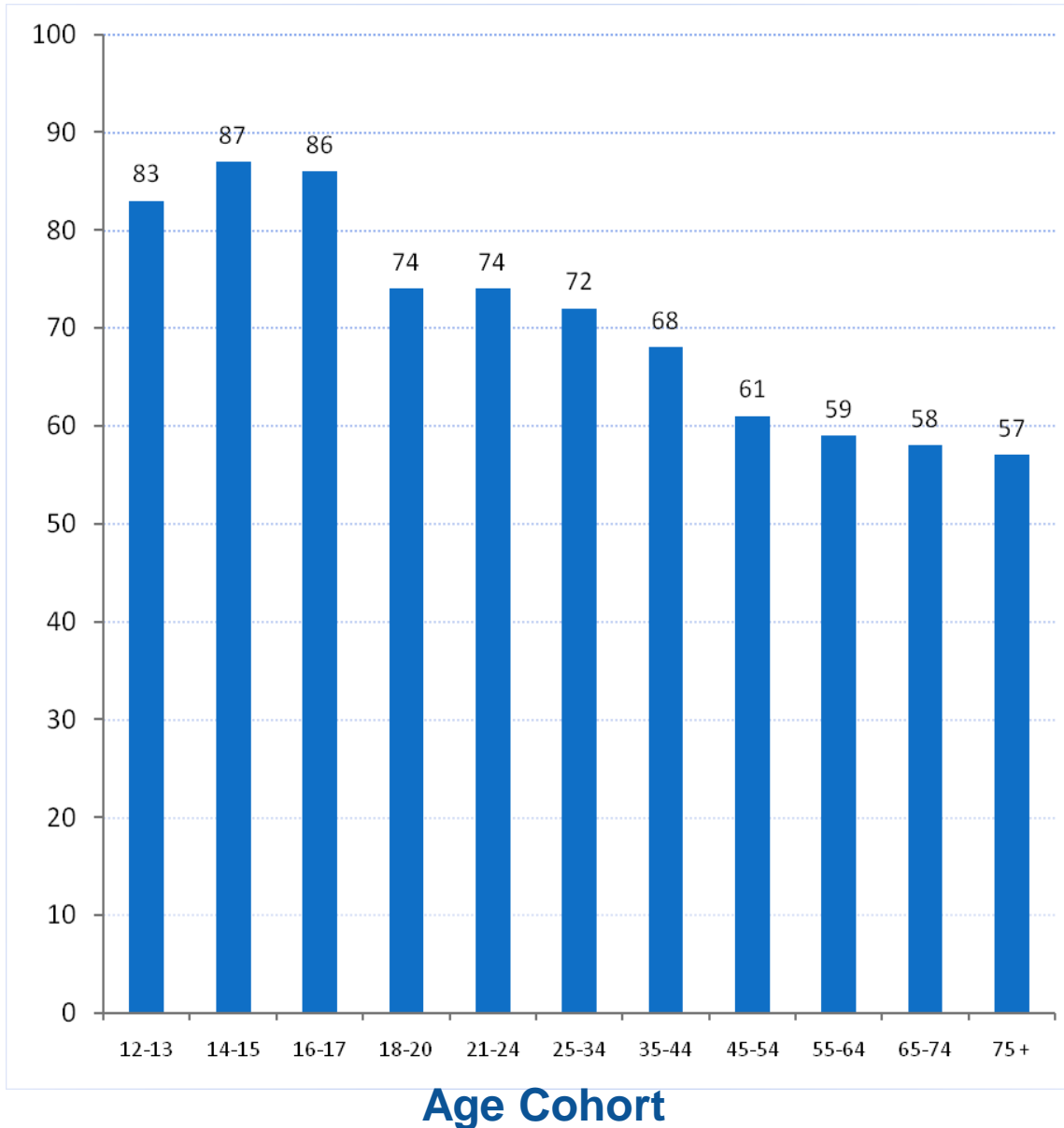
Information Conduit	%
Word of mouth	79%
Internet	64%
Television	33%
Newspaper	30%
Magazines	23%
Radio	14%
ZAM	12%



KEY FINDINGS

“Individual citizens are personally responsible for protecting the environment.”

Average Sclar Response Ranging 0-100



KEY FINDINGS



My child is better informed about current environmental issues than I am.

78

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree



A scalar variable indicates a level of agreement with a proposition.

KEY FINDINGS



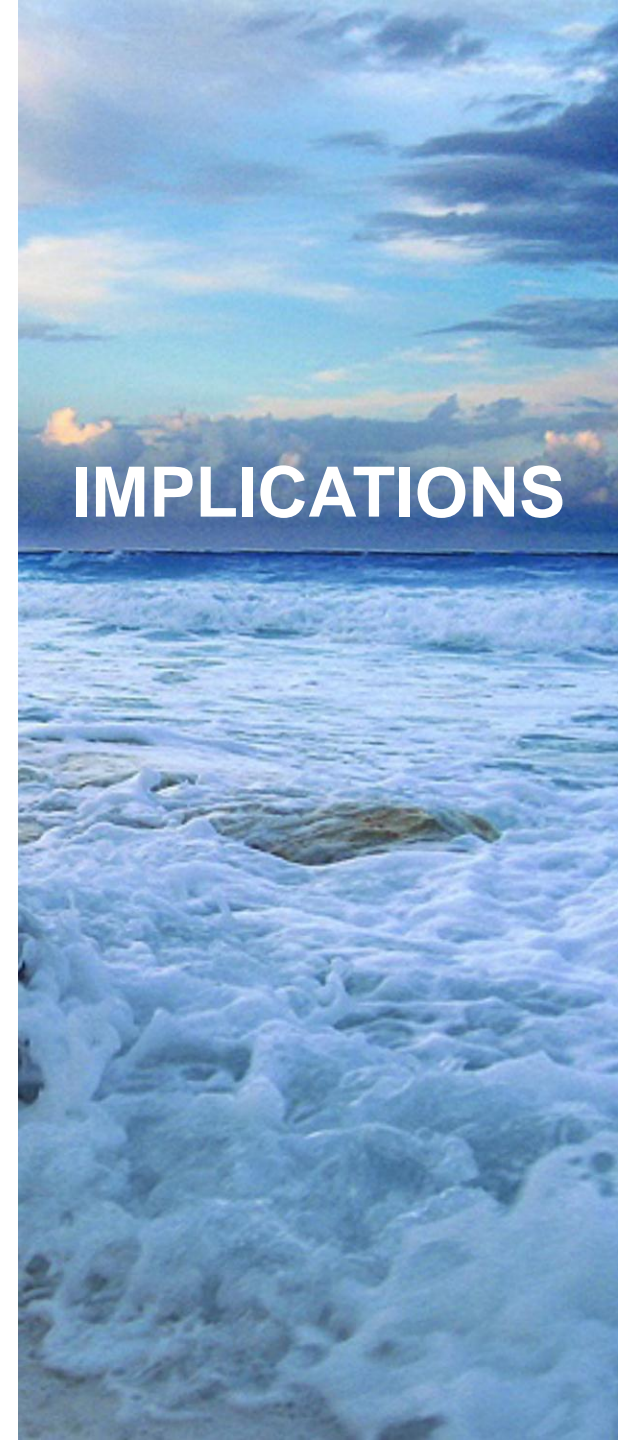
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- Ocean conservation is core value but not top-of-mind concern
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IMPLICATIONS

1. Use solutions, especially personal action steps, as a way to engage and inform the public
2. Discuss problems in terms of their impact on *particular places* and *specific species*
3. Focus on *youth, especially teenagers*, as they are not only “the future” but also the present
4. ZAMs can play a key role, both onsite and online



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to extend special thanks to NOAA for providing the funding for our market research initiative

Feedback?

Do you have questions/feedback about this research, its findings and implications?

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www.TheOceanProject.org



THANK YOU!