

Biodiversity Awareness Survey



October 2014

By:



METHODOLOGY & LOGISTICS

Study Sample

This report represents the findings from a survey of 1,000 residents (18 years of age or older) of Ontario. The surveys were conducted between the days of October 16th to October 24th, 2014.

Confidence

The margin of error for this 1,000-person survey is +/- 3.1%, 19/20 times.

Survey Method

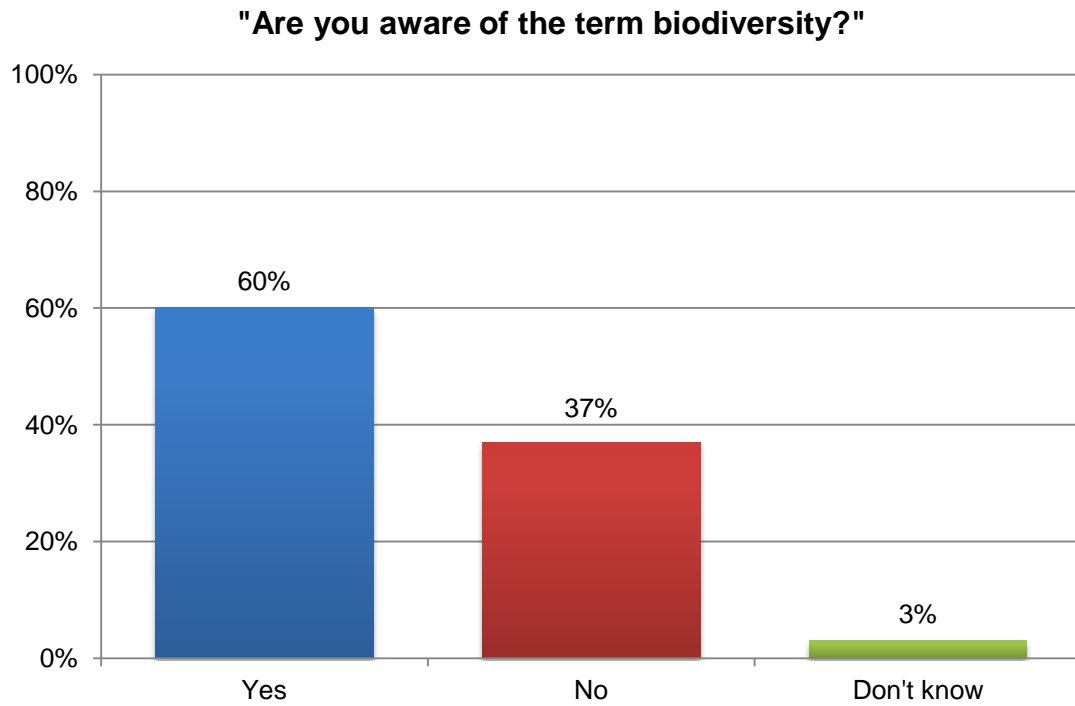
The survey was conducted using computer-assisted techniques of telephone interviewing (CATI) and random number selection. A total of 20% of all interviews were monitored and the management of Oraclepoll Research Limited supervised 100%.

Logistics

Initial calls were made between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Subsequent call-backs of no-answers and busy numbers were made up to 5 times (from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) until contact was made. In addition, telephone interview appointments were attempted with those respondents unable to complete the survey at the time of contact. If no contact was made at a number after the fifth attempt, the number was discarded and a new one was used.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Respondents were first asked the following awareness question.



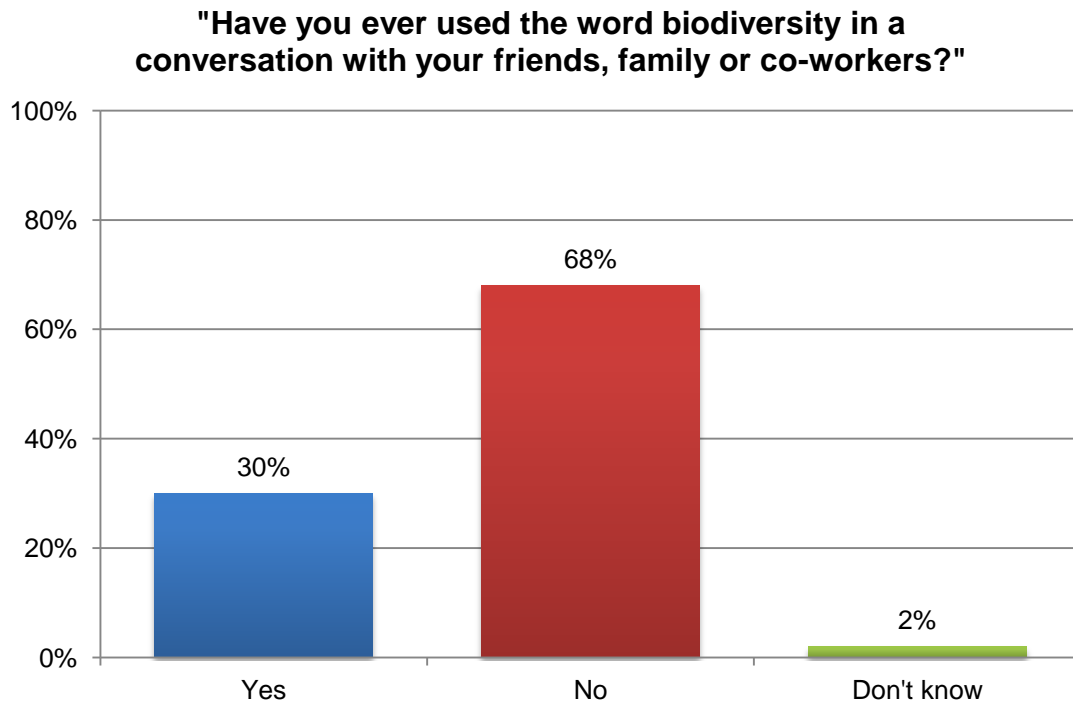
Six in ten Ontarians interviewed (60%) claimed to be aware of the term biodiversity, compared to 37% that were not, while 3% were unsure.

The respondents (60%) who were aware of the term biodiversity were then asked a series of questions. This series started by asking which of the definitions respondents felt best fit their understanding of the term.

<i>“Which of the following definitions best fit your understanding of biodiversity?”</i>	
The variety of life on earth	59%
The environment and nature	19%
Sustainable development	9%
Human, religious and cultural variety	8%
Don't know	5%

The correct response, variety of life on earth, was most named, next followed the environment and nature.

The respondents (60%) aware of the term biodiversity were then asked if they have ever used the word in a conversation.



Three in ten or 30% have used the word biodiversity in a casual conversation.

Next, those aware of the term biodiversity were questioned on how they first heard about it.

<i>“Where did you first learn or hear about the term biodiversity?”</i>	
Don't know	29%
School	22%
Newspaper	17%
Television	16%
Read about it	7%
Through work	7%
Conservation Authorities	2%

While not surprising, almost three in ten respondents were not definitive in their recall of where they first heard the term. It is useful to note that the next three responses (school, newspaper and television) were closely clustered, indicating each was an important platform for education.

Respondents aware of the term were asked a final question about where they obtain their information about biodiversity.

<i>“Where do you obtain information about biodiversity?”</i>	
Don't know	31%
Internet	21%
Newspaper	12%
Books	8%
School	7%
Read about it	7%
Television	5%
Through other people	3%
Science Centres / Biodome	2%
Magazine	2%
Radio	2%

More than three in ten (31%) did not know, while the internet was the most cited information source at 21%. Responses to this question highlight the challenges of outreach and education on this topic, as nearly half the responses were spread out over nine categories.

All 1,000 respondents were asked the following, revealing school and the internet as the most influential sources to educate Ontarians on biodiversity. Television and newspapers can be classified in a secondary cluster.

<i>“Which source of information do you think is the most influential to educate Ontarians about biodiversity?”</i>	
School	38%
Internet	30%
TV	17%
Newspaper	11%
Don't know	4%

Nearly seven in ten respondents answered for the top two categories.

All 1,000 respondents were also questioned about what age was preferable to advance awareness of biodiversity.

<i>“Which age group is the most important to educate in order to advance awareness of biodiversity?”</i>	
Under 12	44%
12-17	35%
18-24	13%
25-40	6%
40-59	2%
Don't know	1%

Nearly 80% of respondents felt the emphasis should focus on education for Ontarians under 17. The emphasis on younger age groups seems consistent with the previous question, where school was chosen by the greatest percentage of respondents.

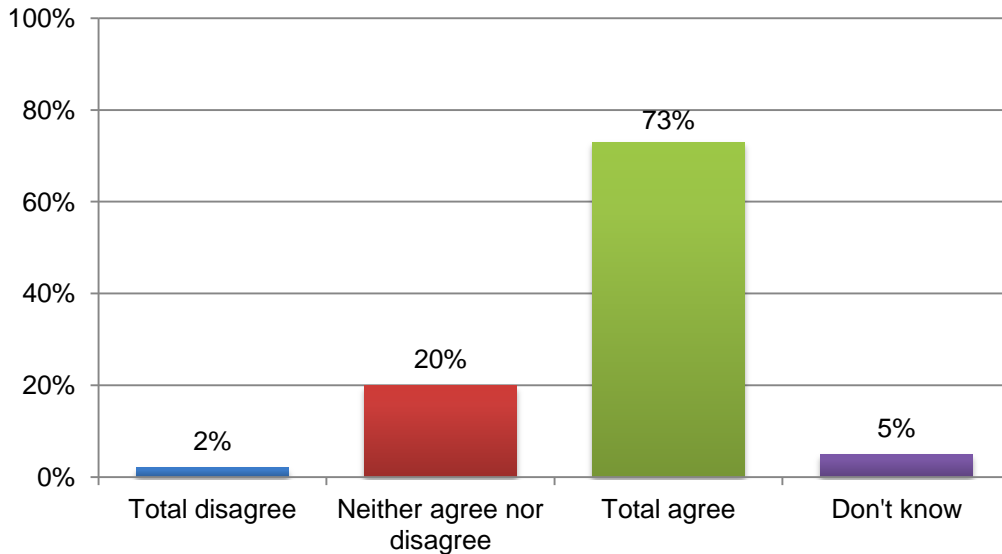
All respondents were asked about the most important issue impacting biodiversity in the province. Pollution and pesticides was most named, followed by habitat loss and unsustainable use of resources.

<i>“In your opinion, what is the most important issue impacting Ontario's biodiversity?”</i>	
Pollution and pesticides	28%
Habitat loss	20%
Unsustainable use of resources	18%
Don't know	10%
Human population growth	11%
Climate change	11%
Invasive species	2%
None	1%

Pollution and pesticides was selected by more than one-quarter of respondents. Habitat loss and unsustainable use of resources were almost equal and can be classified into a distinct second cluster of responses.

All respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statement using a scale from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.

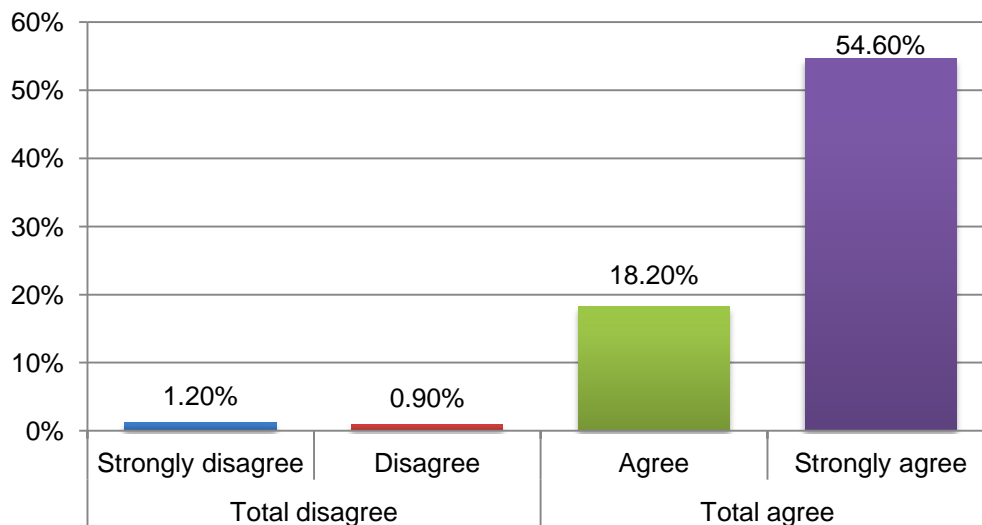
"Biodiversity plays an important role in maintaining my health and well-being"



A total of 73% were in agreement with the statement compared to only 2% in disagreement, while 20% had a neutral response (neither agree nor disagree) and 5% were undecided. It is important to note the intensity behind the strongly agree, which was chosen by 55% of respondents.

Breakdown of Total Disagree and Agree

"Biodiversity plays an important role in maintaining my health and well-being"



In a final question all respondents were asked the following.

<i>“In your opinion, what aspect of biodiversity has the greatest impact on your health?”</i>	
Cleaner air and water	38%
Availability of healthy food	20%
Improved physical and mental health from outdoor experiences	12%
Prevention of diseases	10%
Climate regulation	6%
Medicines sourced from wild species	5%
Don't know	9%

Cleaner air and water was by far the most popular choice with Ontarians, followed by availability of healthy food. Arguably, prevention of diseases and medicines sourced from wild species might be grouped together.

RESULTS BY QUESTION

Q1. Are you aware of the term biodiversity?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	598	59.8
No	371	37.1
Don't know	31	3.1
Total	1000	100.0

IF YES GO TO Q2 / NO OR DON'T KNOW GO TO Q6

Q2. Which of the following definitions best fit your understanding of biodiversity? READ / ACCEPT ONE ONLY

	Frequency	Valid Percent
The environment and nature	115	19.2
The variety of life on earth	353	59.0
Sustainable development	55	9.2
Human, religious and cultural variety	45	7.6
Don't know	30	5.0
Total	598	100.0

Q3. Have you ever used the word biodiversity in a conversation with your friends, family or co-workers?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	177	29.5
No	408	68.2
Don't know	14	2.3
Total	598	100.0

Q4. Where did you first learn or hear about the term biodiversity?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Don't know	171	28.6
School	130	21.7
Newspaper	100	16.8
Television	98	16.4
Read about it	43	7.2
Through work	42	7.1
Conservation Authorities	14	2.3
Total	598	100.0

Q5. Where do you obtain information about biodiversity?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Don't know	184	30.7
Internet	124	20.8
Newspaper	71	11.8
Books	50	8.4
School	44	7.4
Read about it	39	6.6
Television	30	5.0
Through other people	20	3.3
Science Centres / Biodome	14	2.3
Magazine	14	2.3
Radio	9	1.6
Total	598	100.0

Q6. Which source of information do you think is the most influential to educate Ontarians about biodiversity?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
School	382	38.2
Internet	304	30.4
TV	167	16.7
Newspaper	113	11.3
Don't know	35	3.5
Total	1000	100.0

Q7. Which age group is the most important to educate in order to advance awareness of biodiversity?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Under 12	439	43.9
12-17	346	34.6
18-24	129	12.9
25-40	57	5.7
40-59	20	2.0
Don't know	9	.9
Total	1000	100.0

Q8. In your opinion, what is the most important issue impacting Ontario's biodiversity? READ / ACCEPT ONE

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Habitat loss	202	20.2
Invasive Species	22	2.2
Pollution and pesticides	275	27.5
Human population growth	105	10.5
Unsustainable use of resources	177	17.7
Climate change	109	10.9
None	12	1.2
Don't know	98	9.8
Total	1000	100.0

Q9. Biodiversity plays an important role in maintaining my health and well-being.

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Strongly disagree	12	1.2
Disagree	9	.9
Neither agree nor disagree	197	19.7
Agree	182	18.2
Strongly agree	546	54.6
Don't Know	54	5.4
Total	1000	100.0

Q10. In your opinion, what aspect of biodiversity has the greatest impact on your health? READ / ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Medicines sourced from wild species	52	5.2
Prevention of diseases	98	9.8
Availability of healthy food	196	19.6
Cleaner air and water	377	37.7
Improved physical and mental health from outdoor experiences	124	12.4
Climate regulation	64	6.4
Don't know	89	8.9
Total	1000	100.0

Demographics

D1. Which of the following age groups may I place you in?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
18-24	120	12.0
25-34	161	16.1
35-44	176	17.6
45-54	206	20.6
55 and over	337	33.7
Total	1000	100.0

D2.What is the highest level of education that you have achieved?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than high school	35	3.5
High school completed	138	13.8
Some college or university	154	15.4
Completed college	244	24.4
Completed university undergraduate degree	189	18.9
Graduate or professional degree (Masters, PhD)	220	22.0
Don't know / refused	19	1.9
Total	1000	100.0

D3. Do you live in a rural or urban area

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Rural	328	32.8
Urban	651	65.1
Don't know	21	2.1
Total	1000	100.0

D4.Finally, what is your combined family income?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Under \$75,000	378	37.8
Under \$100,000	124	12.4
\$100,000 & OVER	229	22.9
Don't know / refused	269	26.9
Total	1000	100.0

D5.Gender

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	480	48.0
Female	520	52.0
Total	1000	100.0