



**Results of the 26th Annual
“Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of
Humankind”**

Report

September 2017

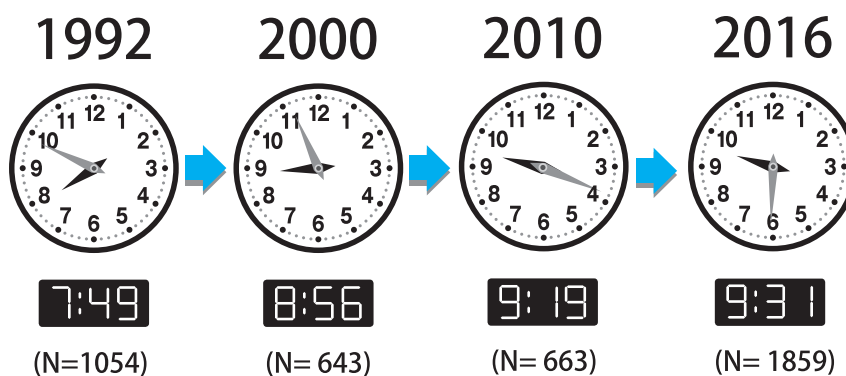
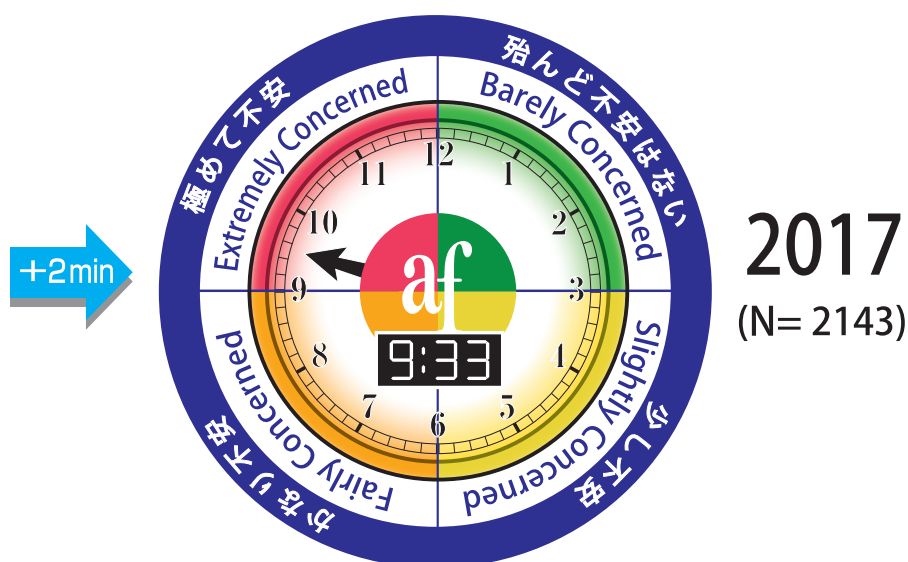
THE ASAHI GLASS FOUNDATION

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The Environmental Doomsday Clock

the sense of crisis felt about the continuance of the human race



Foreword

This report summarizes the results of the 2017 Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of Humankind, a survey conducted annually by the Asahi Glass Foundation since 1992. As in previous years, the Asahi Glass Foundation wishes to continue communicating the current thoughts and opinions of environmental experts around the world on the state of the global environment to as many people as possible.

Thanks to the cooperation of the participants, we received 2,152 responses to the questionnaire this year. (1,822 responses in 2016) We would like to express our gratitude for the opportunity to report once again this year on an environmental survey covering most regions of the world.

We have taken the familiar category “Environmental Conditions of Concern in Determining the Time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock,” which had been basically used continuously until the previous fiscal year, and revamped it for 2017 as “Environmental issues to be taken in account,” a more succinct rendering that maintains the continuity of the central idea. We have linked these items, starting from Agenda 21, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, by clarifying their relationship with the items in Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity, (Johan Rockstrom et al) , in 2011 and with the items in the SDGs this year.

As in the previous fiscal year, we will post comments from respondents in each country on the website of the Asahi Glass Foundation (<http://www.af-info.or.jp/en/questionnaire/result.html>). Please refer to the views and opinions of environmental experts.

At the Foundation, we sincerely hope that we can contribute to the resolution of environmental problems using this questionnaire to raising environmental interest among as many people as possible, not limited to environmental experts.

Once again, we extend our deepest gratitude to the respondents for taking the time to share their valuable opinions and experience through the survey. In closing, we appeal to readers of this report for advice on how to enhance the survey in the coming years.

The Asahi Glass Foundation
September 2017

I. Facts about the 26th Annual “Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of Humankind”

Response period: Questionnaires were sent out in April 2017 with a return deadline of June 2017.

Questionnaire respondent pool: Environmental experts selected from members of government organizations, academic institutions, NGOs, corporations, and mass media (based on the Asahi Glass Foundation database).

Questionnaires mailed: 29,214

Questionnaires returned: 2,152

Response rate: 7.4%

Table 1. Breakdown of respondents by region, gender, and occupational affiliation:

Region	Number of responses	Percent of total
Oceania	80	3.7
United States & Canada	282	13.1
Central America, Caribbean countries	47	2.2
South America	63	2.9
Western Europe	251	11.7
Africa	87	4.0
Middle East	39	1.8
Eastern Europe & former Soviet Union	52	2.4
Asia	1251	58.1
Total (Including three area unknown responses)	2152	100.0

Gender	Number of responses	Percent of total
Male	1457	67.7
Female	688	32.0
Others	4	0.2
No response	3	0.1
Total	2152	100.0

Occupational Affiliation	Number of responses	Percent of total
Central government, Local government	253	11.8
University or research institution	632	29.4
NGO/NPO	401	18.6
Corporation	423	19.7
Mass Media	52	2.4
Other	384	17.8
No response	7	0.3
Total	2152	100.0

*1 Unless otherwise noted, the questionnaire calculated as 100% the total number of responses received for questions where respondents were only asked to choose one item. For questions with multiple selections, the questionnaire calculated the percentages based on the number of times a valid response was given.

*2 Figures have been rounded to the first or second decimal places.

*3 Each question was calculated based on the number of responses to that question and not the number of questionnaires that were returned.

II. Summary of Questionnaire Results

1. Awareness of the Crisis Facing Human Survival —The Environmental Doomsday Clock

- The average time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock for all the world was 9:33, an advancement of 2 minutes from last year, and comes to the same most advanced time in the past (2008).
- Overall, “Climate change” continued from last year to be the most frequently selected environmental issue to be taken in account in determining the time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock. This was followed by “Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity),” “Water resources,” “Society, Economy and Environment,” “Bio-chemical flows (Pollution/Contamination),” “Population,” and “Land-system change (Land Use).”
- Overall, when arranging the top-ranked Environmental issues to be taken in account in descending order of severity on the Environmental Doomsday Clock, “Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity),” “Food,” and “Population” had the most advanced time. These were followed by “Climate change,” “Water resources,” then “Lifestyles (Consumption Habits),” and “Society, Economy and Environment.”
- In comparison with 2016, the clock time of Food, in particular has advanced significantly from 8:59 → 9:43.

2. Shifts in the Environmental Doomsday Clock Based on Respondent Age

We analyzed the shifts in the time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock from 2011 to 2017 as marked by respondents around the world, with a particular focus on the age of the respondents.

- Similar to last year, older respondents tended to report more advanced times on the Environmental Doomsday Clock.
- The time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock for respondents between ages 20s and 30s has been advancing since 2011, reaching nearly the same levels as their counterparts aged between 40s and 50s.

3. The American political situation viz-a-viz the American Political situation since 2017 presidential inauguration

Overall, 55% of respondents said that the changed American political landscape influenced their decision on the doomsday clock time.

A breakdown by region and country shows that the US recorded the highest percentage (80%) of such responses, followed by South Korea (69%), Japan (67%), South America (66%), Australia (65%) and the UK (64%). The regions and countries where respondents were least influenced by the changed American political situation were Africa (33%), India (37%), Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (37%), China (38%), Taiwan (38%), and the Middle East (38%).

A breakdown by occupation shows that the percentage of respondents influenced by the changed American political situation was 82% for Mass Media, 63% for local government, 57% for university or research institution, and 57% for NGO/NPO. Respondents working in Corporation were the least influenced by the American political situation (41%).

III. Questionnaire Results

1-1. Awareness of the Crisis Facing Human Survival - The Environmental Doomsday Clock

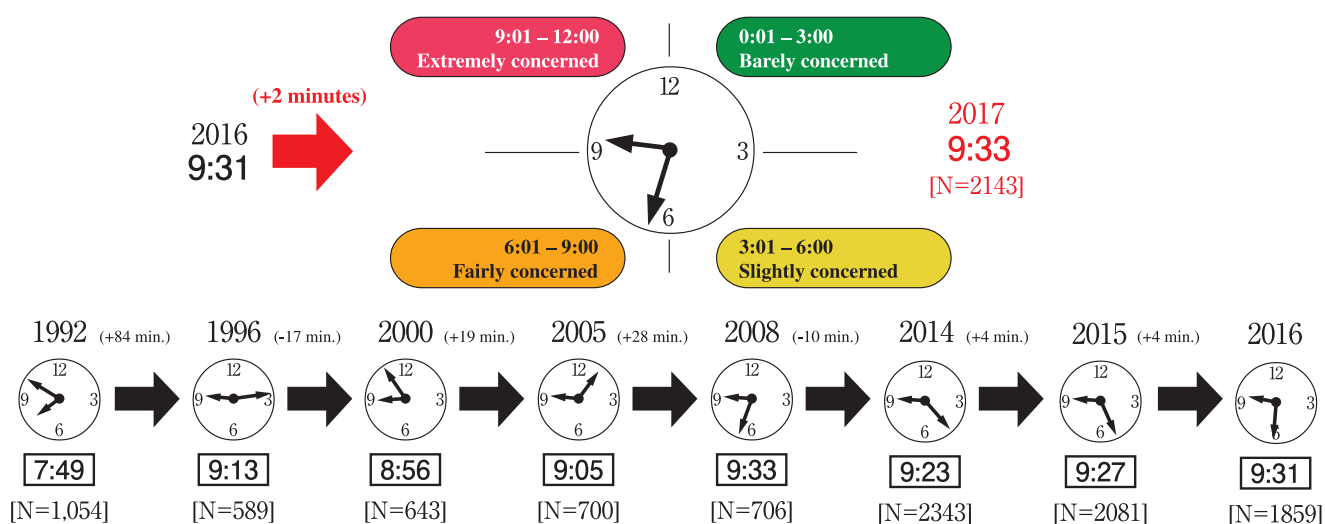
“Environmental issues to be taken into account” are shown. Keeping in mind the problems that the environment faces at a global level, please select the three most pressing issues for the country or the region where you reside. Then, please rank them in the order of importance. Lastly, for each item, select a time using hours and minutes between 0:10 to 12:00, to indicate the level of crisis for that issue. For the purposes of calculating results, please select your times in units of 10 minutes.

About the calculation of the time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock

The time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock will be determined by taking the weighted average of the data. The issue ranked in first place will be weighted at 50%, second place at 30%, and third place at 20%.

A-1. The Environmental Doomsday Clock

Fig.1 Concern about Human Survival Prospects



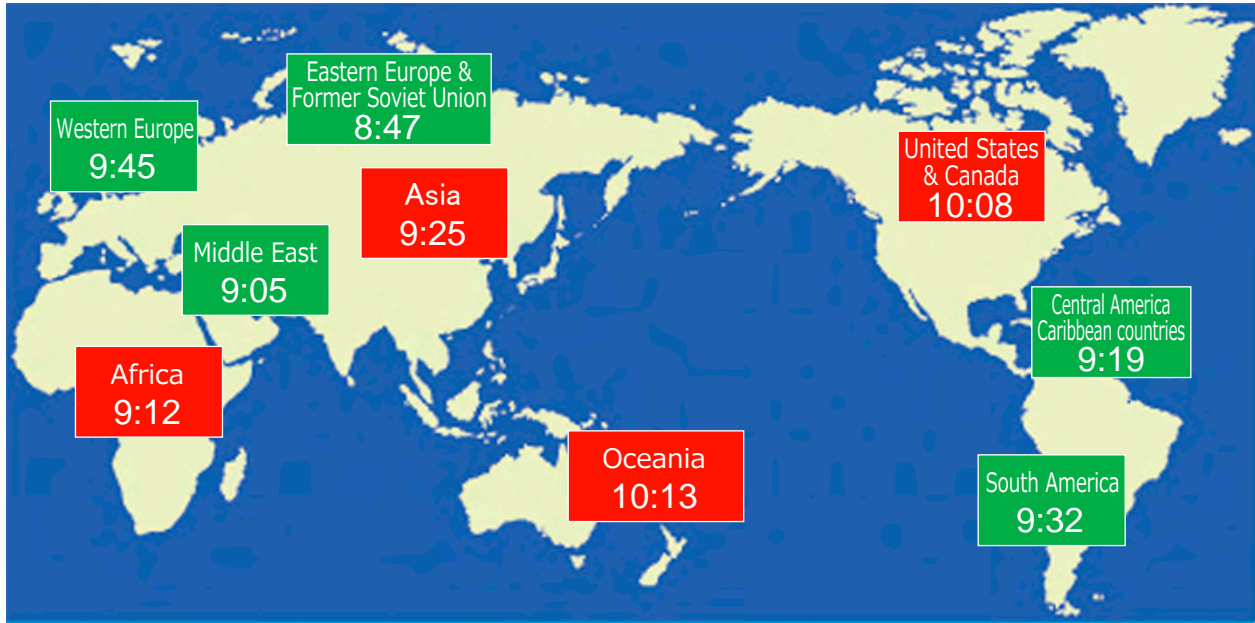
	Changes in time from year to year			Changes in average time by region (min.)			
	'07	→	'16	→	'17	'07→'17	'16→'17
Total	9:31	→	9:31	→	9:33	+2	+2
Oceania	10:27	→	10:01	→	10:13	-14	+12
United States & Canada	9:40	→	9:58	→	10:08	+28	+10
Central America, Caribbean countries	9:38	→	9:38	→	9:19	-19	-19
South America	*	→	9:48	→	9:32	-6	-16
Western Europe	9:23	→	9:47	→	9:45	+22	-2
Africa	10:02	→	9:09	→	9:12	-50	+3
Middle East	9:41	→	10:06	→	9:05	-36	-61
Eastern Europe & former Soviet Union	9:20	→	8:51	→	8:47	-33	-4
Asia	9:27	→	9:18	→	9:25	-2	+7

(Red indicates the advancement in time from last year; green indicates a reversal)

*Central America, Caribbean countries and South America are comparisons with Latin America

- The average time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock for all respondents was 9:33, an advancement of 2 minutes from last year's time of 9:31.

Fig.2 Regional Times

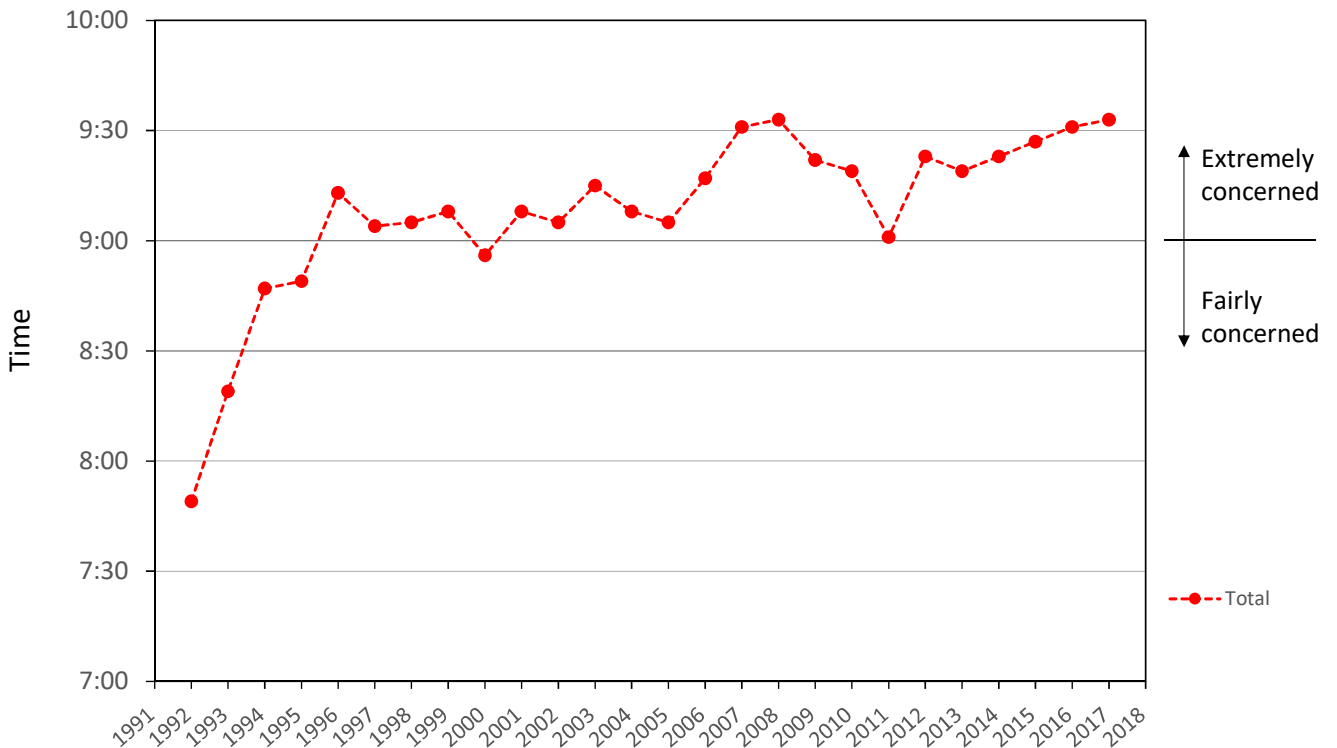


■ Represents regions/countries where the time advanced from last year
 ■ Represents regions/countries where the time retreated from last year

Fig.3 Changes in the Environmental Doomsday Clock (Overall)

Year	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Time	7:49	8:19	8:47	8:49	9:13	9:04	9:05	9:08	8:56	9:08	9:05	9:15	9:08	9:05	9:17	9:31	9:33	9:22	9:19	9:01	9:23	9:19	9:23	9:27	9:31	9:33

Since the inception of the survey, ■ represents the lowest sense of crisis, while ■ represents the highest.



A-2. Shifts in the Environmental Doomsday Clock Based on Respondent Age (2011 - 2017)

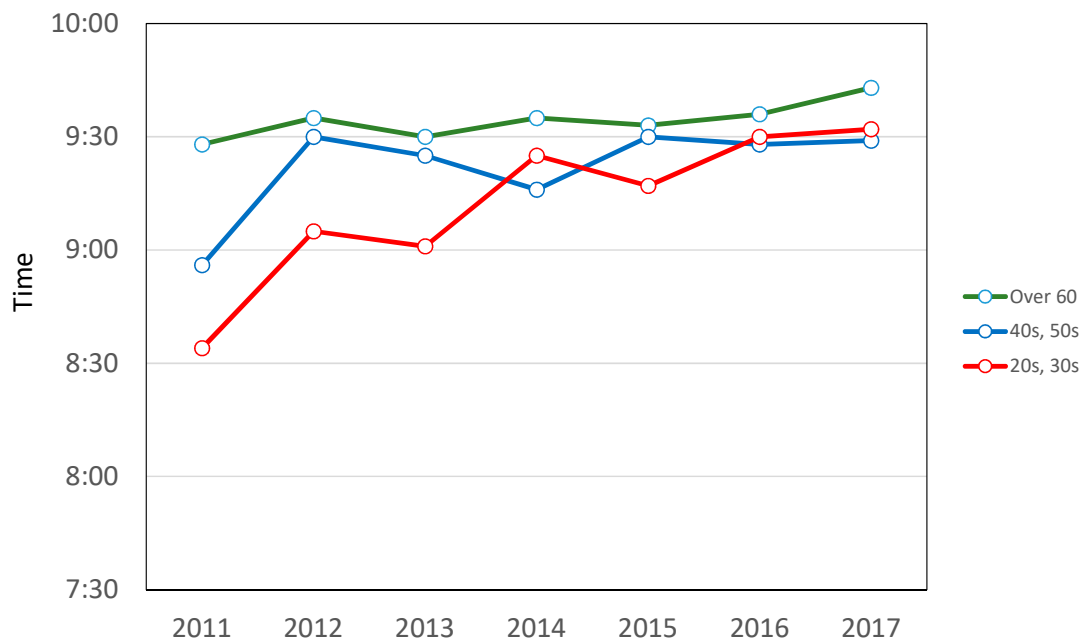
- The older the respondents were, the more they tended to report advanced times on the Environmental Doomsday Clock.

A-2-1. Shifts in the Environmental Doomsday Clock by Generation

- For respondents over 60, the Environmental Doomsday Clock time while consistently the most advanced out of all the age groups, has hitherto remained relatively stable between 9:28 and 9:36. However, this year the time jumped 7 minutes to 9:43.
- For respondents of the age group 40s, 50s, the Environmental Doomsday Clock advanced from 8:56 in 2011 to 9:30 one year later, but the times have remained relatively stable since then.
- The Environmental Doomsday Clock time for respondents between the ages of 20s, 30s has been advancing from 2011, when it was 8:34, to 2016. Since 2016, respondents in this age group selected times that reached nearly the same levels as chosen by their counterparts, age group of 40s, 50s.
This year, respondents from South Korea included many students in their 20s. (47 from a total of 192)

Fig.4 Shifts in the Environmental Doomsday Clock by Generation

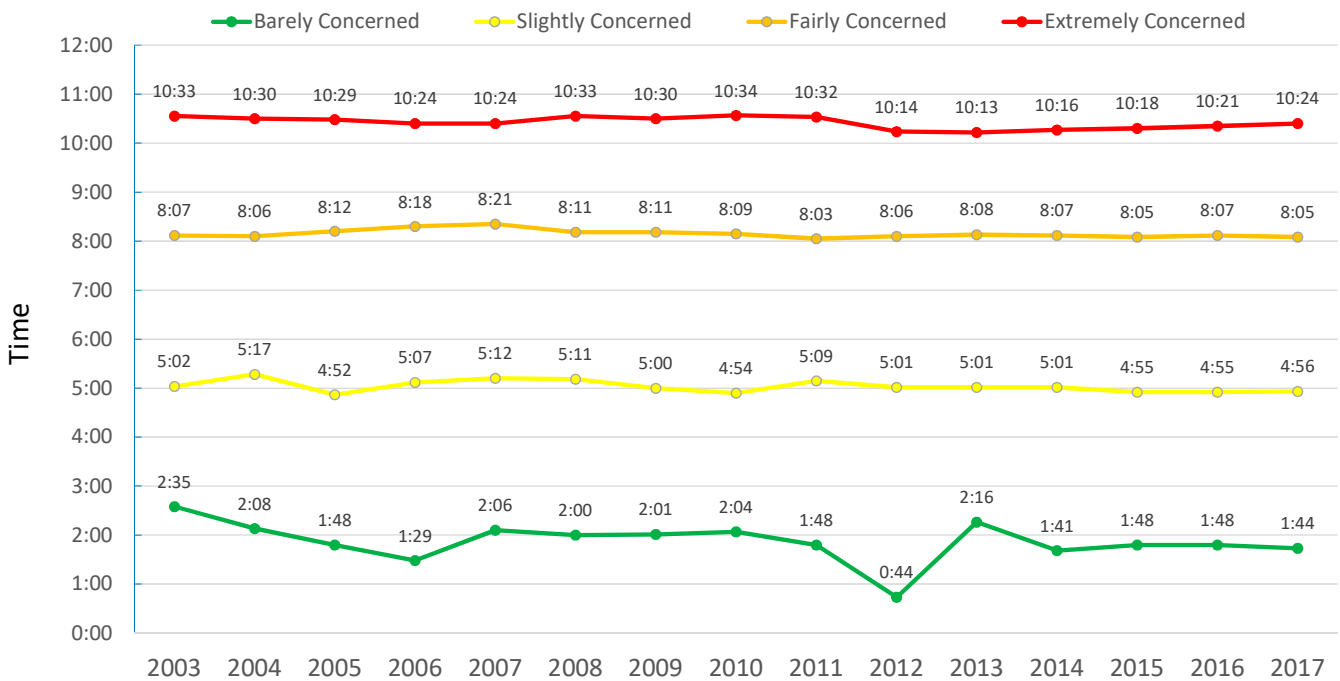
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Average Time	9:01	9:23	9:19	9:23	9:27	9:31	9:33
Over 60	9:28	9:35	9:30	9:35	9:33	9:36	9:43
40s, 50s	8:56	9:30	9:25	9:16	9:30	9:28	9:29
20s, 30s	8:34	9:05	9:01	9:25	9:17	9:30	9:32



A-3 Changes in the Average the Environmental Doomsday Clock Time in the Four Quadrants (2003 – 2017)

- Following the changes in each quadrant of the Environmental Doomsday Clock shows that the changes in the “Extremely Concerned,” “Fairly Concerned,” and “Slightly Concerned” quadrants have been stable. On the other hand, the “Barely Concerned” quadrant has showed a large retreat from 2011 to 2012, of 1 hour 4 minutes. Conversely, the quadrant recorded an extremely accelerated advancement of 1 hour 32 minutes from 2012 to 2013.
- The selection rate of the “Barely Concerned” category among all respondents remained between 1.3% to 3.0% until 2011, whereas the percentages varied from 0.2% to 1.3% after 2012. Because the small number of respondents does not offer a stable statistic data, we believe that the changes in the time are greater in this quadrant compared to the other three.
- In 2017, 69% of respondents selected “Extremely Concerned,” 26% selected “Fairly Concerned,” 3.2% selected “Slightly Concerned,” 0.6% selected “Barely Concerned,” and 1.4% selected “No answer or Unknown”.

Fig.5 Changes in the Average the Environmental Doomsday Clock Time in the Four Quadrants



1-2. Did the American political situation since the presidential inauguration affect your decision on the time of the Environmental doomsday clock?

Fig.6

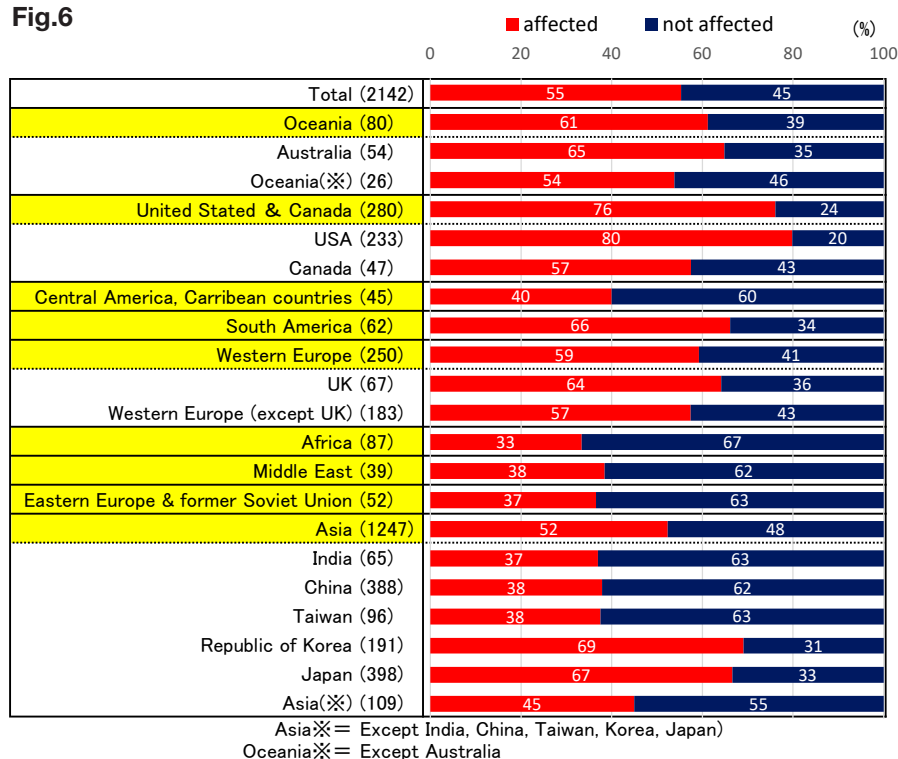
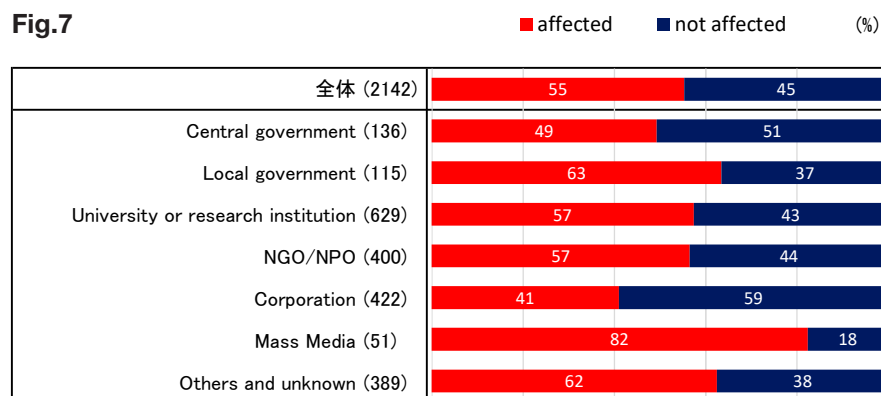


Fig.7



*Breakdown by country of respondents who said the changed American political landscape influenced their decision on the Environmental Domsday Clock time.

- Overall, 55% of respondents said that the changed American political situation influenced their decision on the Environmental Domsday clock time.
- A breakdown by region and country shows that the US recorded the highest percentage (80%) of such responses, followed by South Korea (69%), Japan (67%), South America (66%), Australia (65%) and the UK (64%). The regions and countries where respondents were least influenced by the changed American political situation were Africa (33%), India (37%), Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (37%), China (38%), Taiwan (38%), and the Middle East (38%).

*Breakdown by occupation of respondents who said the changed American political situation influenced their decision on the Environmental Domsday Clock time.

- The breakdown by occupation shows that the percentage of respondents influenced by the American political situation was 82% for journalism, 63% for local government, 57% for university or research institution, and 57% for NGO/NPO. Respondents working in business were the least influenced by the American political situation (41%).

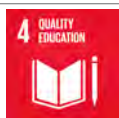
B. Environmental issues to be taken into account

Table 2.

No.	Category	Examples of Observable Changes in the Country or the Region in which You Reside	Planetary Boundaries (PB)
1.	Climate Change	Global warming; CO₂ , ocean acidification ; climatic aberrations (droughts, torrential rains and flooding, severe storms, heavy snow, abnormal temperatures, desertification, etc.)	Climate Change Ocean Acidification Atmospheric aerosol loading Stratospheric ozone depletion
2.	Biosphere Integrity (Biodiversity)	Acceleration of species extinction rate ; effects of contamination, climate change, land use	Genetic diversity Functional diversity
3.	Land-System Change (Land Use)	Change in the amount of forest cover remaining at the tropical, temperate and boreal biomes. Change in the amount of cropland	Land-system change
4.	Biochemical flows (Pollution/Contamination)	River and ocean pollution: eutrophication caused by excessive nitrogen and phosphorus and contamination by chemical substances; atmospheric pollution : particulates suspended in the atmosphere, soot and chemical substances	Chemical Pollution Nitrogen & Phosphorous Cycles
5.	Water Resources	Diminution of usable fresh water resources (depletion, contamination)	Freshwater Use
6.	Population	Population growth beyond what the Earth can support; aging of the population	Related with almost all the PB
7.	Food	Diminution of food supply from land and oceans	Related with almost all the PB
8.	Lifestyles (Consumption Habits)	Transformation of lifestyles away from excessive consumption of resources like energy	Related with almost all the PB
9.	Society, Economy and Environment	Establishing a Green Economy with environmental economics and accounting Environmental awareness at the individual and societal levels, progress of environmental education; poverty, governance; the status of women	Related with almost all the PB

Terms in blue are

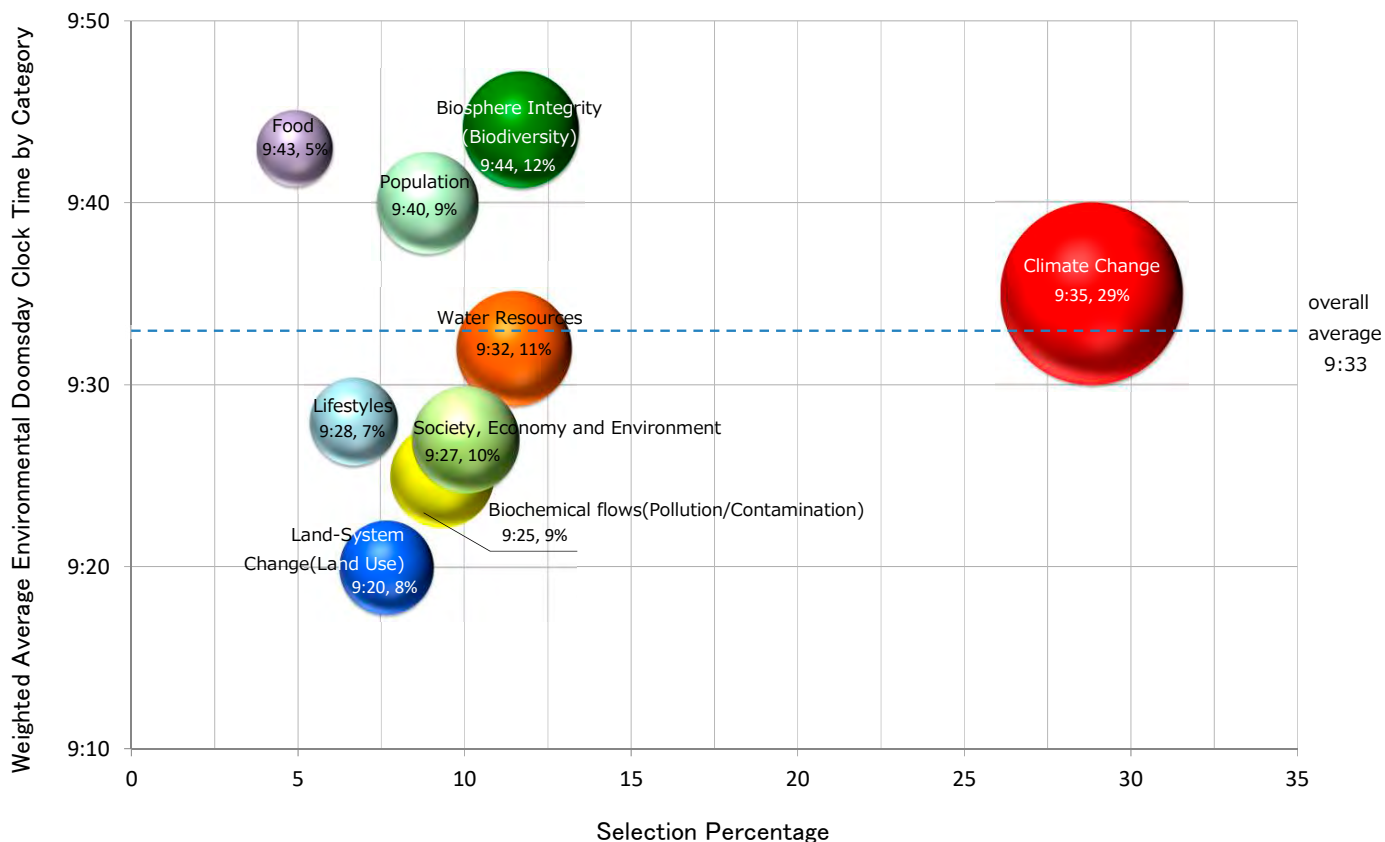
Category by **SDGs #** (Sustainable Development Goals: SDGs)



categories listed in Planetary boundaries: Will Steffen, Katherine Richardson, Johan Rockstrom et al. Science 13 Feb 2015 vol. 347, issue 6223

B-1. Overall Analysis of the Environmental Issues to Be Taken Into Account

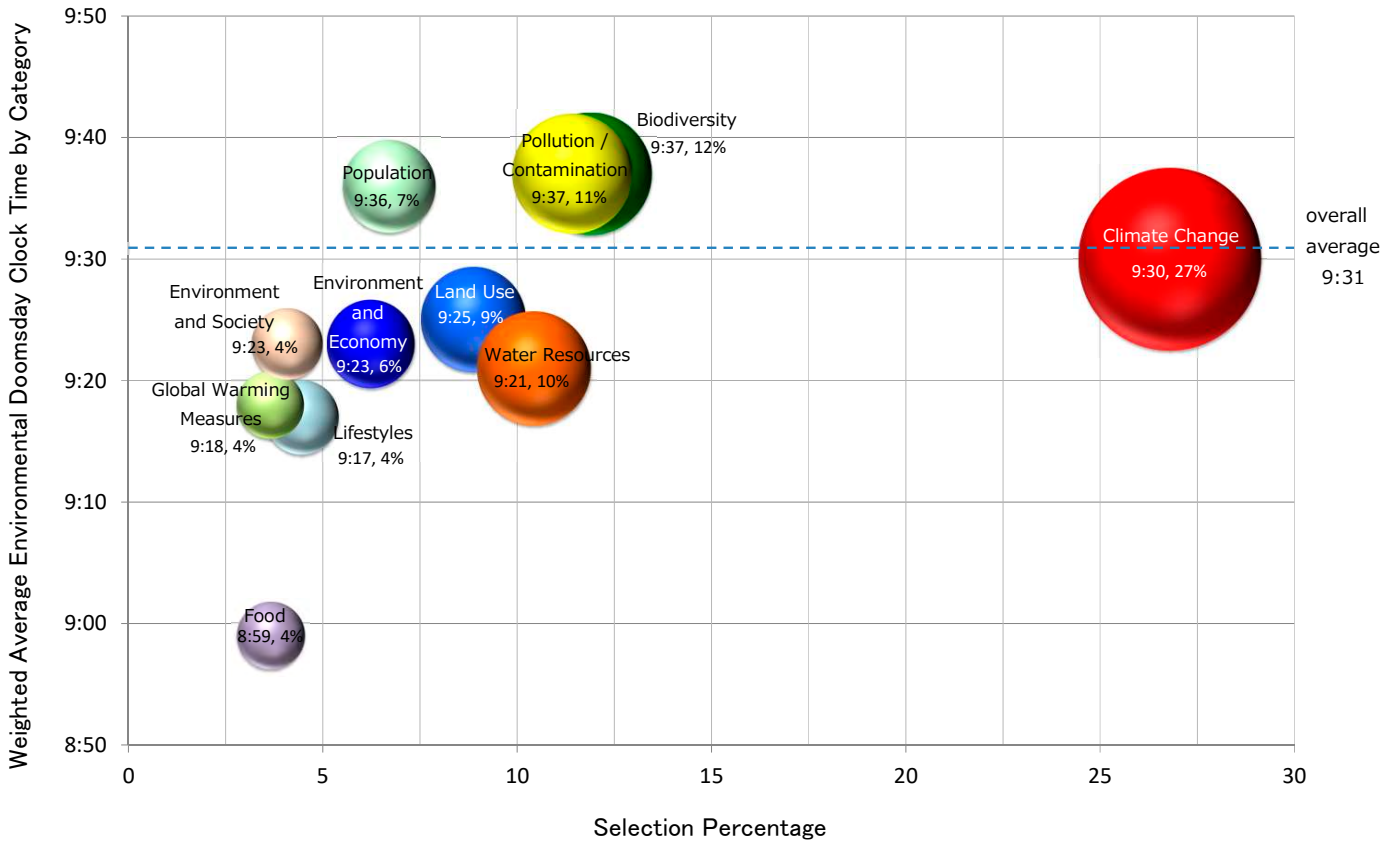
Graph 1-1. Overall (2017)



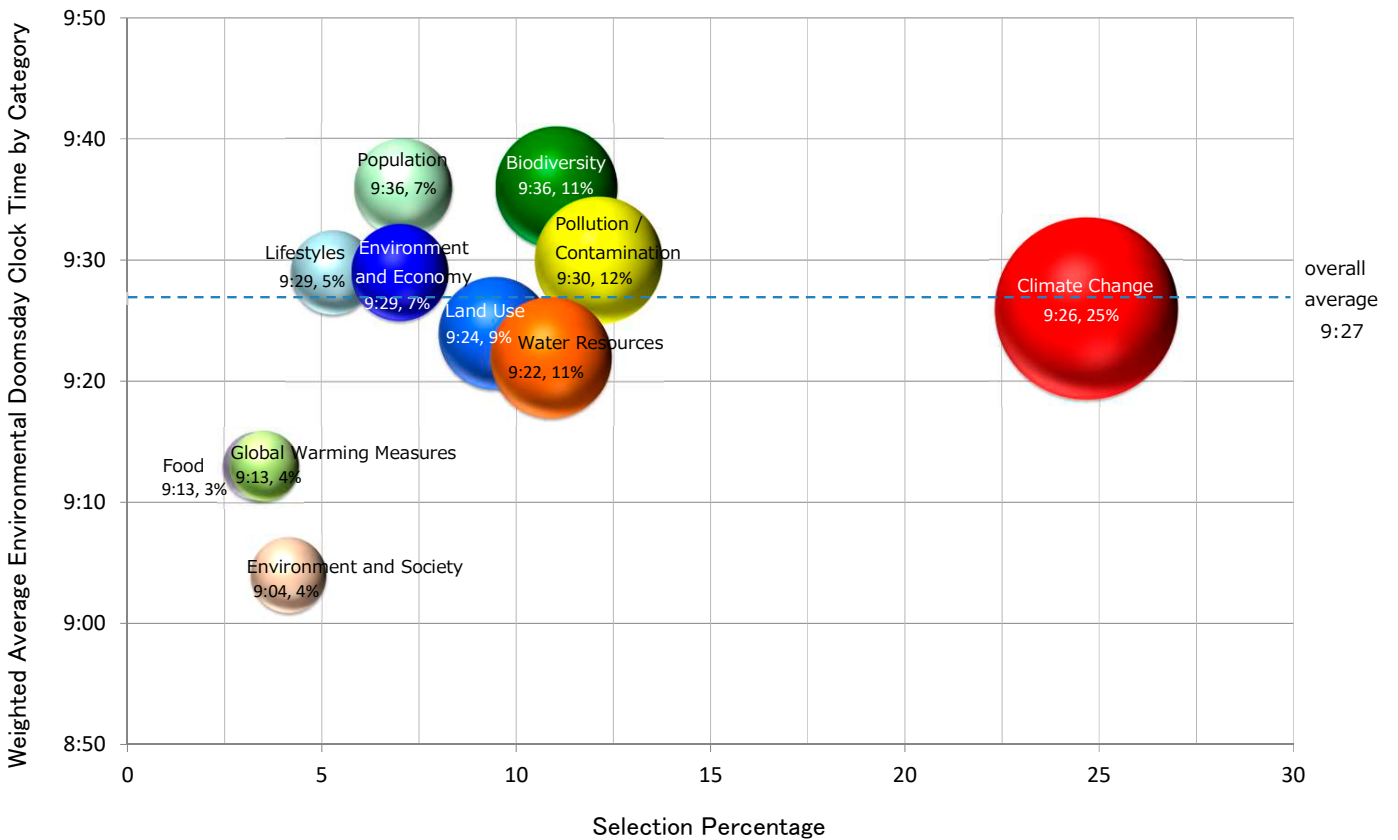
※ Category Items of “Warming measures” “Environment and economy” “Environment and society” were deleted from the 2017 category list, and “Society, Economy and Environment” is added newly.

- Arranging the Environmental issues to be taken in account in order of the selection rate showed that overall, “Climate change” continued from last year to be the most frequently selected issue, at 29%. This was followed by “Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity)” (12%), “Water resources” (11%), “Society, Economy and Environment” (10%), “Biochemical flows (Pollution/Contamination)” (9%), “Population” (9%) and “Land-System Change (Land Use)” (8%).
- “Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity)” 9:44, “Food” 9:43, and “Population” 9:40, had the most advanced time. These were followed by “Climate change” 9:35, “Water resources” 9:32, then “Lifestyles (Consumption Habits)” 9:28, and “Society, Economy and Environment” 9:27.
- In comparison with 2016, the clock time of Food, in particular, advanced significantly from 8:59 → 9:43.

Graph 1-2. Reference (2016)

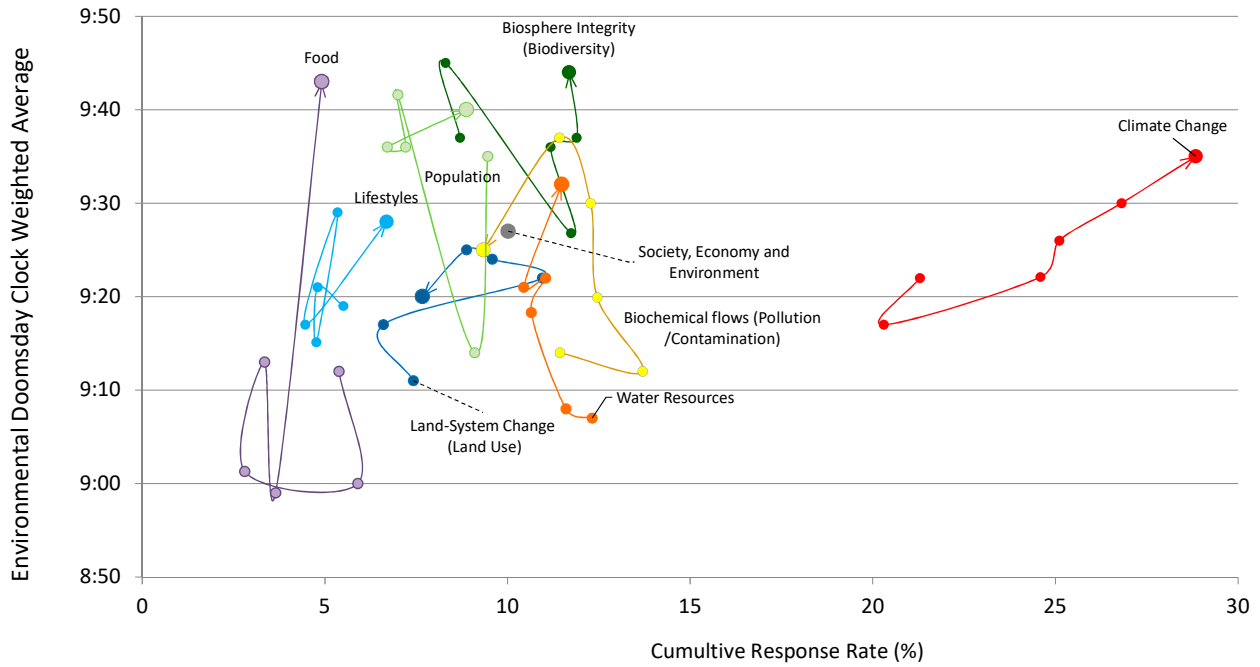


Graph 1-3. Reference (2015)

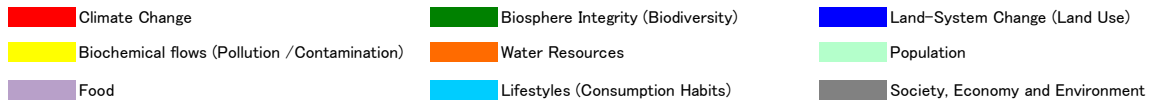


B-2. Distribution of the Environmental Conditions of Concern (2012 - 2017)

Graph 1-4.



※ Category Items of “Warming measures” “Environment and economy” “Environment and society” were deleted from the 2017 category list, and “Society, Economy and Environment” is added newly.



B-3. Selection Patterns for Environmental Issues To Be Taken In Account By Region

Table 3.

	1. Climate Change	2. Biosphere Integrity (Biodiversity)	3. Land-System Change (Land Use)	4. Biochemical flows (Pollution/Contamination)	5. Water Resources	6. Population	7. Food	8. Lifestyles (Consumption Habits)	9. Society, Economy and Environment
Total	29%	12%	8%	9%	11%	9%	5%	7%	10%
Oceania	33%	18%	11%	4%	9%	10%	1%	7%	8%
Oceania (Except Australia)	33%	16%	17%	7%	11%	6%	2%	4%	5%
Australia	33%	19%	8%	3%	8%	12%	0%	8%	10%
USA & Canada	34%	15%	8%	5%	10%	10%	2%	8%	8%
Canada	37%	20%	9%	3%	10%	5%	1%	9%	7%
USA	34%	14%	8%	5%	10%	11%	2%	8%	8%
Central America, Caribbean countries	27%	15%	11%	5%	16%	4%	2%	10%	10%
South America	25%	12%	19%	3%	16%	6%	2%	3%	11%
Western Europe	27%	18%	8%	5%	6%	10%	2%	13%	10%
UK	28%	17%	7%	5%	3%	11%	3%	15%	10%
Western Europe (except UK)	26%	19%	9%	5%	7%	10%	2%	12%	11%
Africa	30%	11%	13%	1%	18%	11%	4%	3%	8%
Middle East	16%	11%	13%	1%	28%	9%	3%	6%	11%
Eastern Europe & former Soviet Union	25%	14%	17%	7%	14%	3%	1%	5%	13%
Asia	28%	9%	6%	13%	12%	9%	7%	6%	11%
Japan	35%	11%	4%	7%	6%	8%	7%	7%	15%
India	21%	10%	14%	5%	18%	14%	2%	4%	9%
China	20%	6%	4%	16%	18%	10%	13%	5%	9%
Taiwan	33%	7%	6%	23%	13%	4%	2%	5%	7%
Korea	33%	8%	5%	22%	5%	8%	3%	8%	9%
Asian*	28%	13%	14%	5%	16%	11%	2%	3%	8%

■ Represents the most frequently selected item in the region/country, ■ represents the second most frequently selected item in the region/country

*With the exception of India, China, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan

- Overall, “Climate change” was the most frequently selected issue at 29%. This was followed by “Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity)” (12%), “Water resources” (11%), “Society, Economy and Environment” (10%), “Biochemical flows(Pollution/Contamination)” (9%), “Population” (9%) and “Land-system change (Land Use)” (8%).
- While “Climate change” was the most frequently selected issue in a large majority of regions, respondents in Middle East most frequently cited “Water resources” that was also selected as the second most frequently issue in China, India, Africa, Central America & Caribbean countries and Asian countries.

B-4. Regional Distribution of the Environmental Doomsday Clock Time for Environmental Issues to be Taken Into Account

Table 4.

	Total	1. Climate Change	2. Biosphere Integrity (Biodiversity)	3. Land-System Change (Land Use)	4. Biochemical flows (Pollution/Contamination)	5. Water Resources	6. Population	7. Food	8. Lifestyles (Consumption Habits)	9. Society, Economy and Environment
Total	9:33	9:35	9:44	9:20	9:25	9:32	9:40	9:43	9:28	9:27
Oceania	10:13	10:13	10:25	9:45	10:30	9:54	10:31	–	9:51	9:29
Oceania (Except Australia)	10:02	9:34	10:41	9:45	10:45	9:57	–	–	–	7:21
Australia	10:18	10:27	10:20	10:21	–	10:03	10:34	–	10:07	9:57
USA & Canada	10:08	10:14	10:23	9:21	9:56	9:45	10:15	9:53	9:53	10:11
Canada	10:01	10:13	10:02	9:10	–	9:01	–	–	10:06	10:03
USA	10:09	10:15	10:29	9:24	9:56	9:53	10:11	10:07	9:50	10:12
Central America, Caribbean countries	9:19	9:06	9:10	9:20	5:49	9:45	10:35	–	9:40	9:40
South America	9:32	9:19	9:08	9:37	–	9:27	9:51	–	9:44	10:06
Western Europe	9:45	9:59	9:49	9:35	8:30	9:30	9:57	9:35	9:30	9:42
UK	9:59	10:18	9:54	9:13	9:11	–	10:14	10:16	9:55	9:41
Western Europe (except UK)	9:40	9:52	9:46	9:37	8:07	9:30	9:56	9:16	9:19	9:42
Africa	9:12	8:55	9:10	9:42	–	8:48	9:02	–	9:58	9:17
Middle East	9:05	8:35	8:57	8:50	–	9:09	9:28	10:08	–	8:34
Eastern Europe & former Soviet Union	8:47	9:07	8:59	8:39	8:13	7:08	8:05	–	9:27	8:27
Asia	9:25	9:25	9:36	9:06	9:25	9:37	9:22	9:47	9:16	9:16
Japan	9:11	9:22	9:32	9:02	8:56	8:43	9:08	8:56	9:00	9:04
India	9:13	9:22	8:06	9:04	8:51	9:10	9:28	–	9:46	10:19
China	10:07	10:14	10:14	8:45	10:13	10:09	9:42	10:12	9:40	9:59
Taiwan	7:59	7:47	8:20	8:13	7:49	8:43	7:16	–	8:15	7:02
Korea	9:09	8:57	9:29	9:20	9:16	9:29	8:58	9:07	9:27	8:40
Asian*	9:41	9:48	10:09	9:30	10:20	9:41	9:55	10:17	9:15	9:29

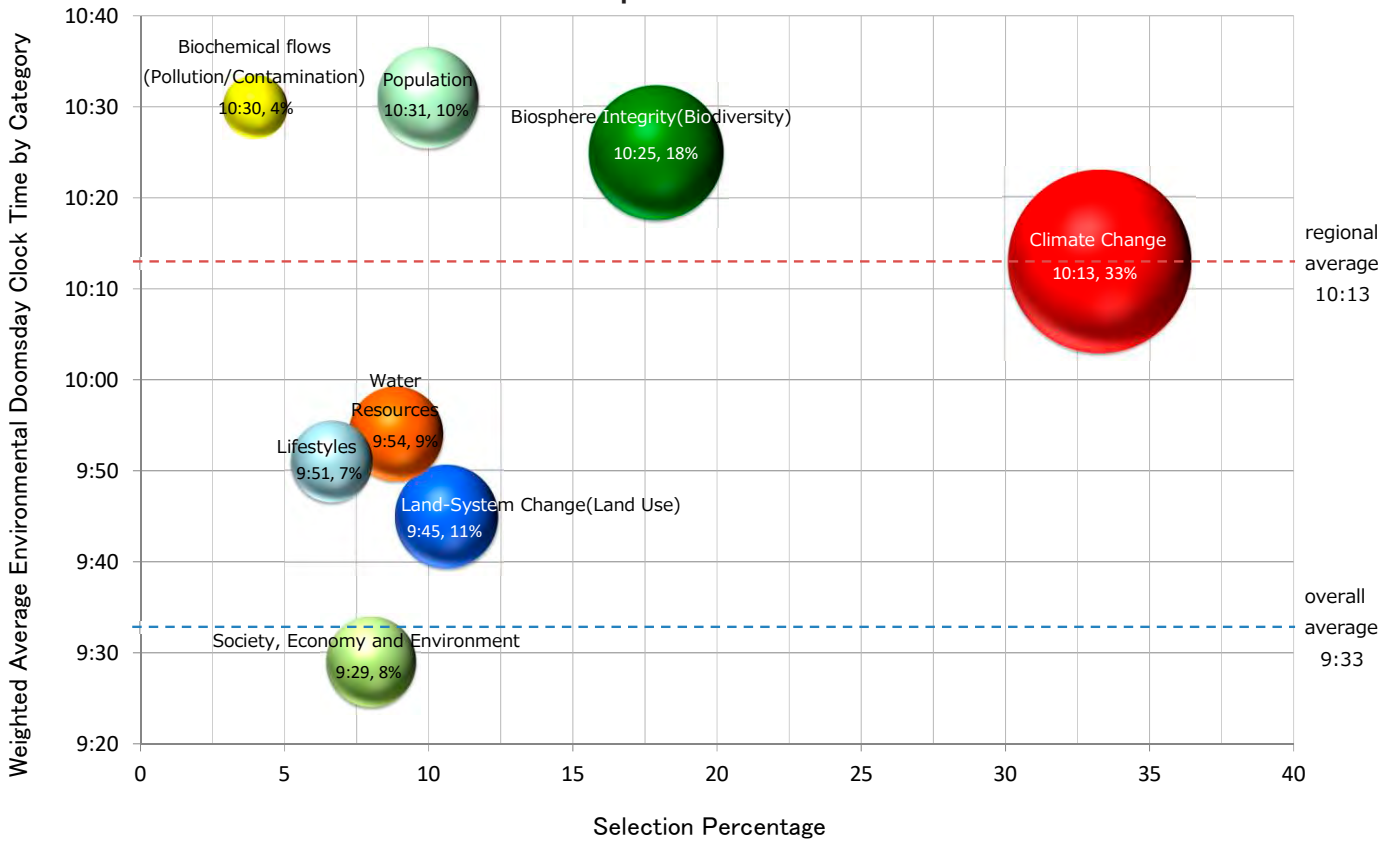
■ indicates the 10 o'clock hour, □ Indicates the 9 o'clock hour, ■ indicates the 8 o'clock hour, and ■ the 7,6 o'clock hour
*With the exception of India, China, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan

- Overall, “Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity)” 9:44, “Food” 9:43, and “Population” 9:40, were the issues with the highest sense of crisis. These were followed by “Climate change” 9:35, “Water resources” 9:32, and “Lifestyles (Consumption Habits)” 9:28. All categories exceeded 9:20.
- While “Climate change” was the most frequently cited issues to be taken account, its time on the Environmental Doomsday Clock was the fourth most advanced, at 9:35.

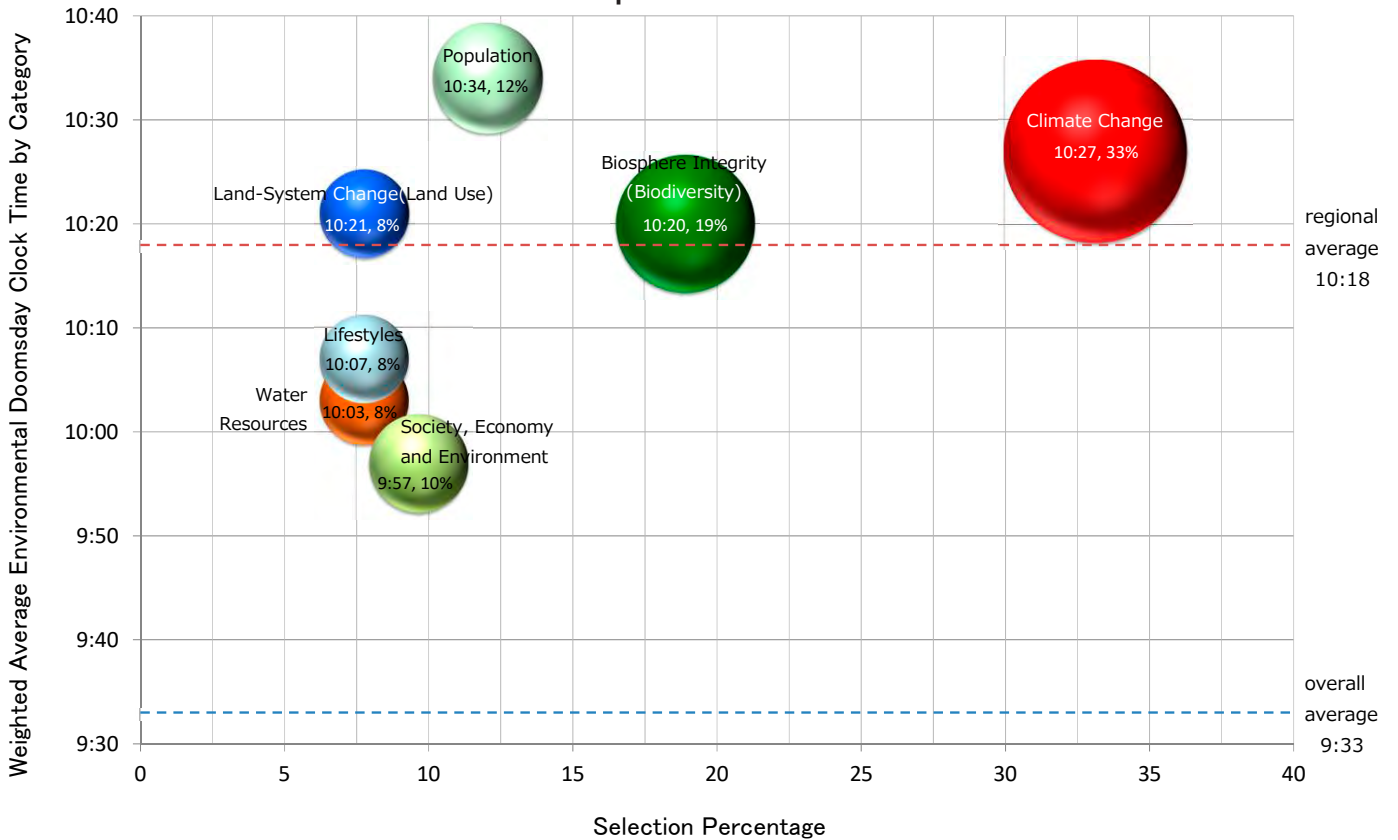
Table 5. Regions and Countries Expressing a High Degree of Crisis

Environmental issues to be taken in account	Regions Indicating the Environmental Doomsday Clock Time Past 10 O'clock
1. Climate change	Australia, Canada, USA, UK, China,
2. Biosphere integrity (Biodiversity)	Oceania, Australia, Canada, USA, China, Asian*
3. Land-system change (Land Use)	Australia
4. Biochemical flows (Pollution/Contamination)	Oceania(ex. Australia), China, Asian*
5. Water resources	Australia, China
6. Population	Oceania, Australia, USA, Central America, Caribbean countries, UK
7. Food	USA, UK, Middle East, China, Asian*
8. Lifestyles (Consumption Habits)	Australia, Canada
9. Society, Economy and Environment	Canada, USA, South America, India

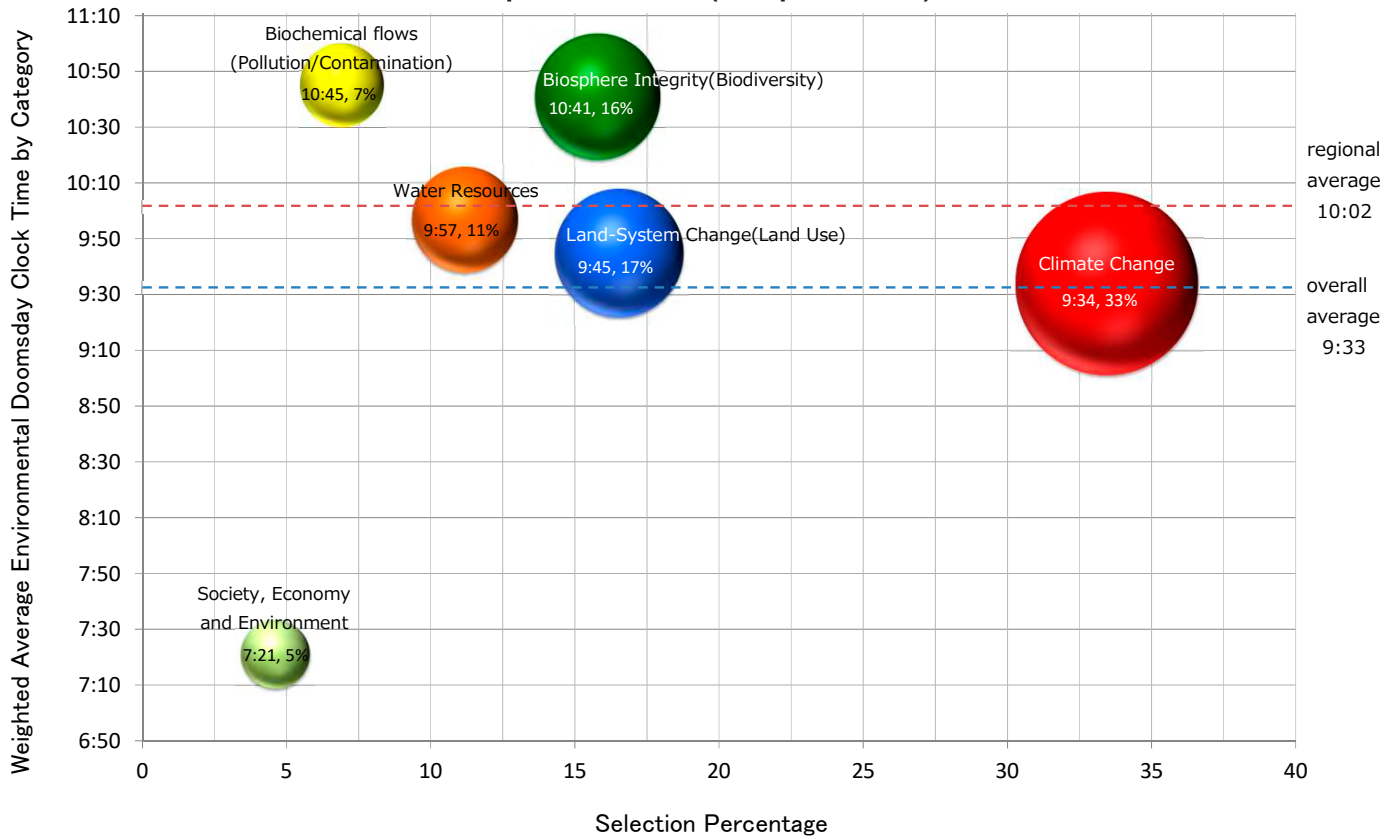
Graph 2-1. Oceania



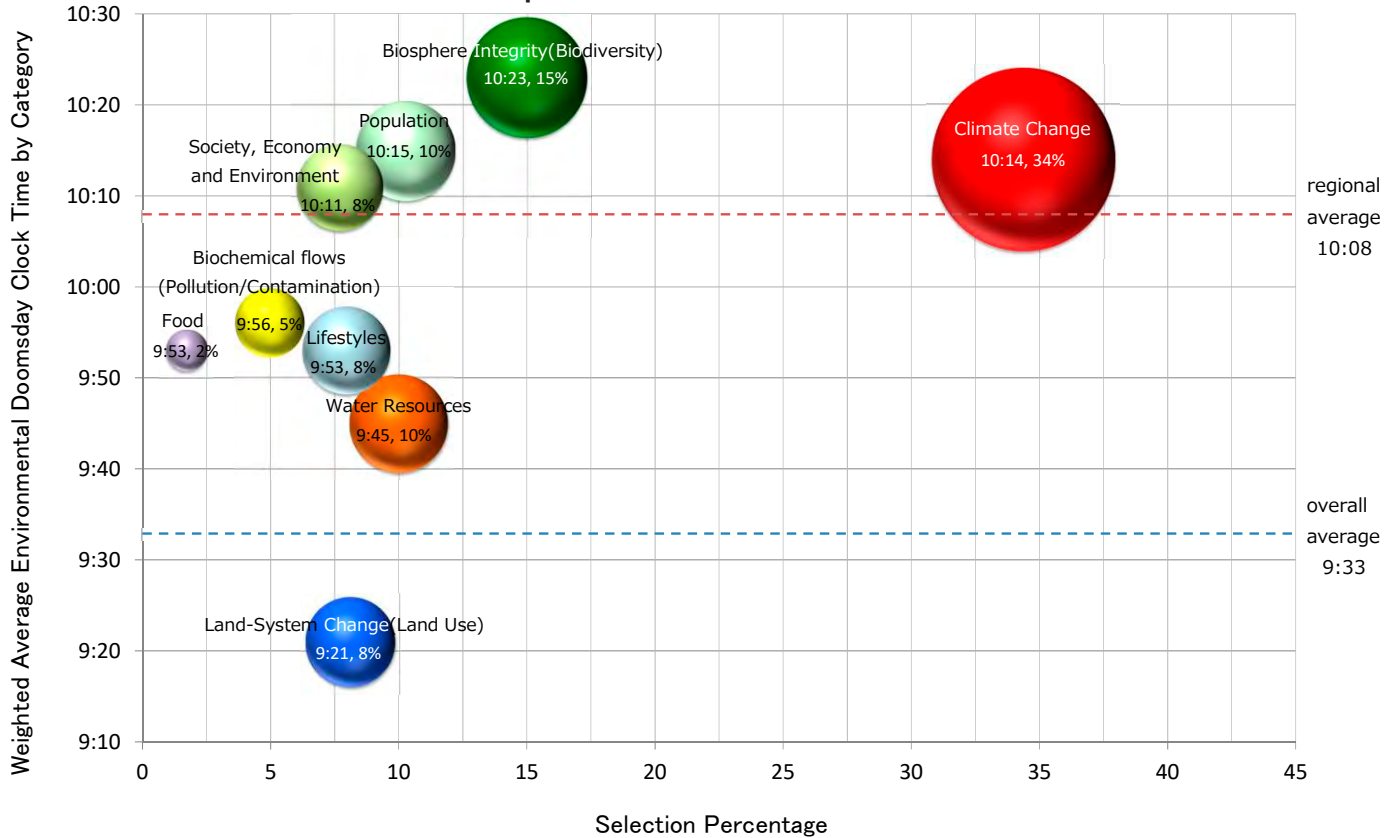
Graph 2-2. Australia



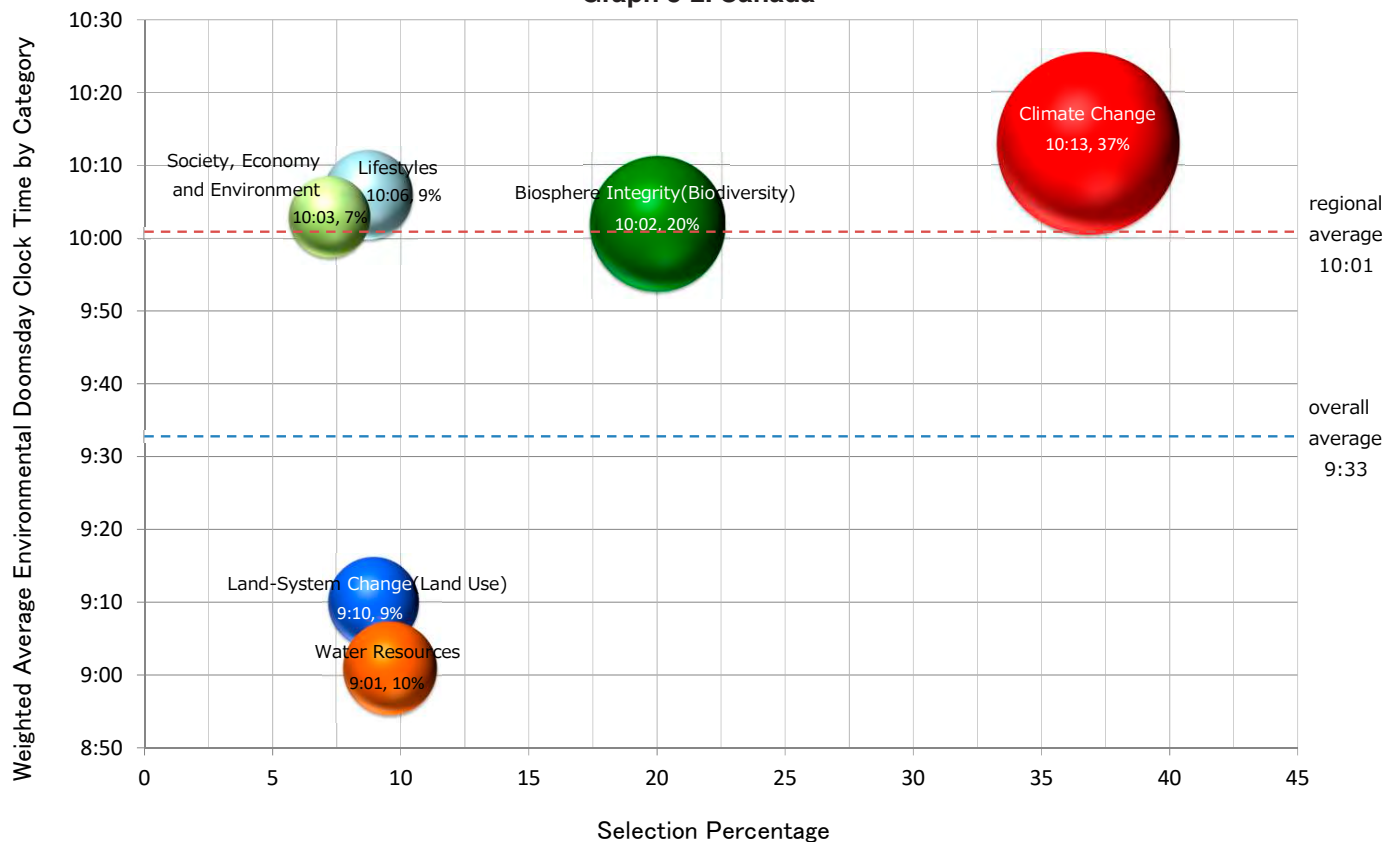
Graph 2-3. Oceania (Except Australia)



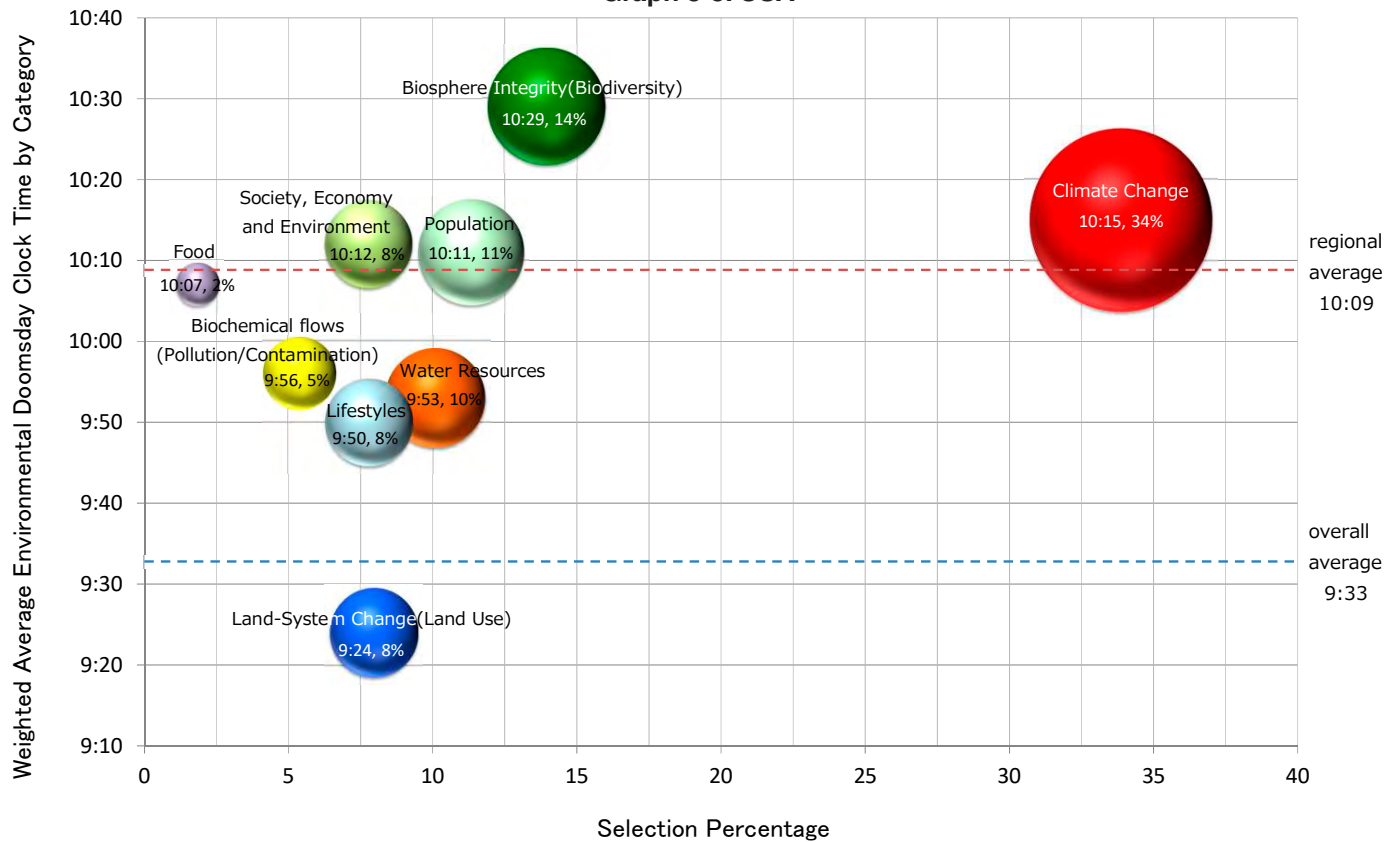
Graph 3-1. United States & Canada



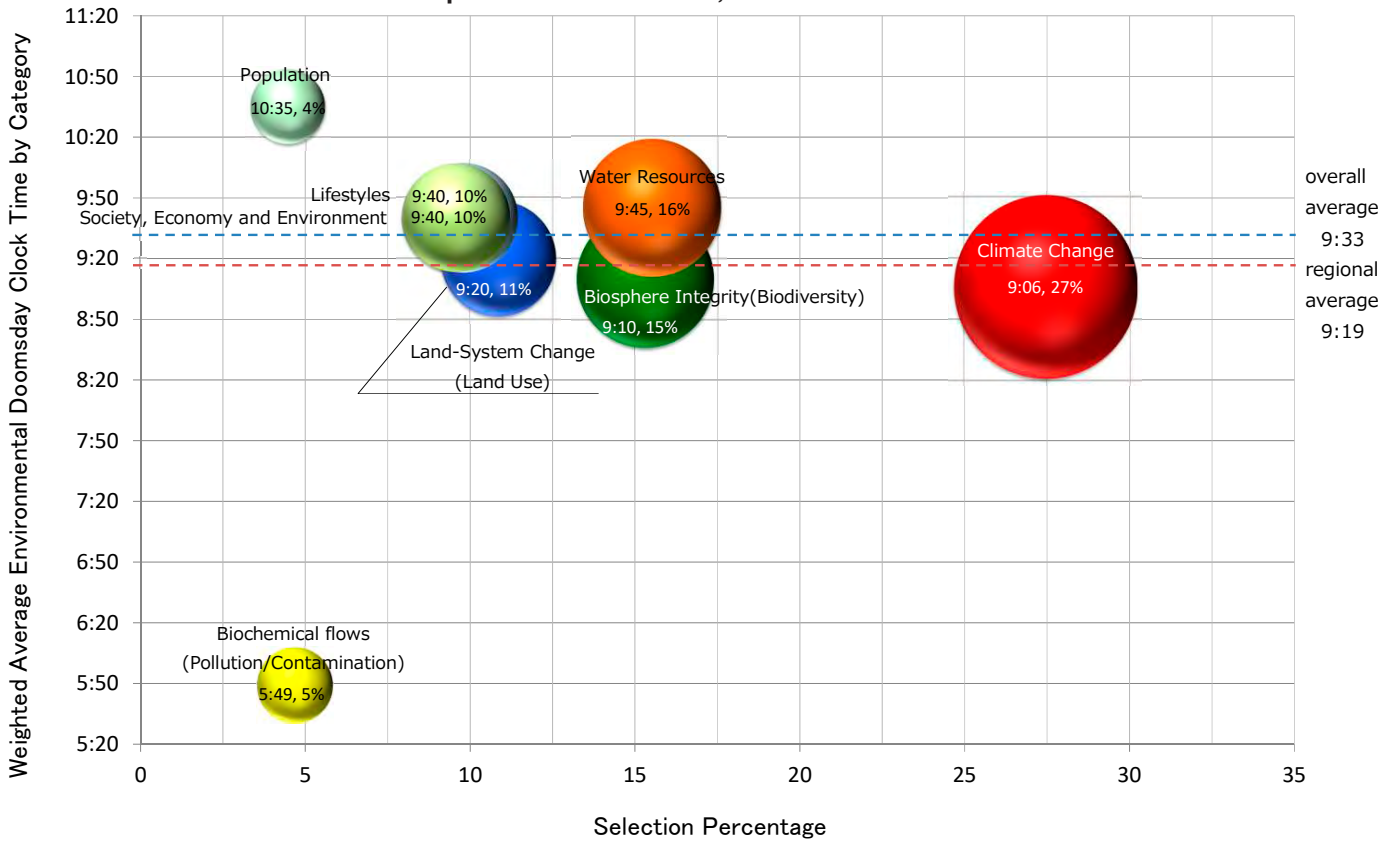
Graph 3-2. Canada



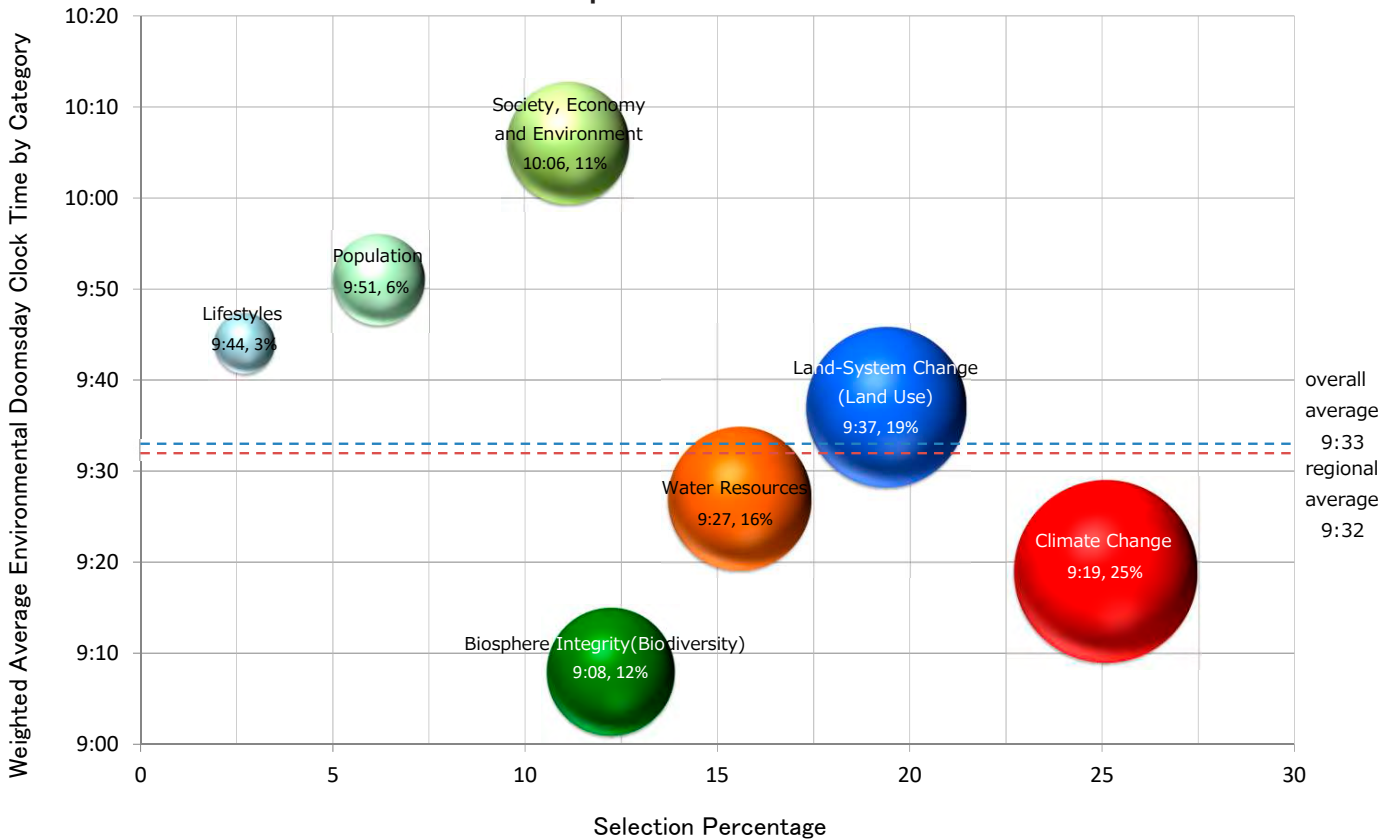
Graph 3-3. USA



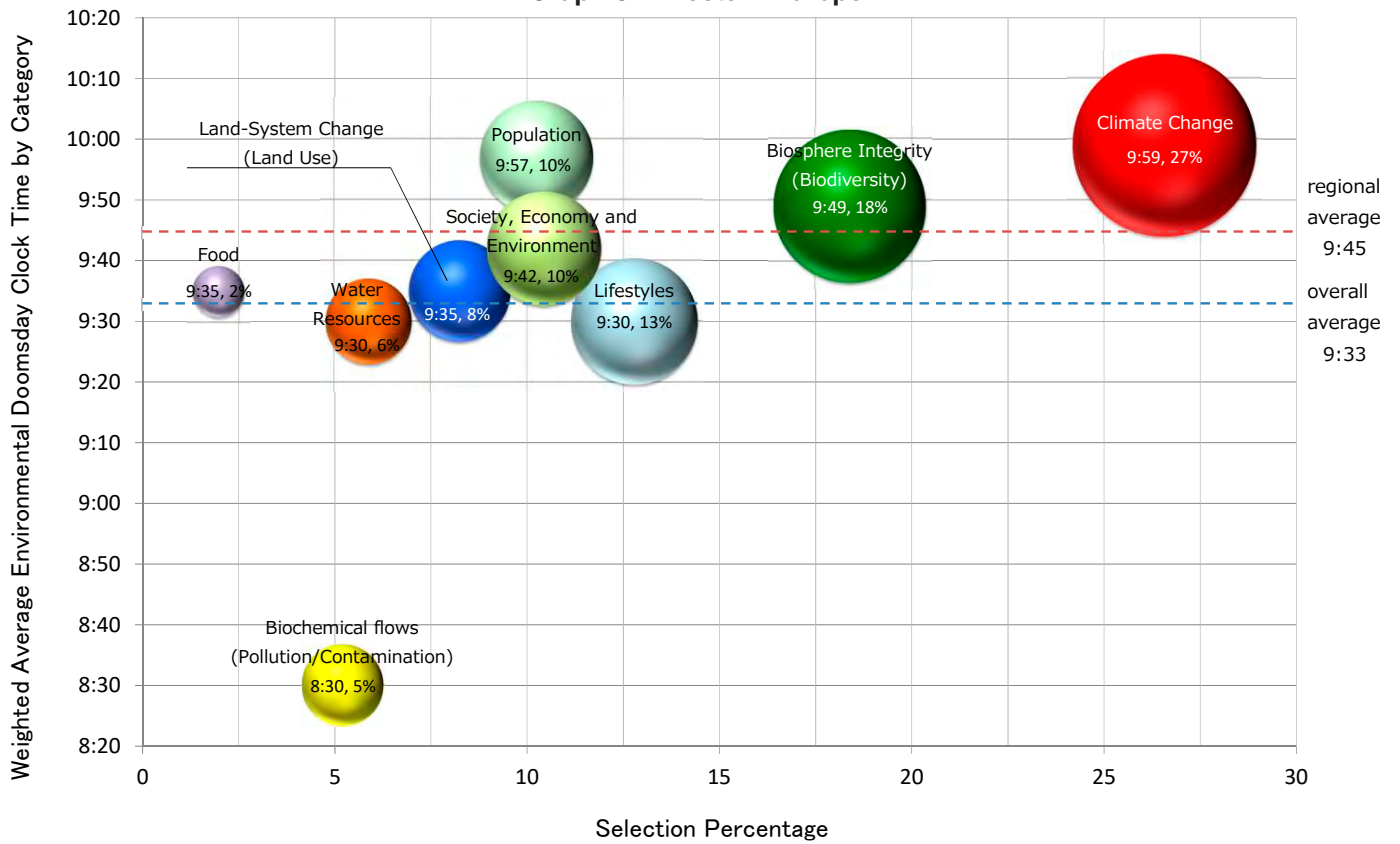
Graph 4. Central America, Caribbean countries



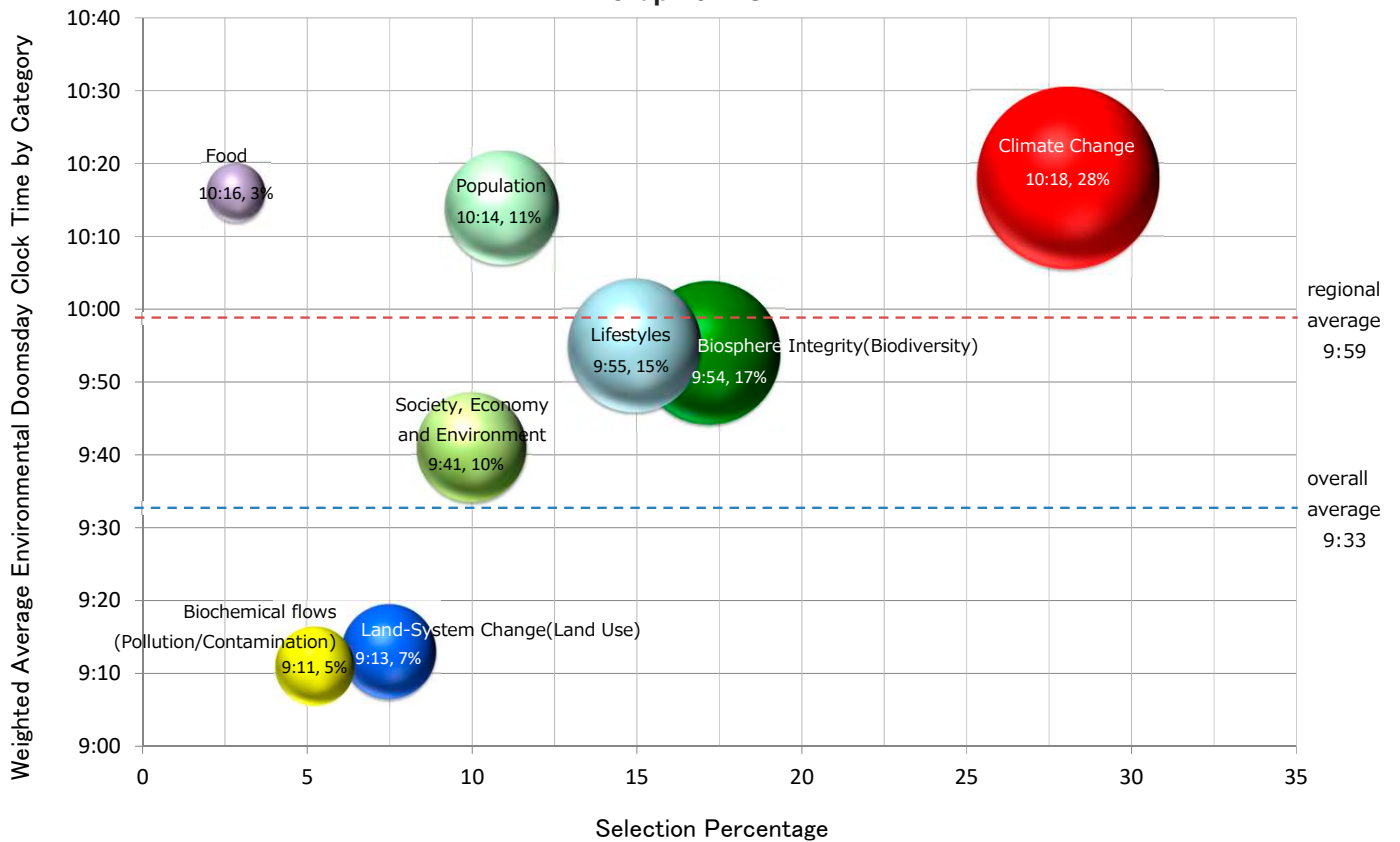
Graph 5. South America



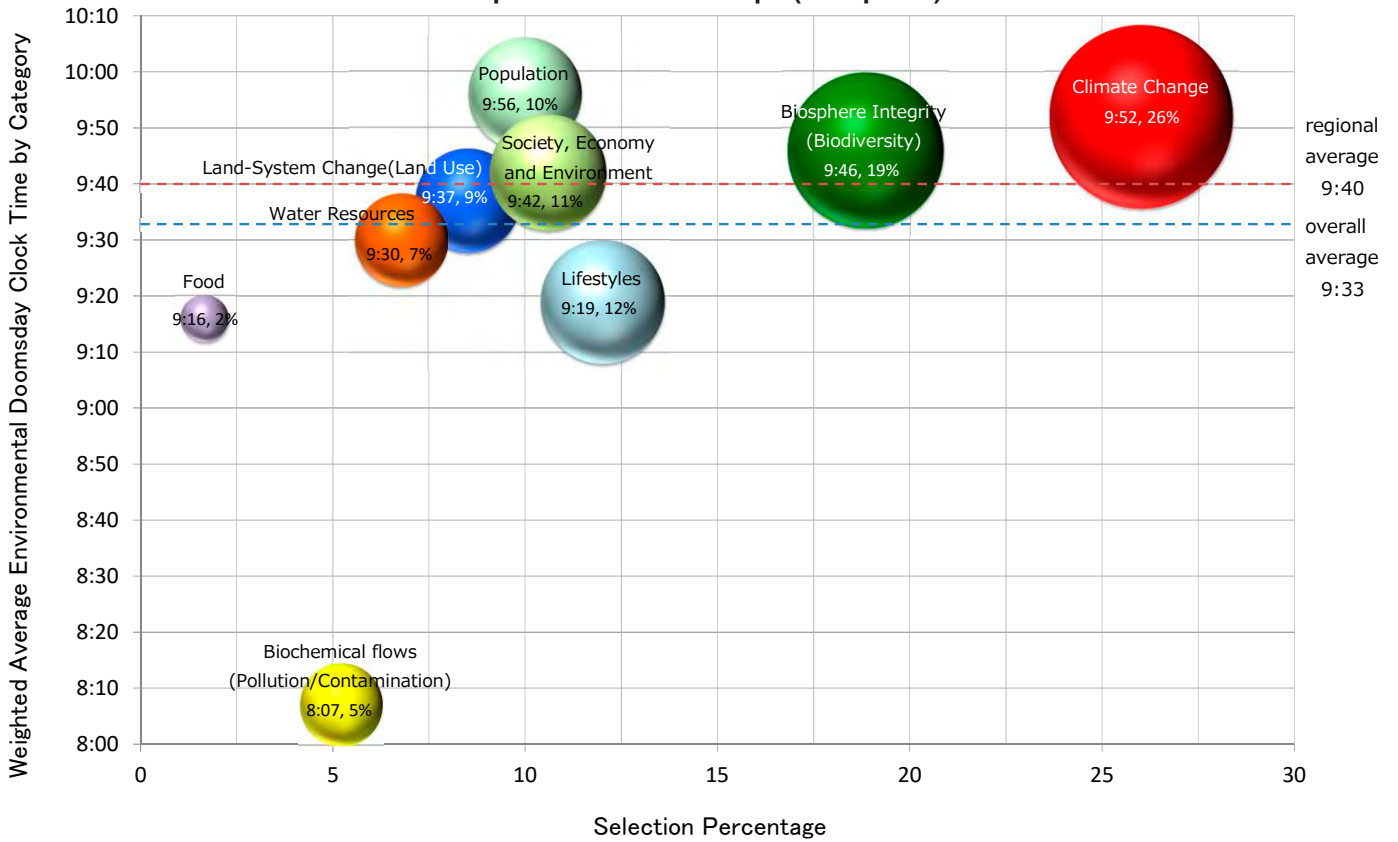
Graph 6-1. Western Europe



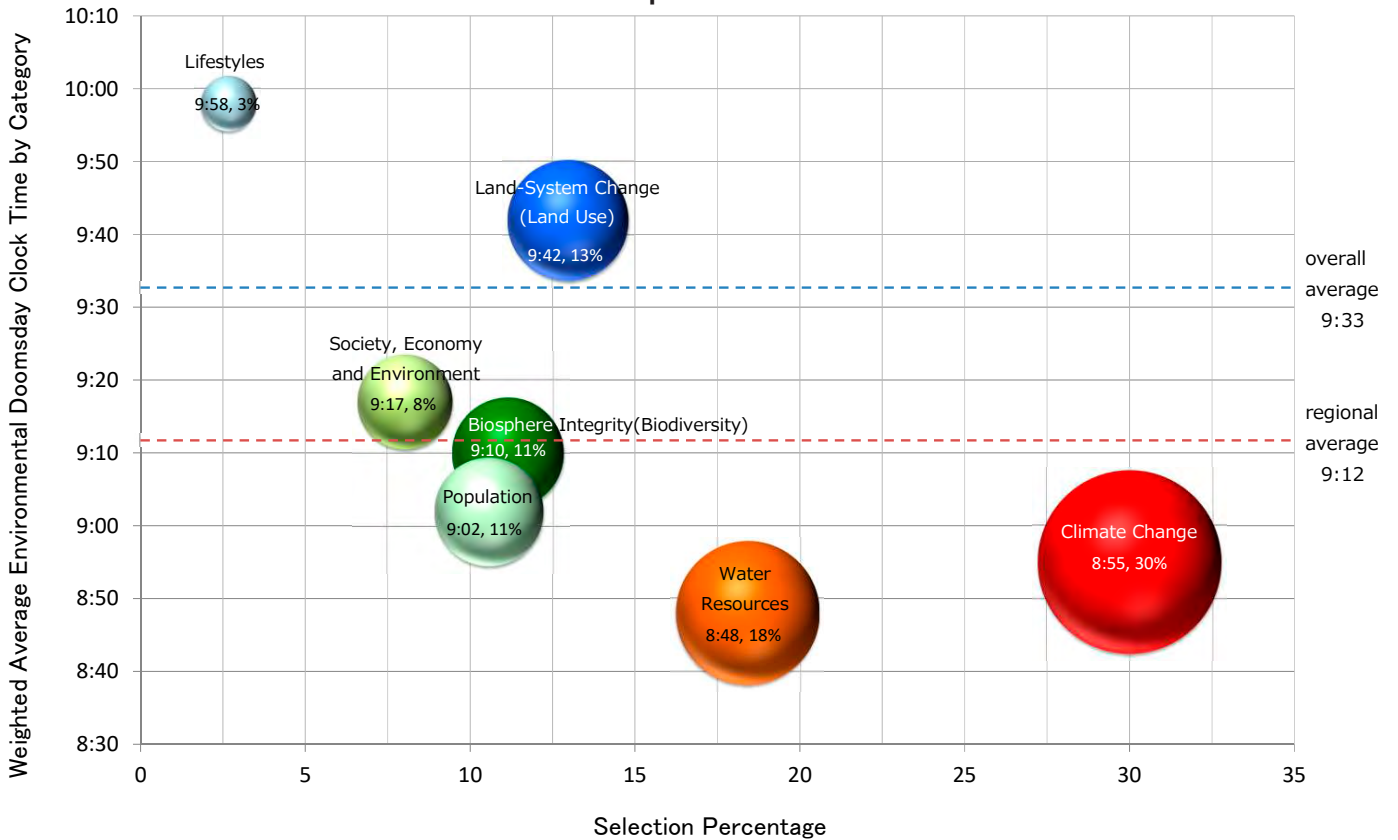
Graph 6-2. UK



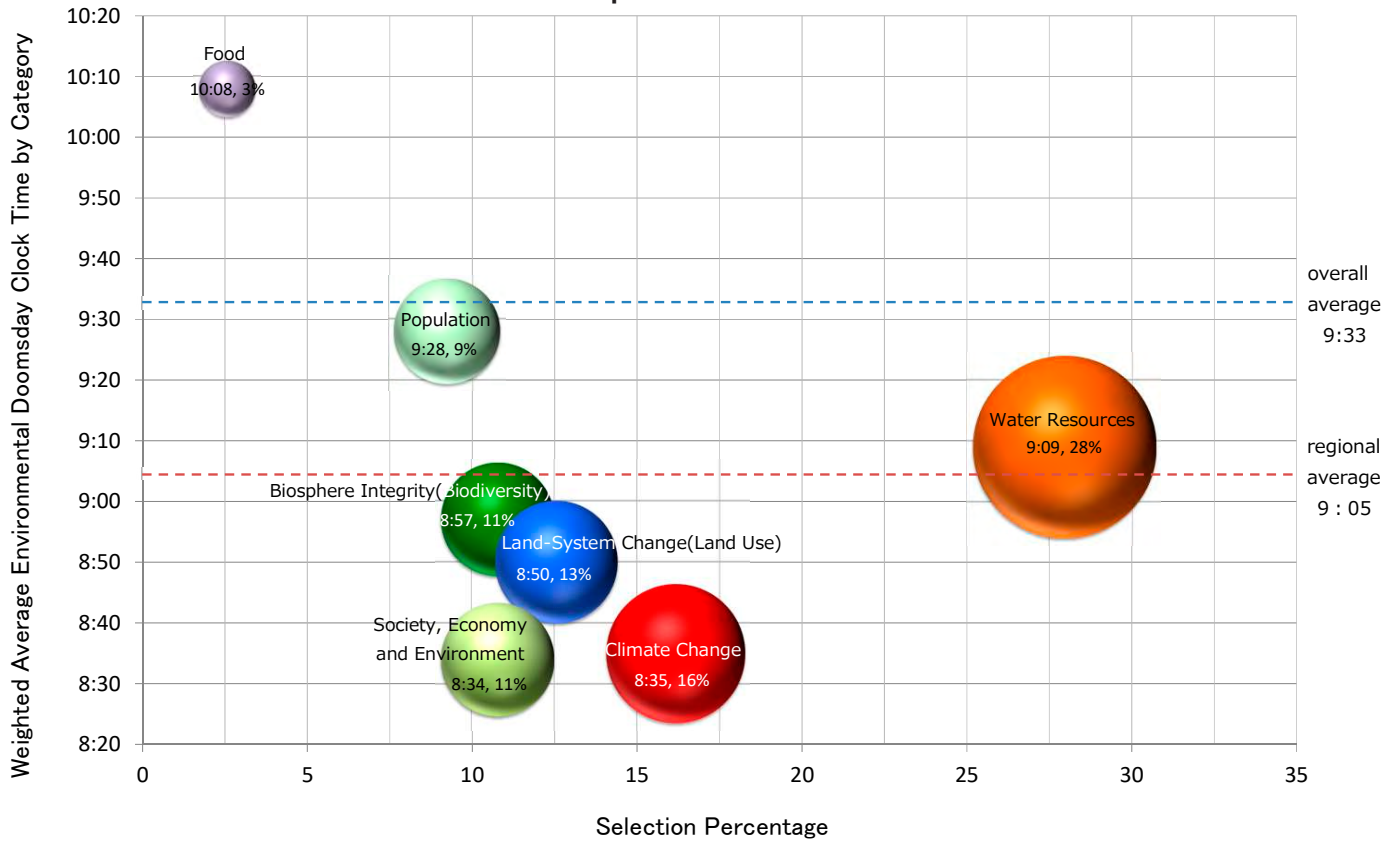
Graph 6-3. Western Europe (Except UK)



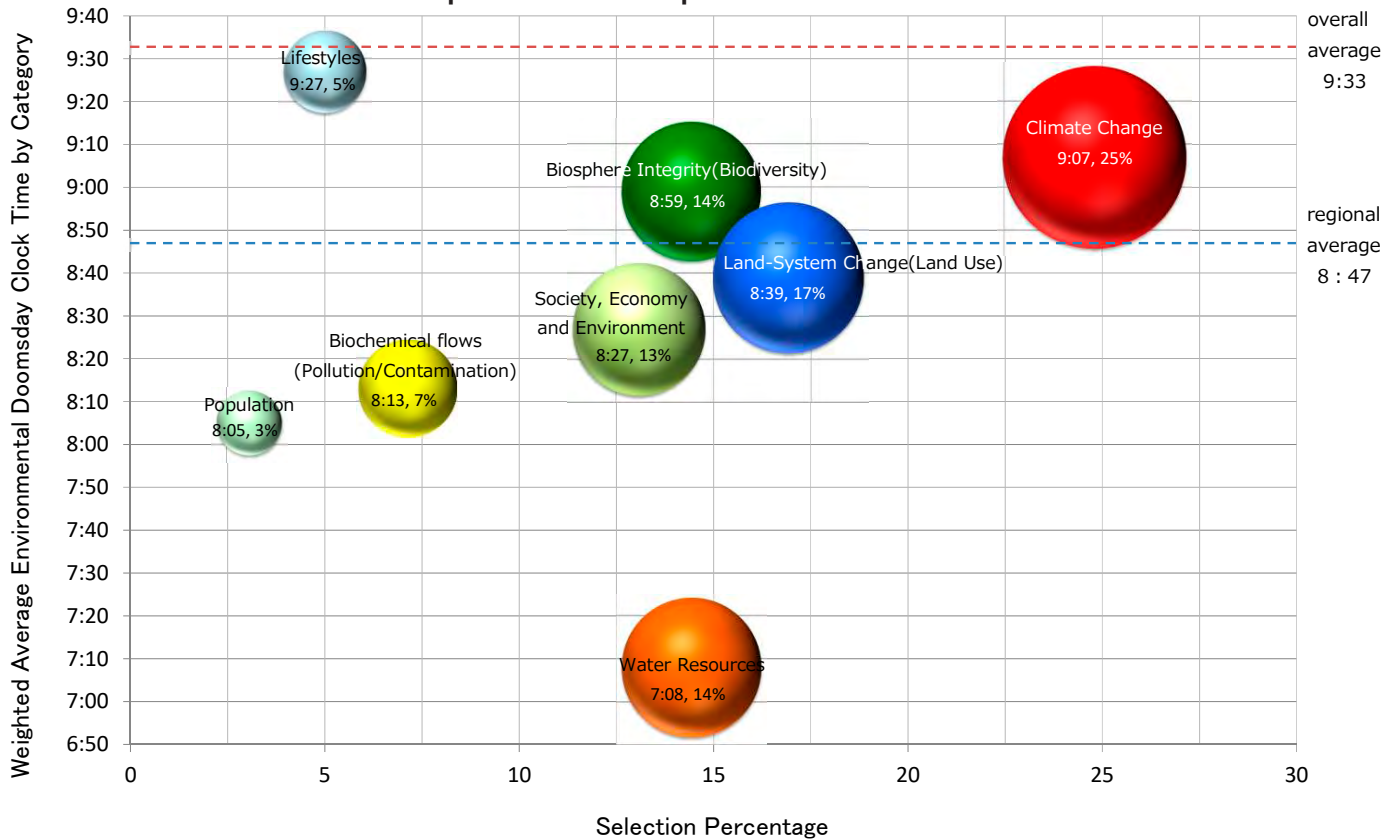
Graph 7. Africa



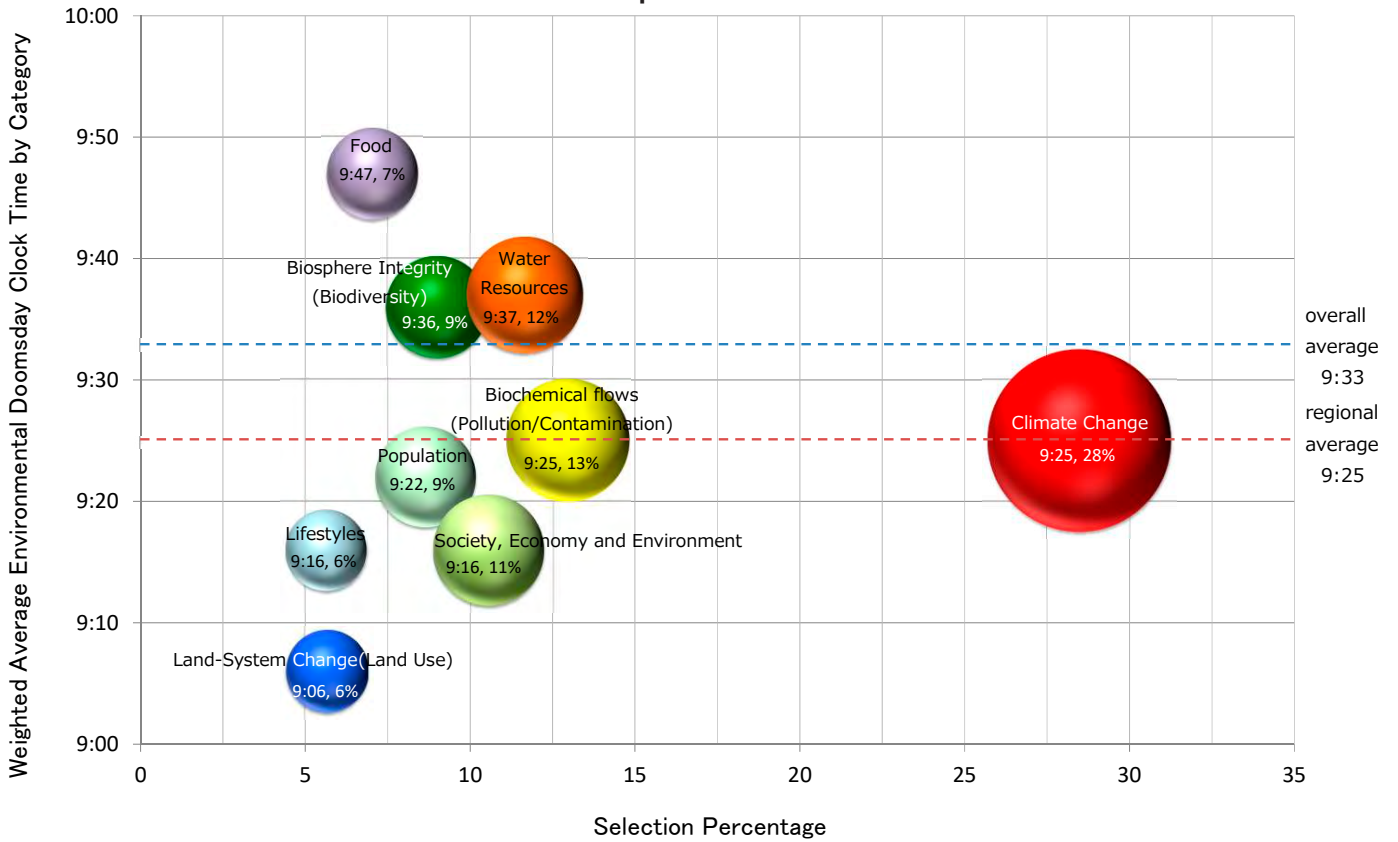
Graph 8. Middle East



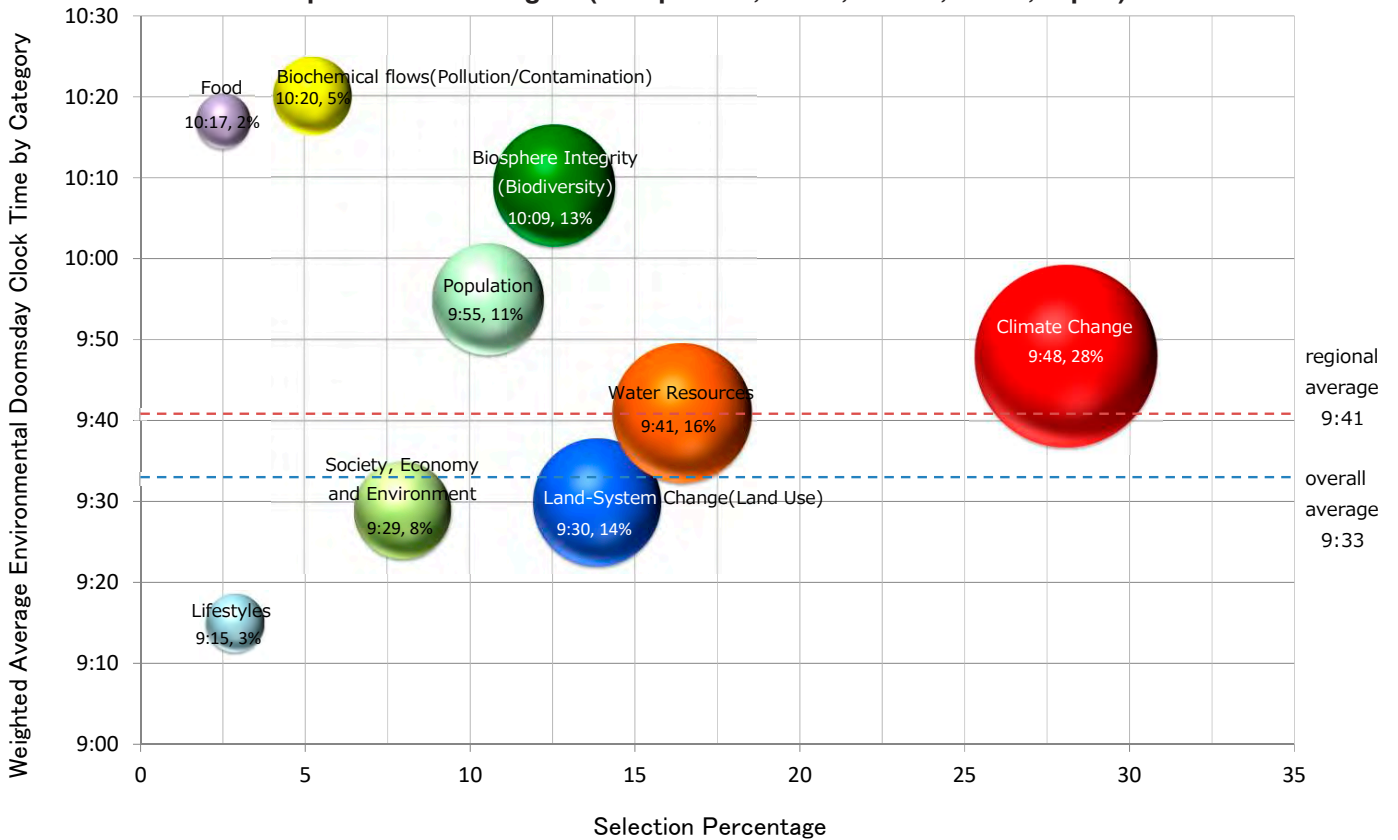
Graph 9. Eastern Europe & former Soviet Union



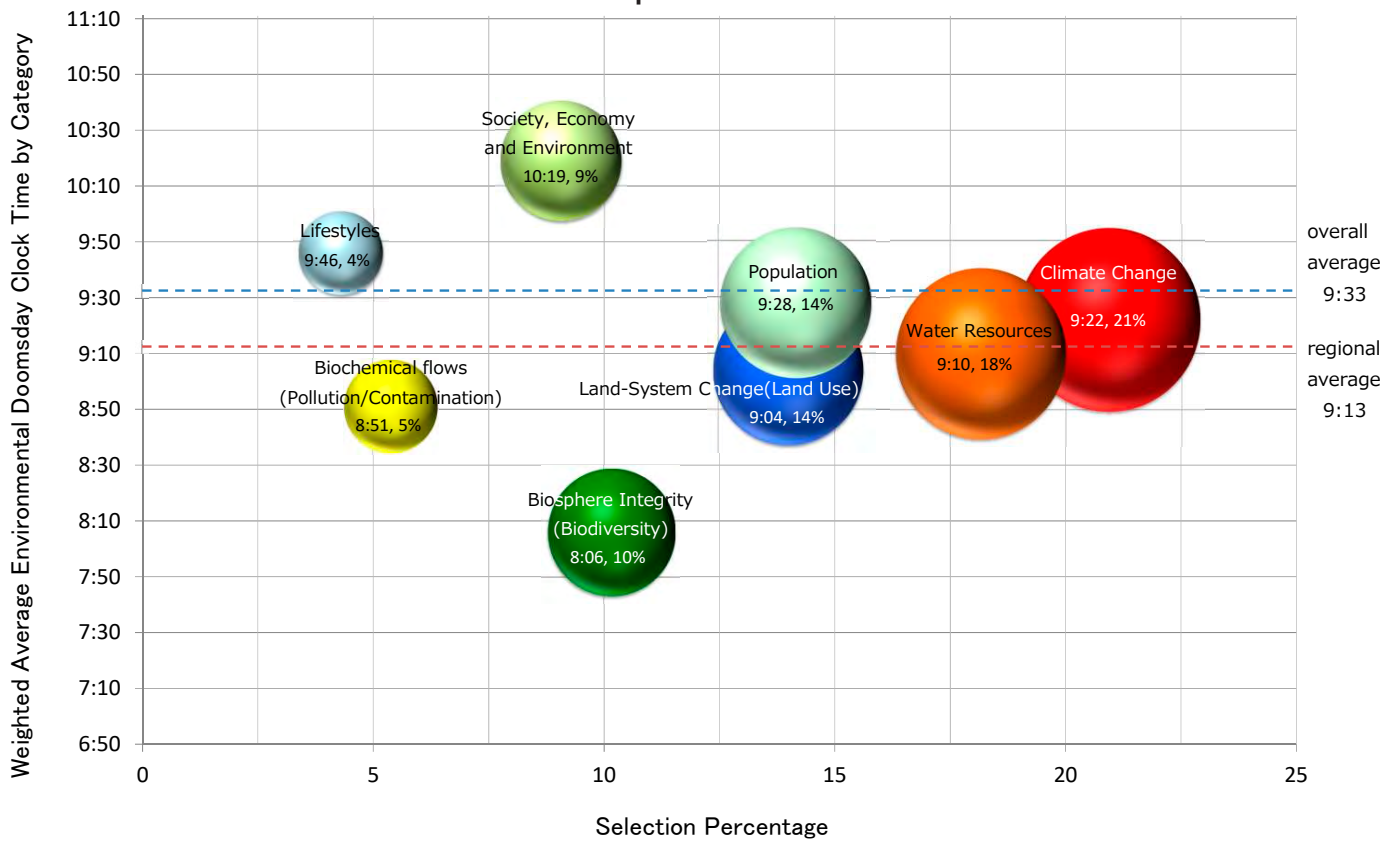
Graph 10-1. Asia



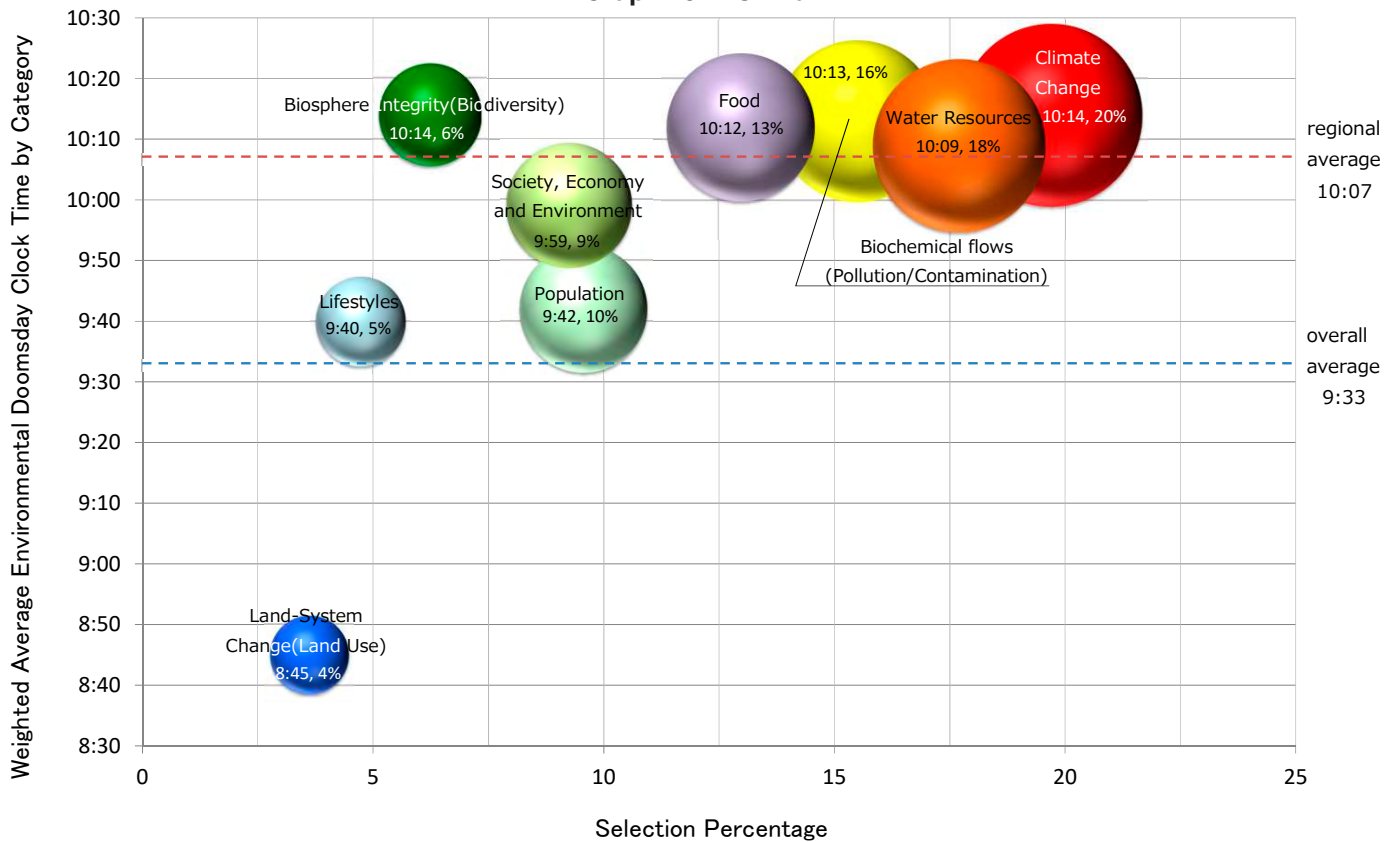
Graph 10-2. Asian Region (Except India, China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan)



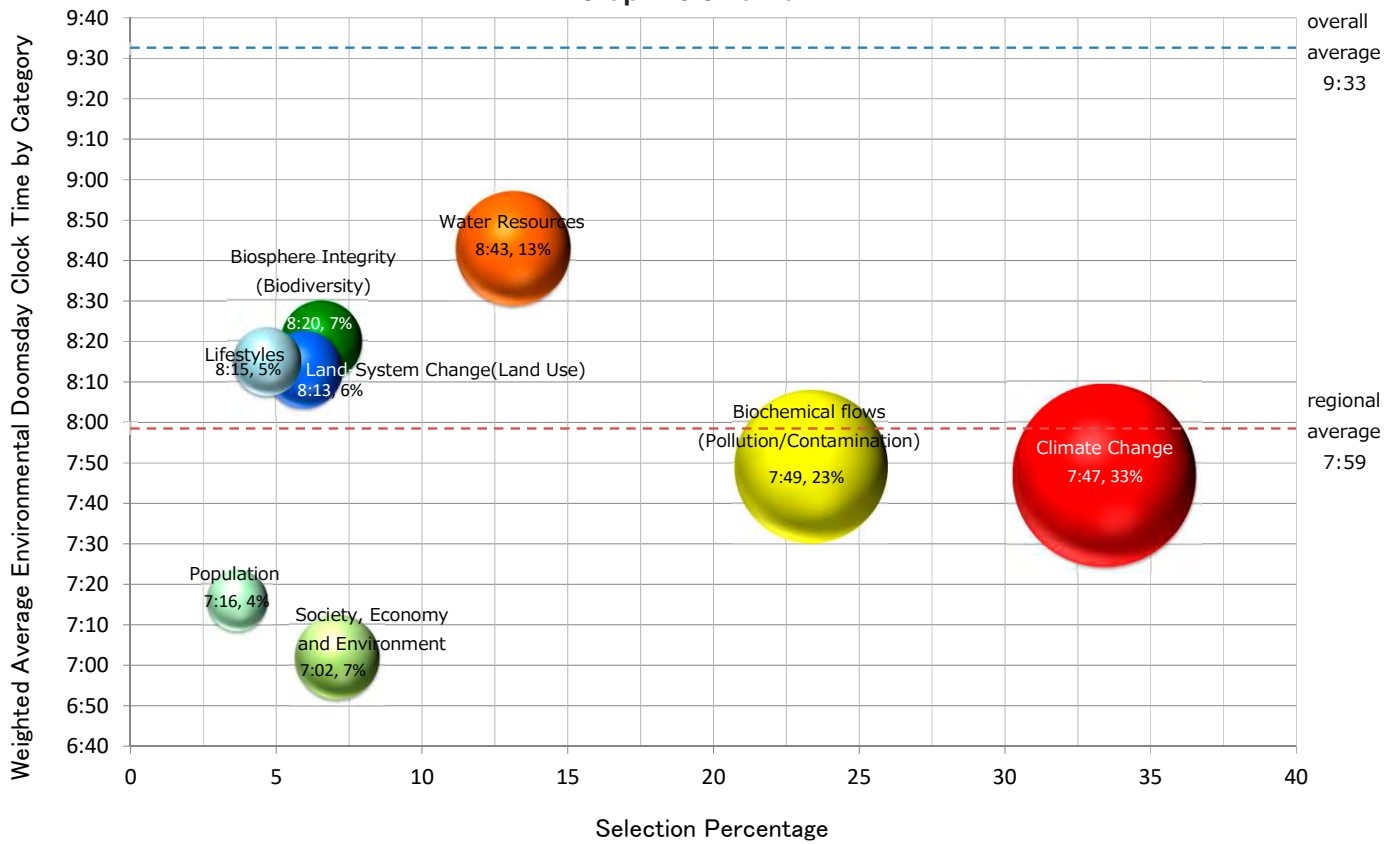
Graph 10-3. India



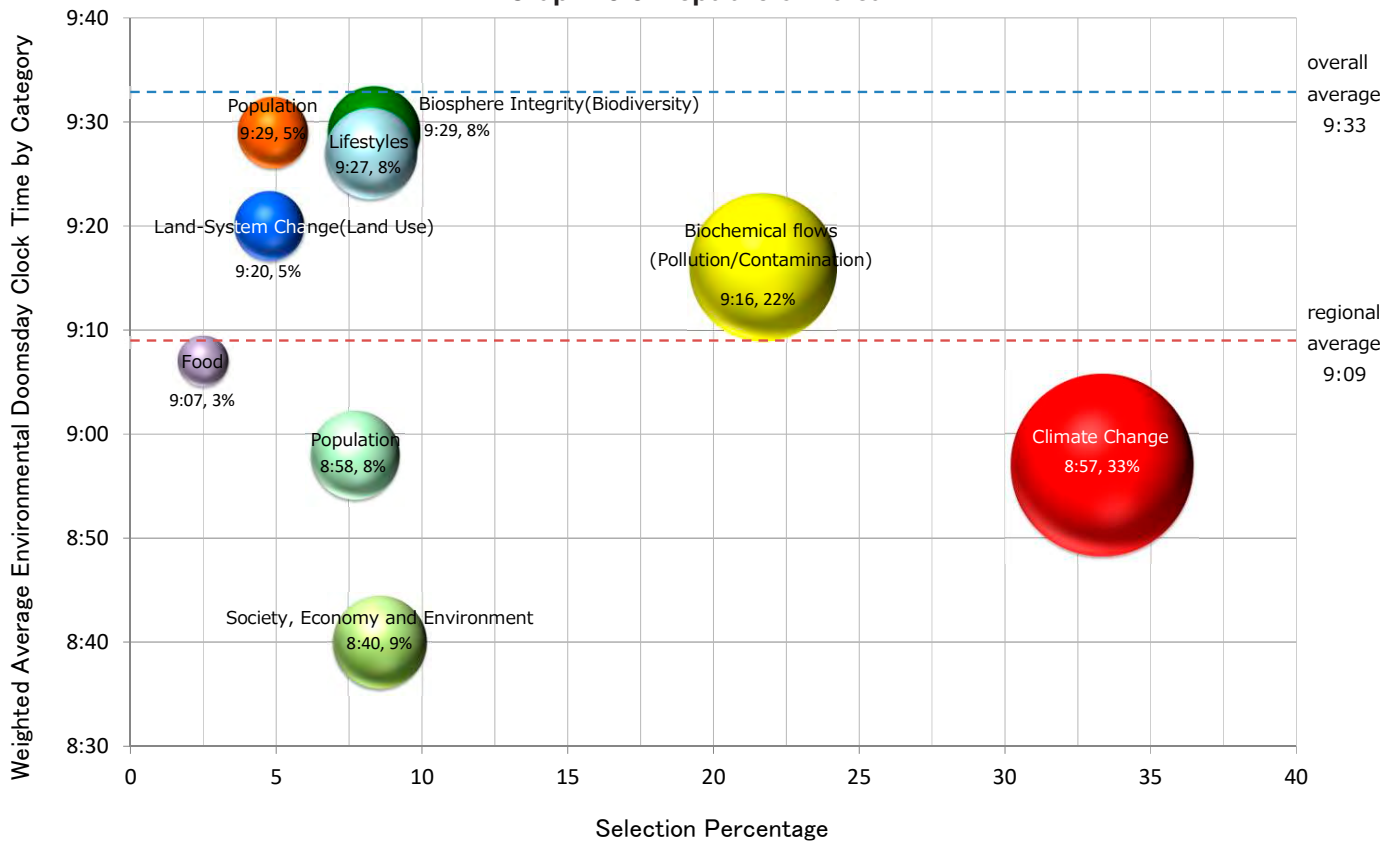
Graph 10-4. China



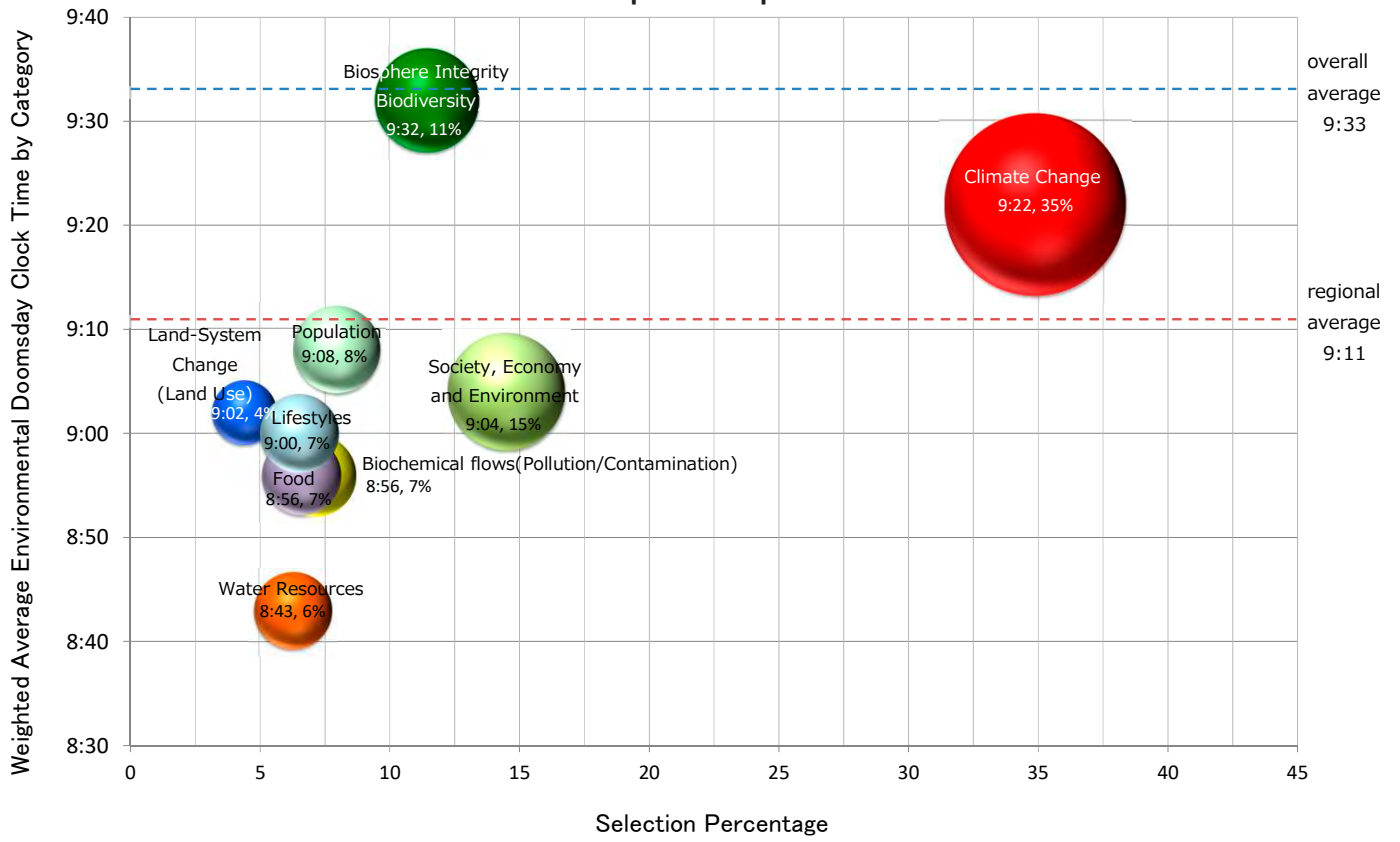
Graph 10-5. Taiwan



Graph 10-6. Republic of Korea



Graph 10-7. Japan



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REPORT

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