

“Humanity in Crisis” Enters Period of Extreme Concern

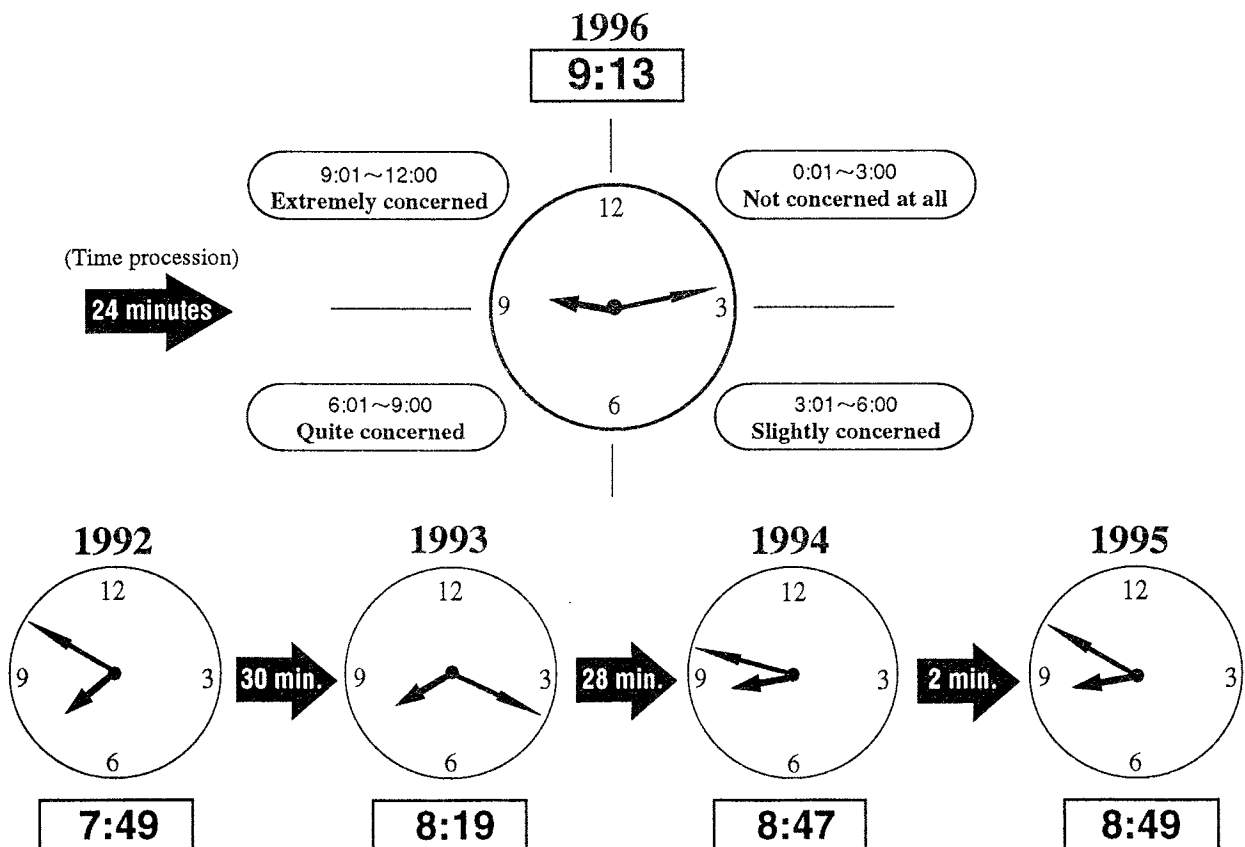
*Ninety Percent of the World’s Environmental Experts Agree that the
 Present Human Civilization Cannot Be Sustained*

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

The Asahi Glass Foundation, chaired by Jiro Furumoto, is pleased to announce the results of its fifth “Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of Humankind.” This annual survey reveals the opinions and perceptions of specialists from both governmental organizations (GOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) regarding the progress of efforts to conserve the environment since the Earth Summit. The following are highlights of the year’s results, the compilation of which was supervised by Professor Akio Morishima of the Faculty of Law at Sophia University.

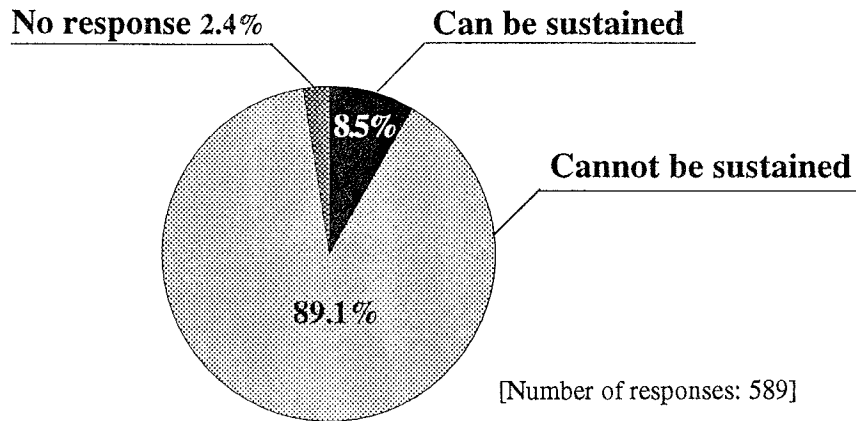
The Environmental Alarm Clock advances 24 minutes; the world enters the period of gravest environmental concern.

If concern about humanity’s prospects for survival are viewed as a on a twelve-hour clock, the average response time of 9:13 indicates deepening concern over the environment. This year, the clock advanced 24 minutes from last year’s survey, bringing us within three hours of the 12-o’clock bell. The clock has advanced every year since 1992.



Ninety percent of the world's environmental experts believe human civilization cannot be sustained in its present form.

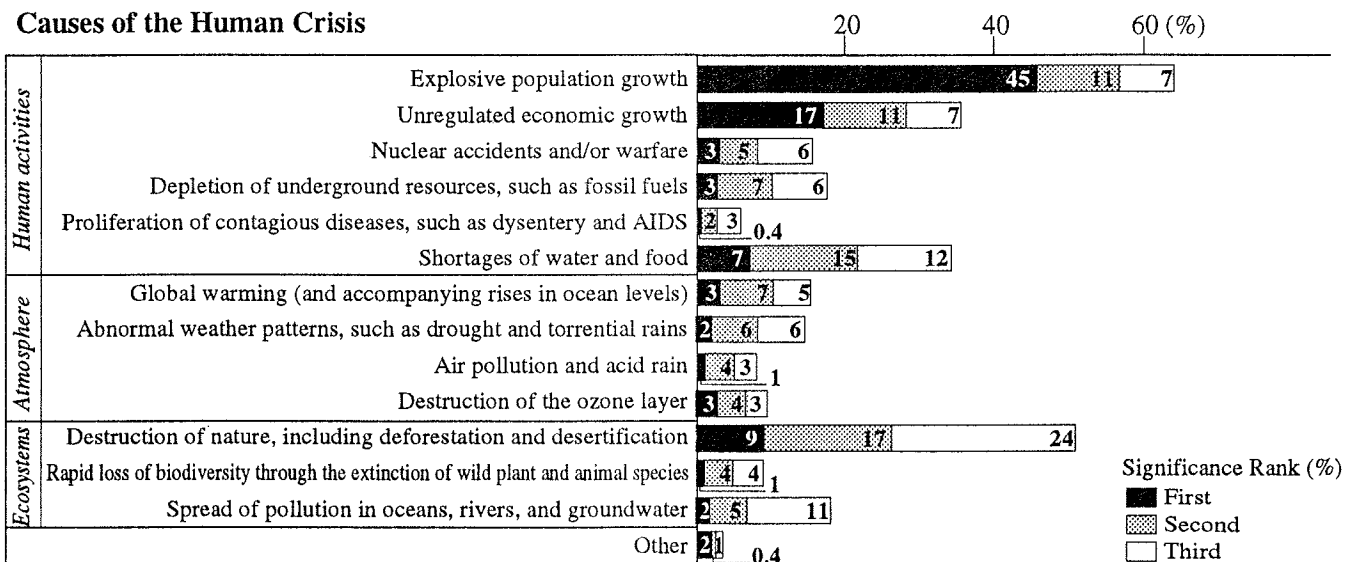
Only about 10% of environmental specialists surveyed believe the human race can survive as long as today's mass-production and mass-consumption-driven industrial civilization are maintained. That approximately 90% of environmental experts believe human survival to be impossible under current conditions demonstrates a widespread feeling of crisis.



Explosive population growth, unregulated economic growth, destruction of nature, and shortages of water and food are cited as the leading causes for the global environmental crisis.

Developed nations	Developing nations
Unregulated economic development	Shortages of food and water
Explosive population growth	
Destruction of nature	

Causes of the Human Crisis



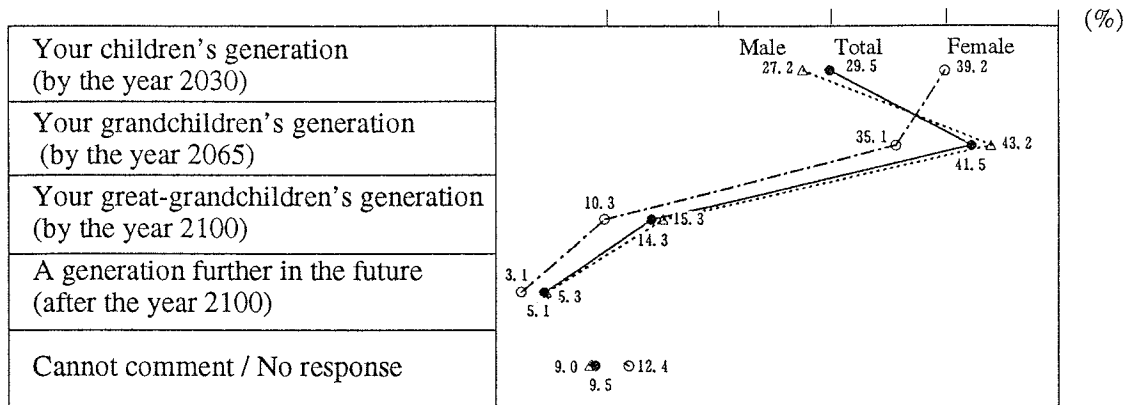
[Number of responses: 525]

*Responses were taken from only those respondents who answered "Cannot be sustained".

*Statistical analysis for above chart is based on how often a response was chosen, irrespective to the assigned rank of 1, 2, or 3.

Most respondents believe the present form of human civilization will become unsustainable before or during their grandchildren's lifetime (the mid-21st century).

More than 70% of respondents indicated their belief that humankind will encounter a crisis of survival before or during their grandchildren's lifetime, or prior to 2065. The environmental crisis is generally seen as a long-term issue, but this survey's results suggest we may have less than half a century to avert disaster.



[Number of responses: 525]

“Efforts to alter lifestyles and consumption patterns” becomes a major issue in Japan.

Japanese environmental experts cited efforts to alter lifestyles and consumption patterns as the most effective conservation strategy for Japan. Other popular responses included integration of economic and environmental policies, promotion of environmental education, and formation of recycling systems.

Regarding environmentally motivated lifestyle changes, only 27% of Japanese respondents gave positive answers to the question of whether they have already adapted or can adapt—the second-lowest affirmative response of all regions surveyed.

Areas Most Important in Respondents' Own Countries by Region

(%)	Japan N=282	Asia (outside Japan) N=63	U.S. and Canada N=51	Latin America N=35	Western Europe N=77	Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union N=16	Middle East N=11	Africa N=32	Oceania N=21
1. International cooperative efforts	21	13	6	14	9	13	-	13	14
2. Poverty and overpopulation	12	44	24	51	13	13	27	63	19
3. Lifestyles and consumption patterns	44	21	43	26	55	25	9	9	29
4. Local GO and citizens' group activities	5	16	10	11	12	-	9	9	14
5. NGO activities	14	8	4	6	4	6	27	6	10
6. Industrial sector policies	22	13	22	9	17	44	18	3	14
7. Global warming	11	2	10	-	18	-	-	-	10
8. Ozone layer protection	4	2	-	3	5	-	-	3	5
9. Acid rain reduction	0	2	-	-	1	6	-	-	-
10. Forest conservation	4	19	8	11	3	19	18	16	14
11. Desertification	0	3	-	6	3	6	9	9	-
12. Agricultural and rural development	9	30	14	23	25	31	9	44	24
13. Biodiversity	4	13	8	9	8	-	-	6	5
14. Protection of oceans	2	2	-	3	3	-	9	-	-
15. Protection of fresh water	2	13	14	9	10	19	27	6	5
16. Hazardous waste disposal	9	3	12	-	9	19	27	6	5
17. Recycling systems	28	8	2	3	13	19	18	-	-
18. Scientific and technological advancement	15	8	12	9	10	6	9	6	5
19. Environmental education	30	37	24	46	26	31	36	38	33
20. Environment assessment system	12	13	16	14	4	13	27	16	10
21. Integration of economic and environmental policies	42	24	51	40	46	31	18	25	29

Notes: The above figures show the number of times the item was chosen as a percentage of total responses. In the chart above, a “0” is used to express the range of 0.1%–0.4%. A dash shows figures below 0.1%. The circles indicate items with the top three percentage figures per region. The No. 1 response for each region has been marked with a double circle.

*N=number of responses

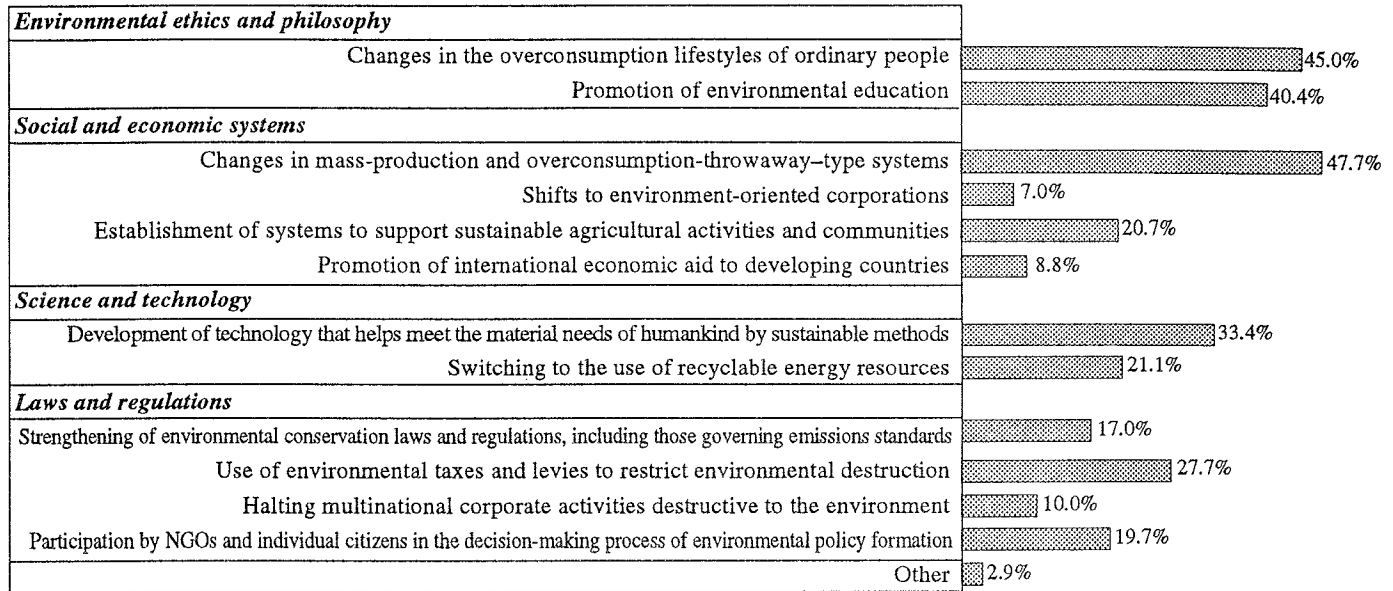
“Already Have Adapted/Can Adapt” Responses by Region

Japan (N=282)	27%
Asia (63)	54%
United States & Canada (51)	80%
Latin America (35)	71%
Western Europe (77)	65%
Eastern Europe & the former Soviet Union (16)	13%
Middle East (11)	36%
Africa (32)	38%
Oceania (21)	67%
Overseas total (306)	60%
Male (470)	42%
Female (108)	55%

Environmental specialists list factors most important for creating a sustainable society.

The factors seen to be most crucial to averting a crisis of survival and enabling sustainable human existence included changes in mass-production and overconsumption-throwaway-type systems, changes in the overconsumption lifestyles of ordinary people, and promotion of environmental education. These responses indicate that responsibility for conserving the environment through lifestyle modification lies with us all.

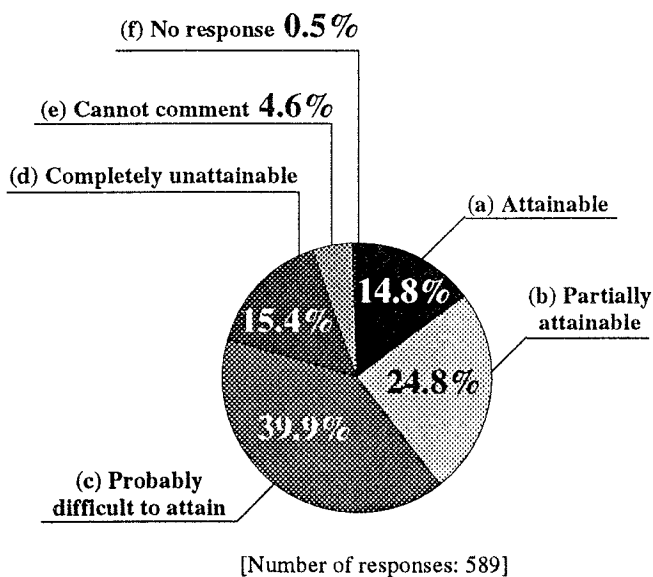
[Number of responses: 589]



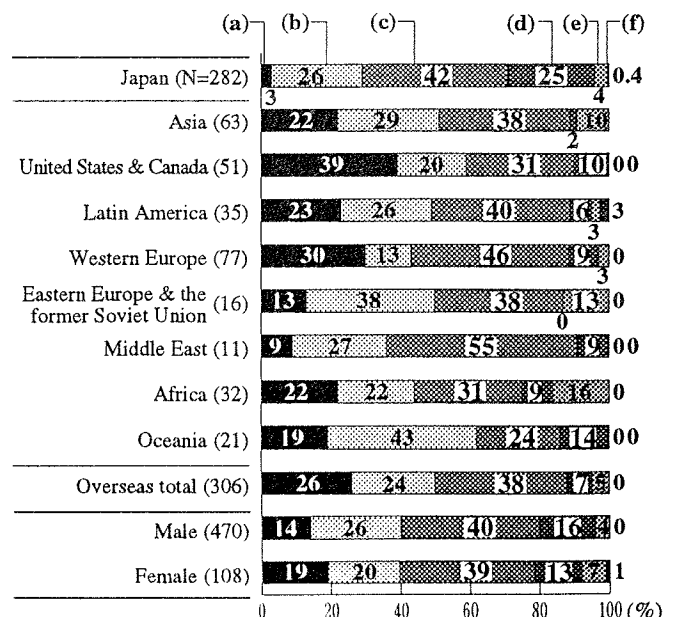
In developing regions, development of technology that helps meet the material needs of humankind by sustainable methods joined changes in mass-production and overconsumption-throwaway-type systems as a common answer. In developed regions, the use of environmental taxes and levies to restrict environmental destruction was also a frequent response.

Respondents believe an effective policy to combat global warming will be difficult to achieve.

When Japan hosts the Third Conference of the Parties (COP3), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) in December 1997, the issue of global warming will be brought closer to home. On this issue, more than half of all environmental experts surveyed believe that global CO₂ emissions cannot be stabilized at the 1990 level by the year 2000. Japanese respondents gave the most pessimistic response, while North Americans were the most optimistic.



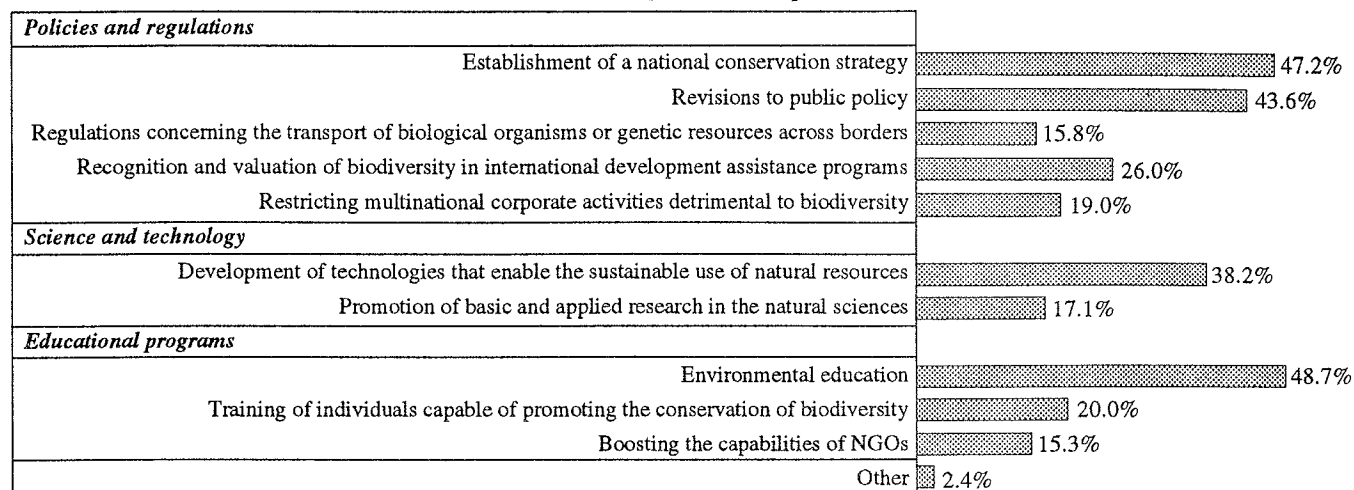
Respondents' Views on the Attainability of the FCCC's Carbon Dioxide Emissions Stabilization Target by region



National government policy and educational programs are necessary to preserve biodiversity.

Environmental experts rank environmental education, establishment of a national conservation strategy, revisions to public policy, and the development of technologies that enable the sustainable use of natural resources as the most effective steps toward furthering current international efforts to preserve biodiversity.

[Number of responses: 589]



This release summarizes the outcome of the fifth annual "Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of Humankind." For complete details, please see the accompanying full text of the survey results.

Facts About the Fifth Annual "Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of Humankind"

Supervision of compilation: Professor Akio Morishima, Faculty of Law, Sophia University

Response period: Questionnaires were sent out in April 1996 with a return deadline of July 10, 1996.

Questionnaire respondent pool: Selected from members of GOs and NGOs in the United Nations Environment Program and Asahi Glass Foundation databases.

Aim: This questionnaire was designed to gauge perceptions of respondents, mainly specialists from both GOs and NGOs concerned with global environmental problems, regarding the progress of efforts to conserve the environment since the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, or Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992.

Questionnaires mailed: 3,197

Questionnaires returned: 589*

Response rate: 18.4%

* Questionnaires returned after July 10, 1995, are not reflected in these results.

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