

STUDENT RESOURCES

DATA GETS GREEN

THE BIG QUESTION

What sustainability issues matter most to your community?

BACKGROUND

The effects of global climate change—including increases in natural disasters and extreme weather events, and the depletion of natural resources—are increasingly on the minds of even the youngest generations. Sustainability initiatives like “Reduce-Reuse-Recycle” can help start young people on the path towards responsible environmental stewardship. This activity provides you with an opportunity to use data to further encourage responsible and sustainable consumer choices, while also developing a critical consciousness of current sustainability policies. After analyzing complex topics in conservation and sustainability, you are now going to ask “What sustainability issues matter most to your community?” and collect your own data to help answer this question.

THE STEPS

Review the information and data starting on page 5 of this document. Now that you have some background information on a few of the issues that are impacting sustainability in the U.S., you are now going to collect your own data to help answer the question: “What sustainability issues matter most to your community?”

STEP 1

After considering some of the important issues related to sustainability and conservation, you will work independently or with a small group to create a short survey to capture your own data. The goal here is to gather useful information that will help you better understand diverse experiences and recognize trends or shared experiences. To help create, administer, and collect useful data from your survey, you may choose to refer to the “Collecting Data: Tips and Tricks” handout in this document.

STEP 2

After you administer the survey, consider how you will administer your survey and who might take your survey. To get the most useful information and results that will help answer your big question, ensure that your survey has diverse representation in responses and that your survey is easy to complete.

STEP 3

Now that you have administered your survey, consider how you will analyze your data. As you review the results, consider a few of the questions below:

- What did you learn?
- How could it be visualized for others to understand? Would displaying the data in charts and graphs help you to analyze the data and see trends?
- Does your data reflect a wide range of people? Does your sample represent the overall group of people (the population) you wanted to study?
- What other questions come to mind?

STEP 4

So now that you have seen the results, consider how you can use this information to make a positive impact or take informed action to solve a problem. To do this, take some time to consider questions from the “Data Reflection: Problem Solving For The Future” handout in this document.

COLLECTING DATA TIPS AND TRICKS

CREATING YOUR SURVEY

Keep the survey focused

- Keep in mind that it may be difficult to get respondents to complete a lengthy survey. Work to keep your survey focused on your research question.

Response scales can be helpful to determine the intensity of feeling

- While it is fine to use *yes/no* or binary questions, consider including questions that provide a range of structured responses based on how strongly you feel about a topic. Responses may range from “*never*” or “*not at all*,” all the way to “*always*” or “*extremely*.”

Try not to ask biased or leading questions

- When framing questions, avoid value statements or language that leads a respondent to a particular answer or desired response.

Create opportunities to clarify Yes/No Questions

- Create opportunities for respondents to clarify as to why they said yes or no by including qualifiers like “*to what degree*” or “*how often*.”

For more information on creating your survey, consider visiting an online resource such as:

[11 Tips for building effective surveys | Qualtrics](#)

ADMINISTERING YOUR SURVEY

Survey platform

- As you create your survey, consider how you will administer the survey to yield the best results. You may choose to simply administer the survey in a paper form and calculate the data by hand, or you may choose to use one of the many digital platforms to increase efficiency. Many of these platforms are available at no cost and can calculate the results for you in a variety of ways. Check with your teacher or the adult in charge about which sites are best for you to access.

Sample size and population

- It’s important to capture responses from individuals with diverse backgrounds because their experiences may lead them to have different answers and perspectives. Gathering perspectives from diverse groups can help provide a more holistic understanding of sustainability issues and how change can be made.

For more information on sample size, consider visiting an online resource such as:

[How many survey responses do I need to be statistically valid? | SurveyMonkey](#)

STUDENT HANDOUT 2

DATA REFLECTION: PROBLEM SOLVING FOR THE FUTURE

1. What does the data tell me?
 - a. *What surprised you?*
 - b. *What did you expect?*
 - c. *Did you notice any patterns?*

2. What could I have done differently to collect more **accurate** data?
 - a. *How many responses do I have?*
 - b. *Did responses represent a valuable sample size?*
 - c. *Was there confusion from the respondents on any of my questions?*

3. How can this data help me answer the question: *"What sustainability issues matter most to your community?"*

4. What might be the best way to display or visualize this data for others?

5. Who might need to see this data?

6. How might I or someone else use this data to make a positive impact or take informed action?

7. What additional questions or information might you like to ask in a follow-up survey?

STUDENT HANDOUT 3

TAKE ACTION TOWARD A PLASTIC AND WASTE-FREE WORLD



USE POST-CONSUMER RECYCLED MATERIALS

Message to your consumers that you have made the shift on the packaging and in your marketing materials.



LEVERAGE MATERIALS THAT ARE EASY AND EFFICIENT TO RECYCLE

Simply using materials that are "recyclable" isn't enough.



COMMUNICATE TRANSPARENTLY ABOUT WHAT CAN BE RECYCLED FROM YOUR PACKAGING AND HOW TO RECYCLE

You can even use your packaging to shed light on how recycling works while encouraging consumers to investigate their communities' recycling infrastructure.



Example: Sigg's yogurt uses recycling-centric packaging by using paper labels that can be removed from the plastic cup with easy-to-tear serration to help consumers separate paper, plastic, and metal and appropriately recycle. The company promotes sustainability, builds a bond with consumers, and incentivizes consumer action with the messaging: "Please tear the sleeve off here to: recycle the paper sleeve separately; read more about our story on the inside."

Achieving something similar may require rethinking a packaging design and making it simpler, but may be well worth the effort through reduced materials and consumer credit via higher engagement and stronger brand equity perceptions

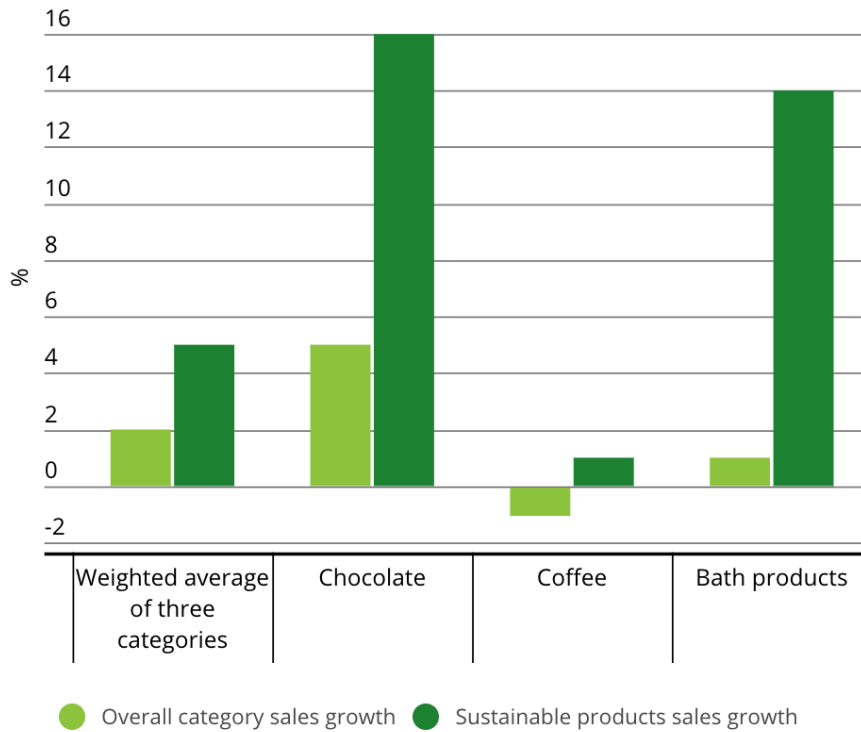


CONSIDER INVESTING IN GREEN, RENEWABLE PACKAGING COMPANIES

Proactively and thoughtfully keep your packaging supply chain up-to-date.

For example, Starbucks invested in Frugalpac, an innovative cup manufacturer that allows easy separation of waterproof film (typically plastic) liner and recycled paper outer to allow consumers to recycle the cup. Currently, most takeout coffee cups, including Starbucks, which have plastic liners, are very difficult to recycle.

SUSTAINABILITY SELLS ACROSS CATEGORIES



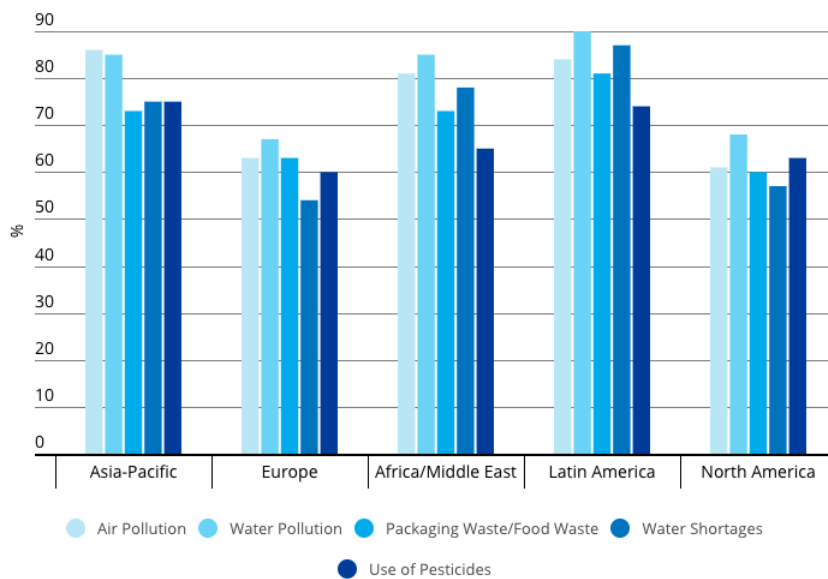
Copyright © 2019 The Nielsen Company (US), LLC. All Rights Reserved

Nielsen: [Sustainability Sells: Linking Sustainability Claims to Sales](#), 2018

STUDENT HANDOUT 3

CONSUMERS AROUND THE WORLD CARE ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Percentage of respondents who are extremely or very concerned about the following environmental issues



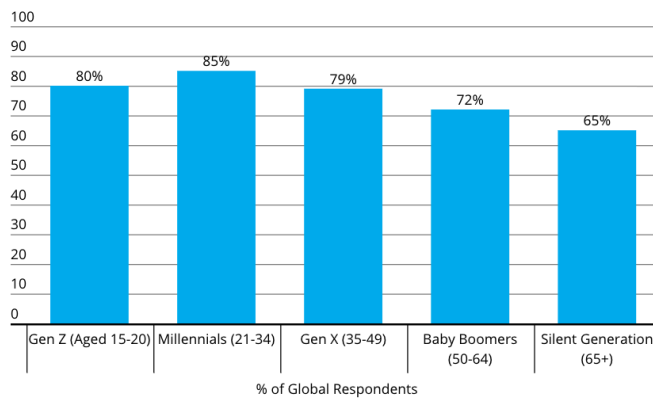
Source: The Conference Board® Global Consumer Confidence Survey, conducted in collaboration with Nielsen Q2 2017

Nielsen: [Global Consumers Seek Companies That Care About Environmental Issues](#), 2018

STUDENT HANDOUT 3

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY IS IN HIGH DEMAND ACROSS GENDER AND GENERATIONS

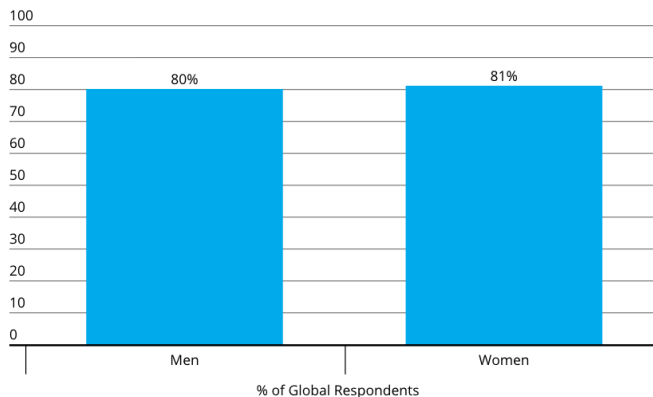
Generations



● It is extremely or very important that companies implement programs to improve the environment

Source: The Conference Board® Global Consumer Confidence Survey, conducted in collaboration with Nielsen Q2 2017

Gender



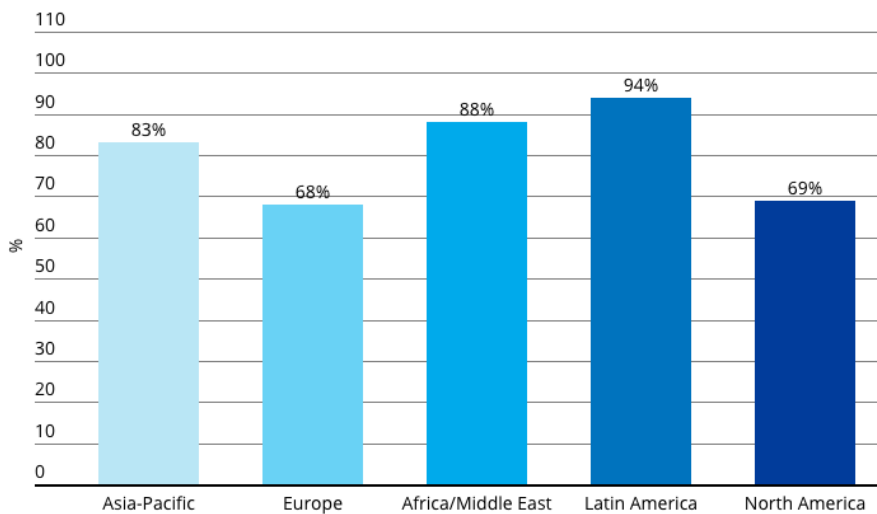
● It is extremely or very important that companies implement programs to improve the environment

Source: The Conference Board® Global Consumer Confidence Survey, conducted in collaboration with Nielsen Q2 2017

Nielsen: [Global Consumers Seek Companies That Care About Environmental Issues](#), 2018

CONSUMERS EXPECT COMPANIES TO CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

Percentage of respondents who say it is extremely or very important that companies implement programs to improve the environment



Source: The Conference Board® Global Consumer Confidence Survey, conducted in collaboration with Nielsen Q2 2017

Nielsen: [Global Consumers Seek Companies That Care About Environmental Issues](#), 2018