

# Public Perceptions of Ocean Issues

Lessons learned from The Ocean Project

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National Marine Protected Areas Center

# Overview

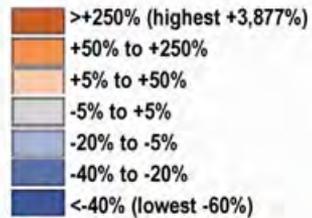
- The social landscape
- Public perceptions
- Solutions
- Thanks to:
  - Bill Mott, the Ocean Project
  - Matt Brookhart, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries



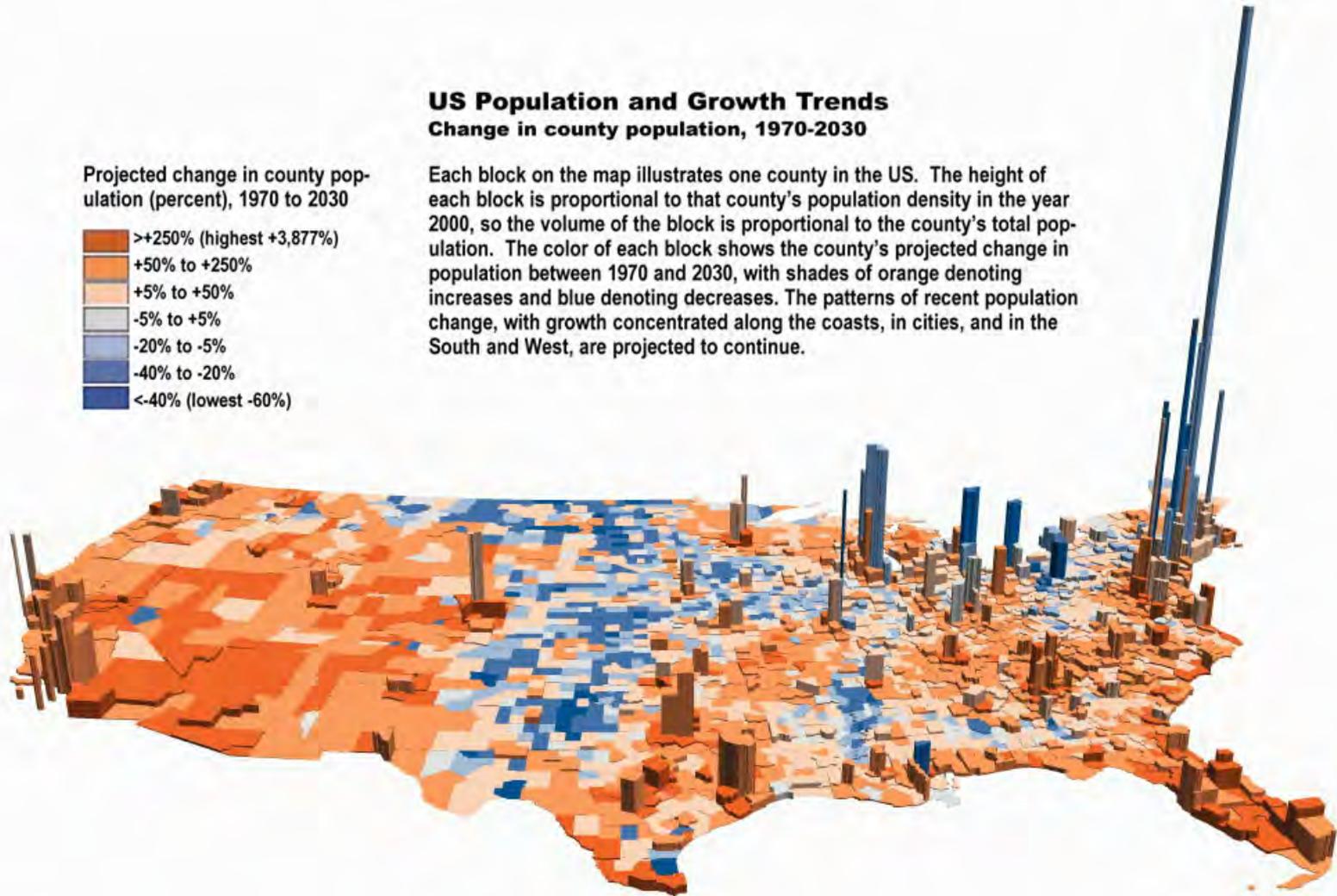
## US Population and Growth Trends

### Change in county population, 1970-2030

Projected change in county population (percent), 1970 to 2030



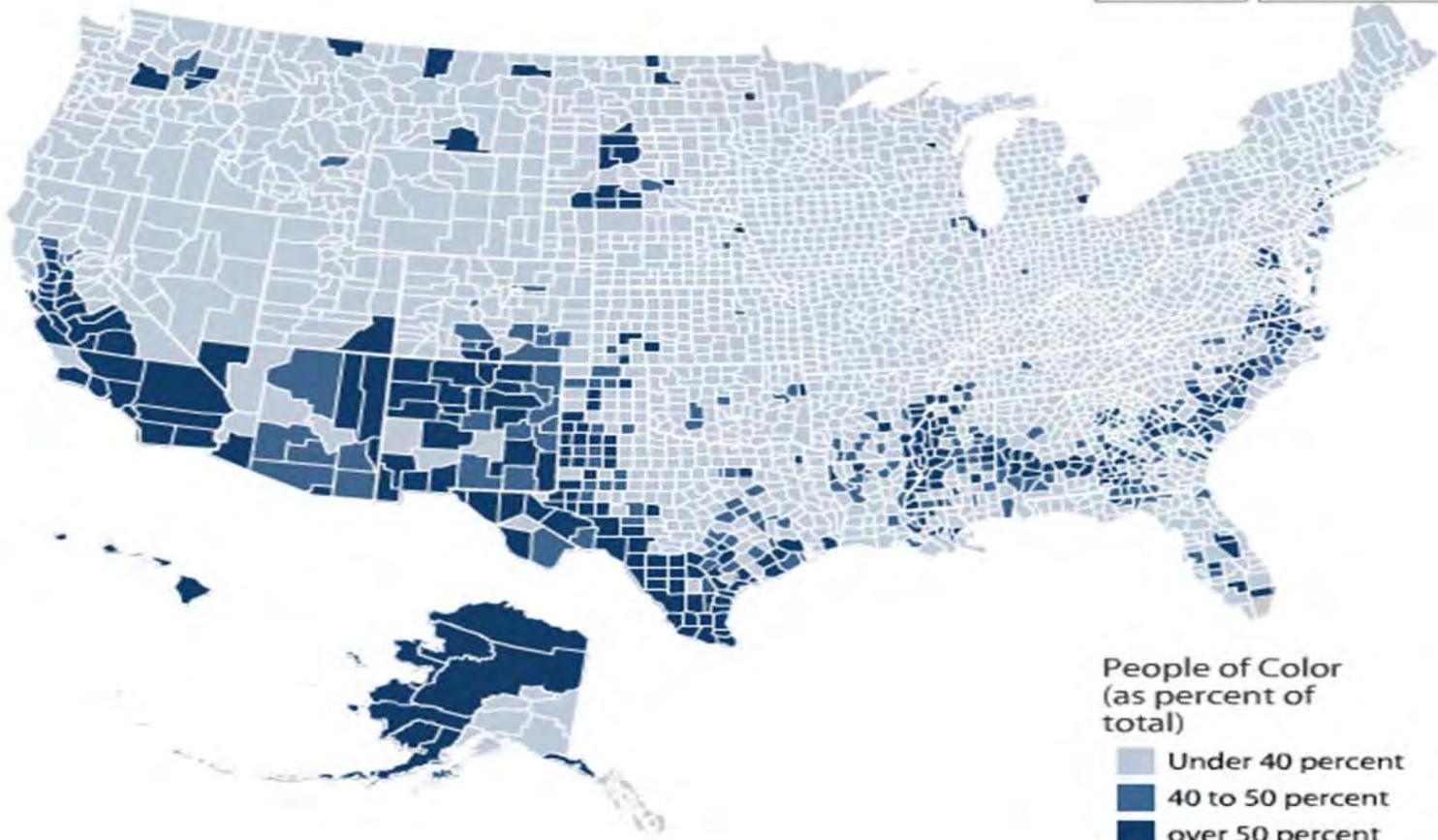
Each block on the map illustrates one county in the US. The height of each block is proportional to that county's population density in the year 2000, so the volume of the block is proportional to the county's total population. The color of each block shows the county's projected change in population between 1970 and 2030, with shades of orange denoting increases and blue denoting decreases. The patterns of recent population change, with growth concentrated along the coasts, in cities, and in the South and West, are projected to continue.



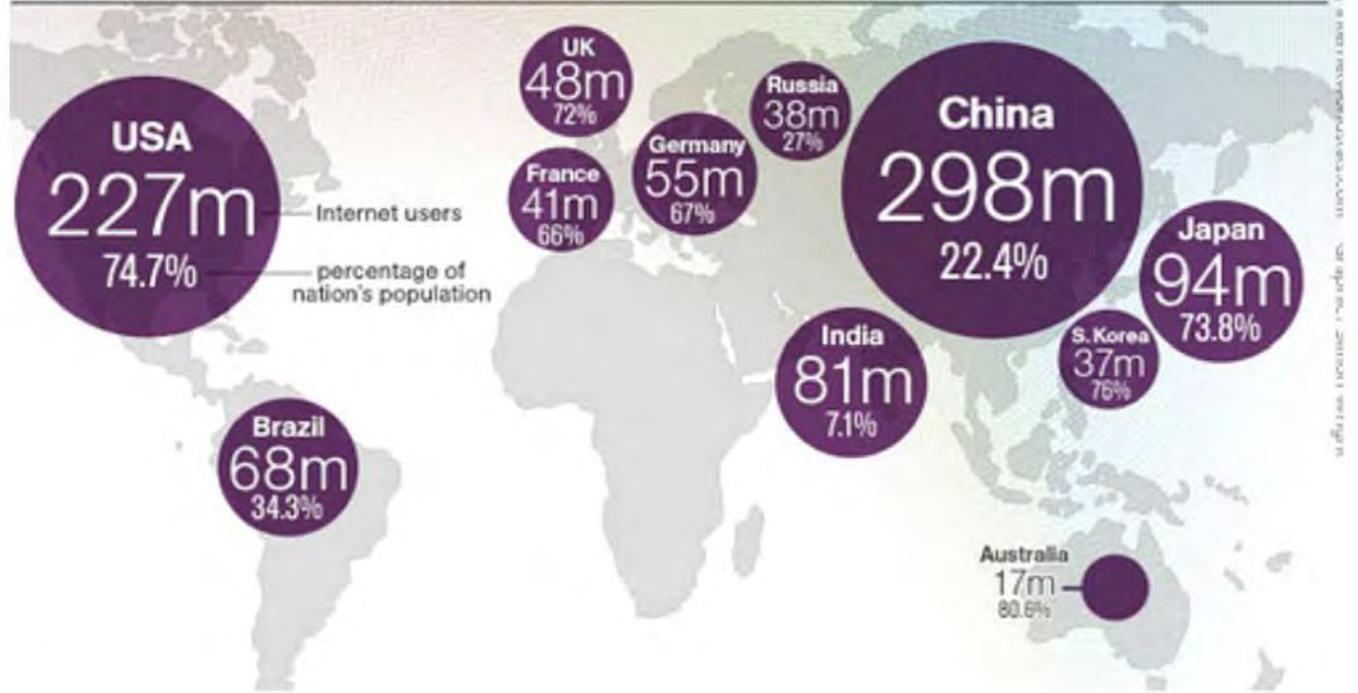
# America's Changing Demographics

People of color are increasingly becoming the majority across the country. Roll over counties to see what the 2010 Census revealed about the changing demographics of our country.

ZOOM IN ZOOM OUT



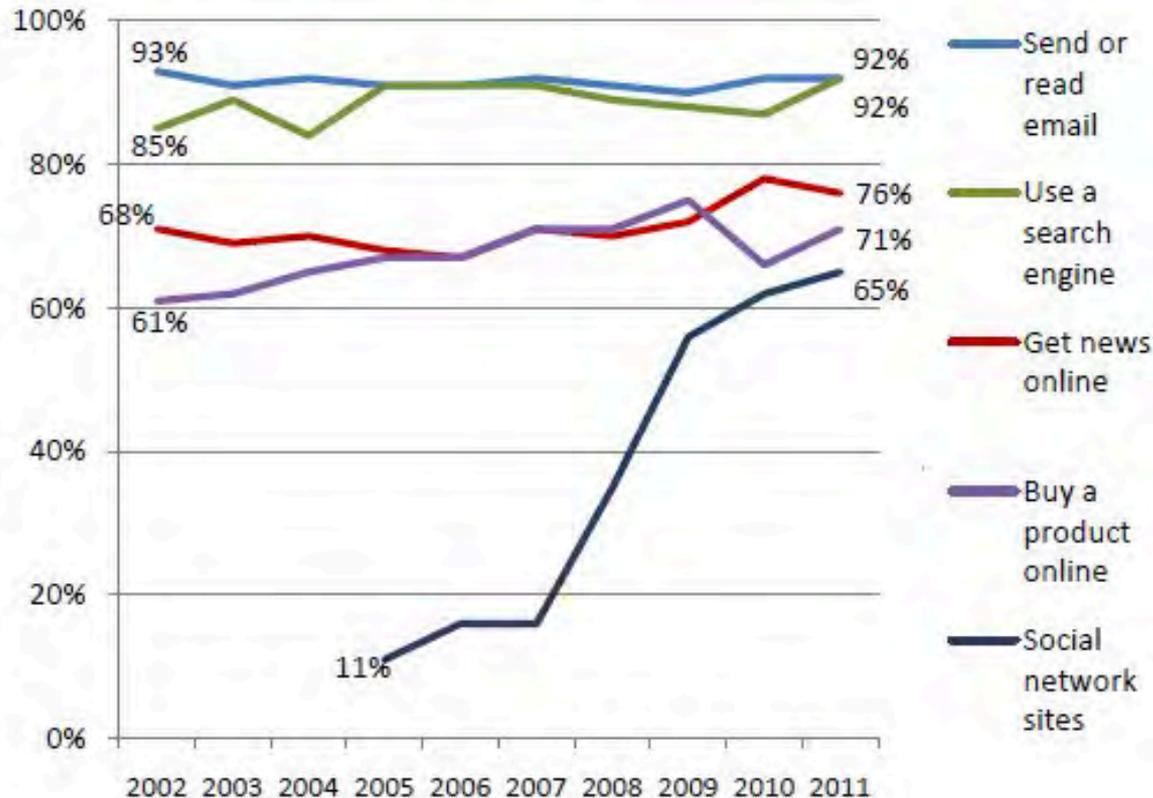
## Internet users by country



© 2010 iStockphoto.com. All rights reserved.

## Over time, search and email are most popular online activities

*% of internet users who do each activity*



Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project tracking surveys, 2002-2011. Social network site use not tracked prior to February, 2005. For more activity trends, go to [pewinternet.org](http://pewinternet.org).

**1 in 9 people on Earth**



**490 million personal channels worldwide**



**91,000 contributors**



**3,000 new uploads every minute**



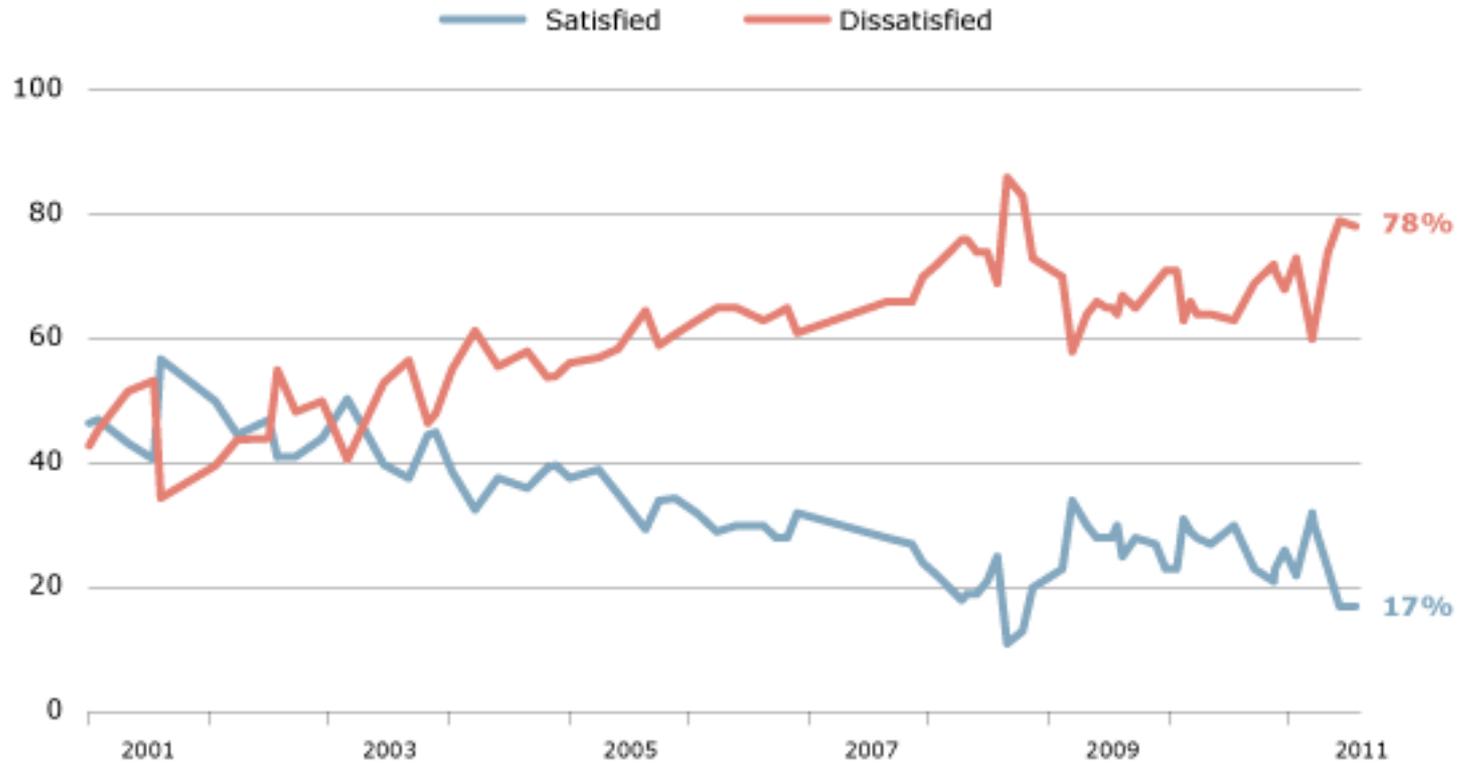
**190 million per day**



- 1) The public discourse is only going to get uglier; think carefully about what you want to say and exactly how you're going to say it.**
- 2) Facts don't matter anymore; stories do.**
- 3) Find your crowd...find the people that want to help you tell your story. And do it digitally.**
- 4) If you can't say it in a video, don't bother.**
- 5) If you can't say it in 8 seconds, don't bother.**

## National Satisfaction, 2001-2011

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press



### Median Duration of Unemployment (UEMPMED)

Source: U.S. Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics



Shaded areas indicate US recessions.  
2011 research.stlouisfed.org

# "Which of the following is the most important issue facing the country today?"



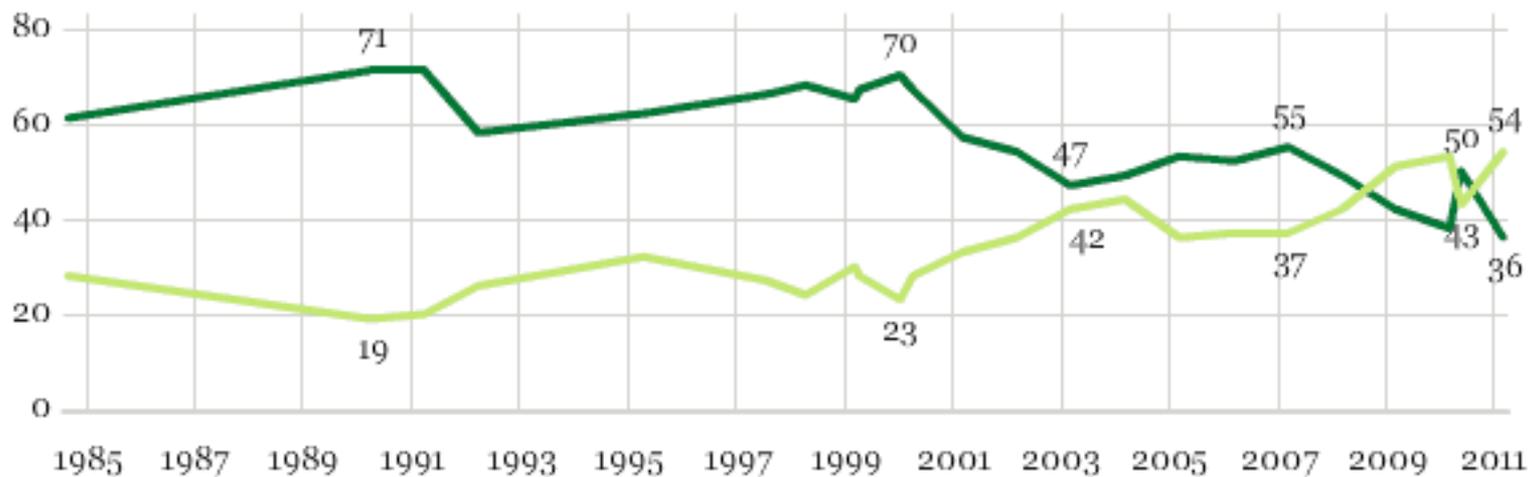
	%
Unemployment and jobs	42
Government spending	17
The federal deficit	13
Health care	10
War in Afghanistan	5
Gas prices	4
Immigration	3
Taxes	1
Other (vol.)	2
Unsure	3

Bloomberg National. June 17-20, 2011.  
N=1,000 adults

*With which one of these statements about the environment and the economy do you most agree -- protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of curbing economic growth (or) economic growth should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent?*

■ % Protection of the environment should be given priority

■ % Economic growth should be given priority



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# Key Points about the Social Landscape

- A rapidly changing demographic
- A society barraged with information; only the most compelling stories make it through all the noise
- Digital communication is the tool of choice for most
- An angry populace passionate about what matters to them
- The environment is still relevant, but ranks low



## Overview:

- Advance ocean conservation with zoos, aquariums, and museums (ZAMs) around world.

## Goals:

- Lead initiatives on public attitudes and motivations regarding ocean, climate change, and related environmental issues
- Build communications, education, and outreach capacities of zoos, aquariums and museums to effectively reach global audiences for conservation outcomes
- Develop new methods and campaigns for measurably increasing ocean awareness and conservation action among zoo, aquarium and museum visitors and the public, especially youth and minorities

# Public Perceptions in US

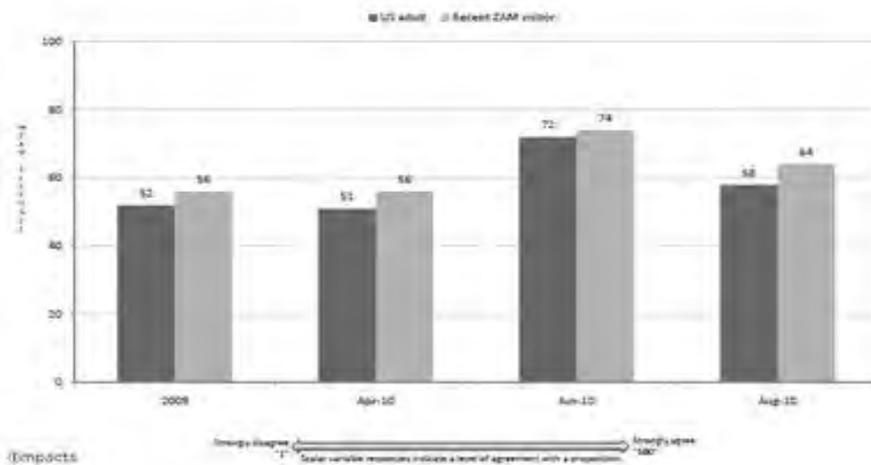
1. Concern for the ocean, but lack of urgency
2. Understanding of the threats, but difficulty in connecting with global problems
3. Willingness to act
4. Importance of teens (highest level of concern; believe they can make a difference)
5. Zoos, aquariums, museums are trusted messengers



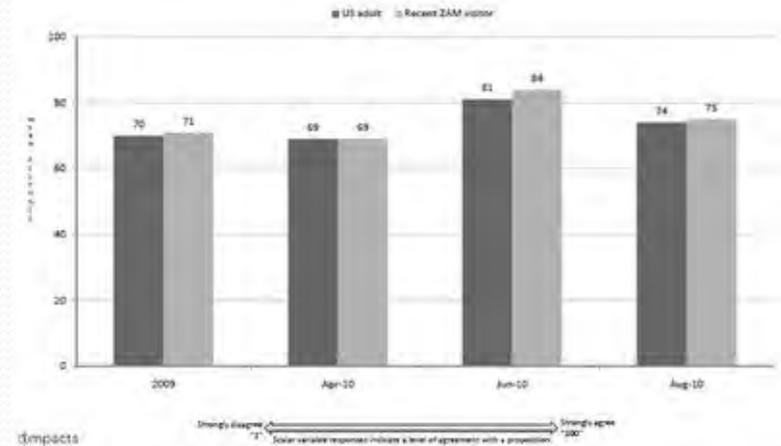
# Getting On Board

## Public opinion about the Gulf Oil Spill Spring 2010

Protecting the ocean should be a priority for the US government.



Protecting the ocean is an important part of protecting the environment.



# Youth Going Green

- “Most environmentally-friendly group”
- The Youth Effect Project
- More than 7.5 “media” hours a week (Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation)
- Utilizing cyber-space to become global citizens

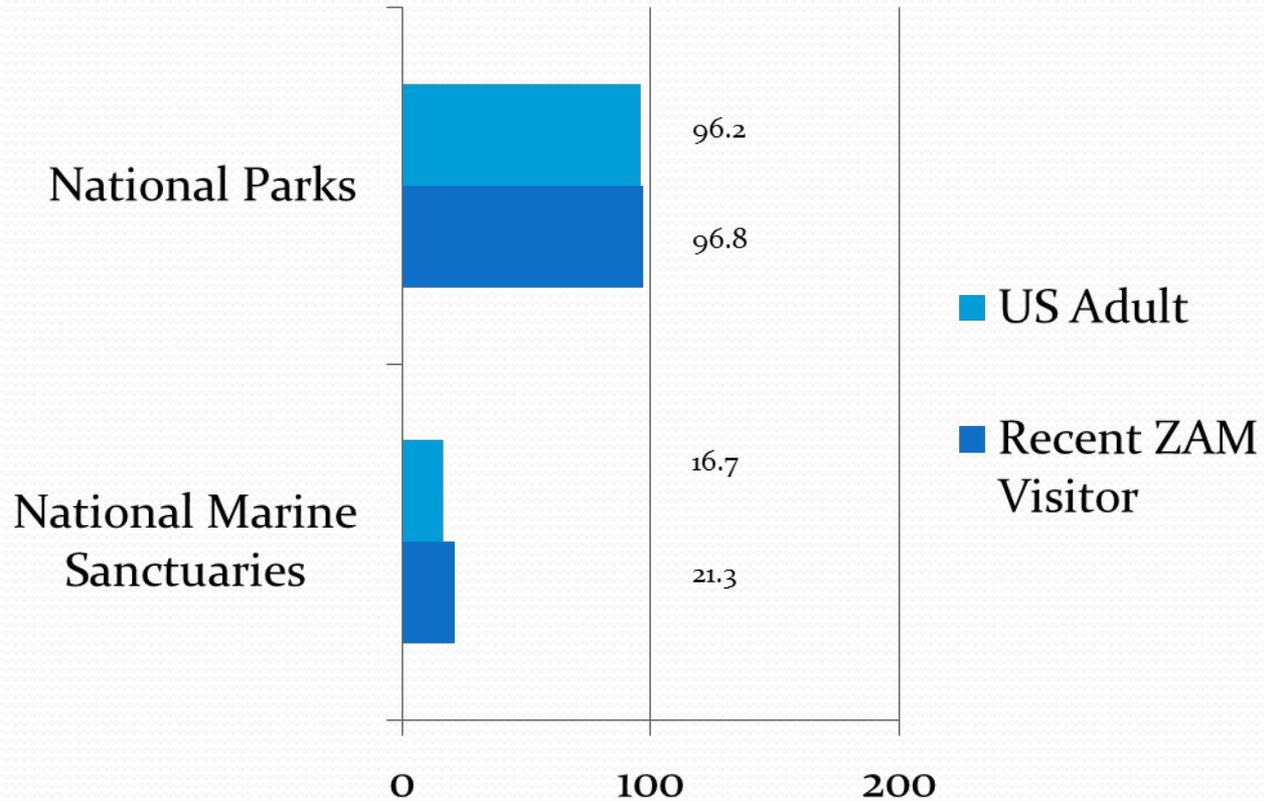


# Describe a national marine sanctuary:

- A protected part of the ocean
- A part of the ocean where no fishing is allowed
- A part of the ocean where no recreational boating is allowed
- A safe place for dolphins
- A park by the water
- A place to see birds



# Have you heard of?



# Testing Social Media: Houston Campaign

- Plastics pollution and impact on Sea Turtles
- Young People 13-25
- Targeted ads on social media channels and search engines
- Elevated sympathy one year later

## Make a Difference Today



Plastics kill thousands of sea turtles and pollute our ocean. Start making a difference today. Be part of the solution.

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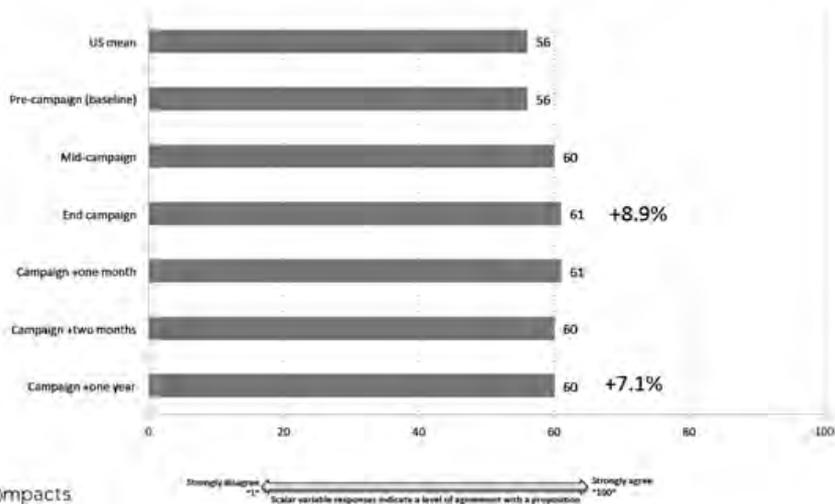
## Make a Difference Today



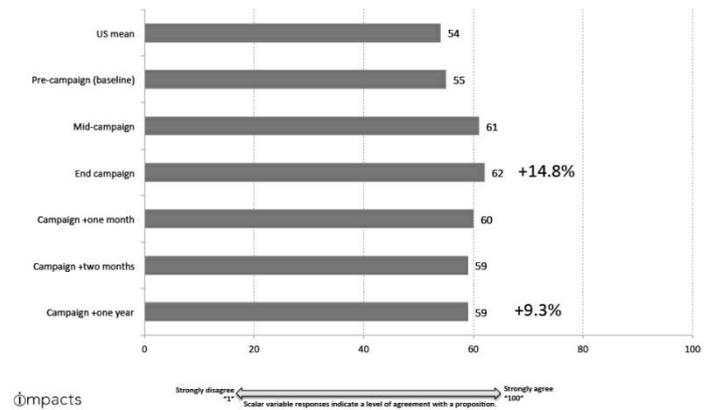
Plastics kill thousands of sea turtles and pollute our ocean. Start making a difference today. Be part of the solution.

# Results and Reactions

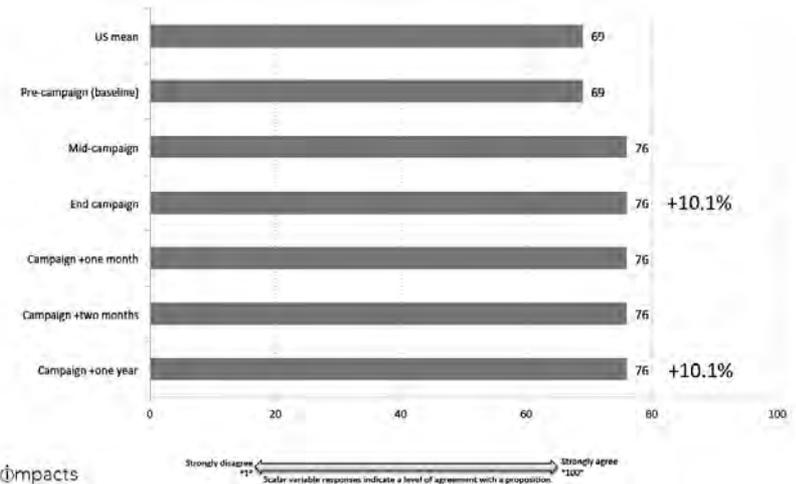
I worry about the health of the world's ocean.



The world's ocean is endangered.



The ocean is affected by the actions of people.





Questions?

# SOCIAL MEDIA EXPLAINED



“I need to pee.”

facebook

“I peed.”

foursquare

“This is where I pee.”

Quora

“Why am I peeing?”

YouTube  
Broadcast Yourself™

“Look at this peeing!”

LinkedIn®

“I’m good at peeing.”



“Let’s all pee together.”

# The Six Reasons Why Young People are Flocking to Ron Paul.

- 1) He's a rebel.
- 2) He's unusual.
- 3) He's an underdog.
- 4) He doesn't care if he wins.
- 5) He talks about four things: jobs, health care, illegal immigration, and Afghanistan (the four most important issue to voters 18-25).
- 6) He communicates online. Only.

# “What should Congress focus on in 2011?”

	Crucial	Important	Not important	Unsure
	%	%	%	%
Jobs	72	25	2	-
The budget deficit	57	38	5	1
Health care	53	41	6	-
Taxes	44	47	7	2
Energy	36	53	10	1
Environment	31	53	15	1
Afghanistan	37	46	13	3

Reuters/Ipsos Poll conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs.  
Oct. 28-31, 2010. N=1,075 adults nationwide.

# Do you think the U.S. government is doing too much, too little, or about the right amount in terms of protecting the environment?

	<b>Too much</b>	<b>Too little</b>	<b>About the right amount</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1992</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2</b>

# Is the quality of the environment in the country as a whole is getting better or getting worse?

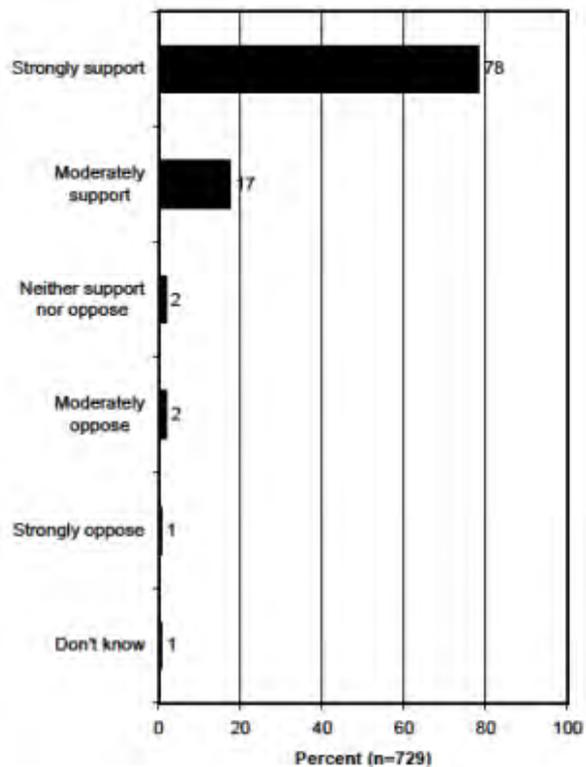
	Getting better	Getting worse	Same (vol.)	No opinion
	%	%	%	%
<b>2011</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

(vol.) = Volunteered response

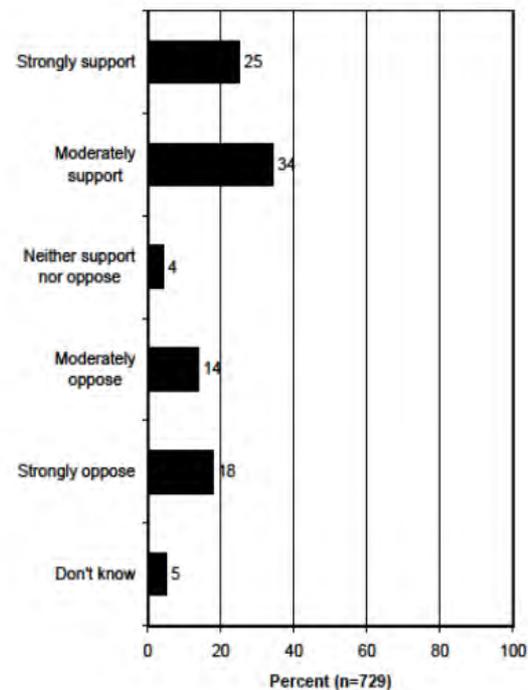
# Do you think of yourself as an active participant, sympathetic towards (but not active), neutral, or unsympathetic towards an environmental movement?

	Active participant	Sympathetic, but not active	Neutral	Unsympathetic	No opinion
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>2011</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
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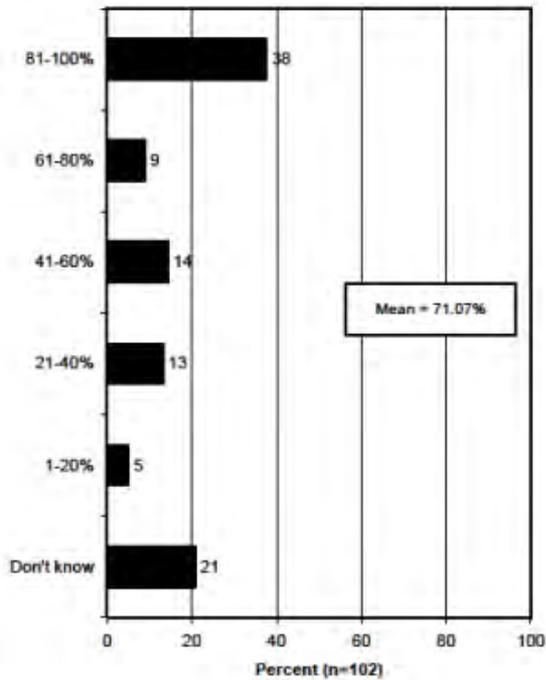
**Q19. In general, do you support or oppose efforts to protect U.S. ocean waters and ocean life?  
(National Survey)**



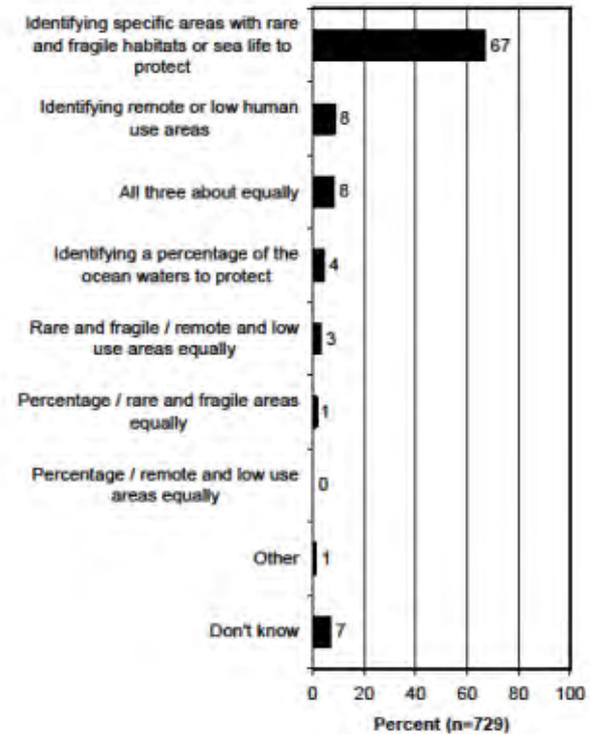
**Q28. If areas of U.S. ocean waters were designated in a manner similar to U.S. Wilderness Areas and human activities were restricted in the designated ocean areas, including a ban on specific human activities such as oil drilling, would you support or oppose legal recreational fishing and shellfishing in the designated ocean areas?  
(National Survey)**



**Q53. In your opinion, what percentage of the ocean waters should be protected? (Asked of individuals who believe that some U.S. ocean water areas should be protected by identifying a percentage of ocean waters to protect.)**  
(National Survey)



**Q51. If some U.S. ocean water areas were protected but scientifically managed for sustainable use, how do you think the water areas to be protected should be selected?**  
(National Survey)



# Findings

- 59% think individuals responsible for protecting the ocean, nearly 70% consider it responsibility of US Government
- Only 1.2 % used sustainable seafood guide in past year, whereas 18.6% signed environmental petition. Passive vs. proactive?
- Concern for oceans and the environment peaked during Summer 2010, likely to oil spill.
- 78% of ZAM visitors consider children to be more environmentally-aware than themselves
- 9% gap between US adults who worry about oceans (57%) and ZAM visitors (66%)
- 70% consider Atlantic Ocean to be in good health, 55% consider it endangered
- About 64% consider protecting the ocean the most important part of protecting the environment

(The Ocean Project)