



Cayman
ES21



2021 Survey Results

An initiative of Amplify Cayman, the Cayman Environmental Survey 2021 was undertaken to gauge public opinion on local and global environmental issues impacting the Cayman Islands.

Amplify Cayman is a non-partisan full community-invested group of diverse and civic-minded Cayman residents, who wish to participate in the decision-making processes that impact our communities. Amplify Cayman focuses on working together with all stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcome for the nation, through three functions: thoughtful leadership, education and advocacy.

For more information, visit amplifycayman.com

CONTRIBUTORS

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Sustainability and Climate consultant, Cayman Islands

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands | Assisted with sharing the survey electronically to its membership. Was not involved in the preparation or management of the survey.

BACKGROUND

On February 15th 2021 an environmental survey was launched aimed at gauging public opinion on local and global environmental issues impacting the Cayman Islands. Survey questions were based on the Guiding Principles of the Cayman Islands' Environment Charter upheld by the Cayman Islands Constitution Section 18 (Protection of the Environment), and United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #12, responsible consumption and production.

The survey touches on other [SDGs](#): 3 (health & wellbeing), 6 (clean water), 7 (clean energy), 11 (sustainable communities), 13 (climate action), 14 (marine environment), 15 (terrestrial ecosystems & biodiversity), 16 (participatory decision-making).

Globally, leaders agree that a truly sustainable recovery post Covid-19 presents the need for data-driven decisions and policies, that are centred on the overall wellbeing and health of a nation's people and natural environment.

With an election set for April 2021, it is hoped that the results of this survey (presented here) will assist candidates running for office to set environmental goals and commitments which align with the perspectives of the people of these islands.

PROGRAMMATIC DETAILS

The survey was open for a period of 1 month: February 15th to March 15th.

The survey was made available digitally via SurveyMonkey.com, as a printable PDF on amplifycayman.com, and in paper format for completion at several local events.

Efforts were specifically focused on collecting responses from local resident's, however the survey was open to anyone with an interest in environmental issues impacting the Cayman Islands.

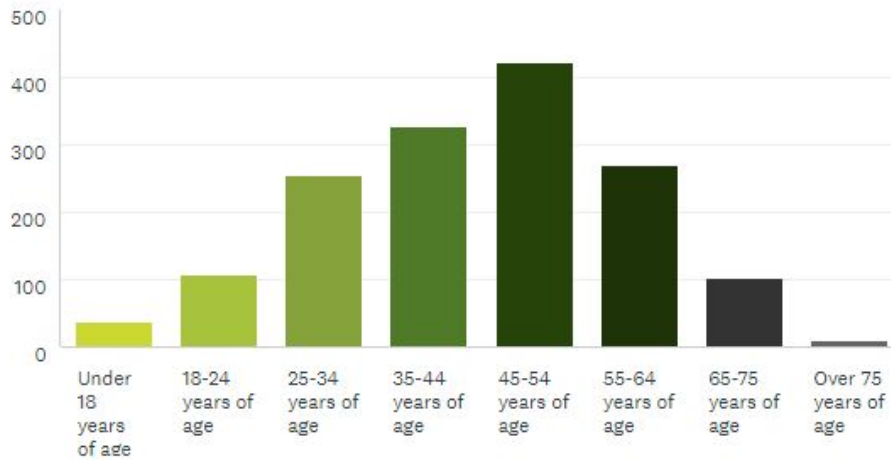
DEMOGRAPHICS

of Respondents | 1,402*

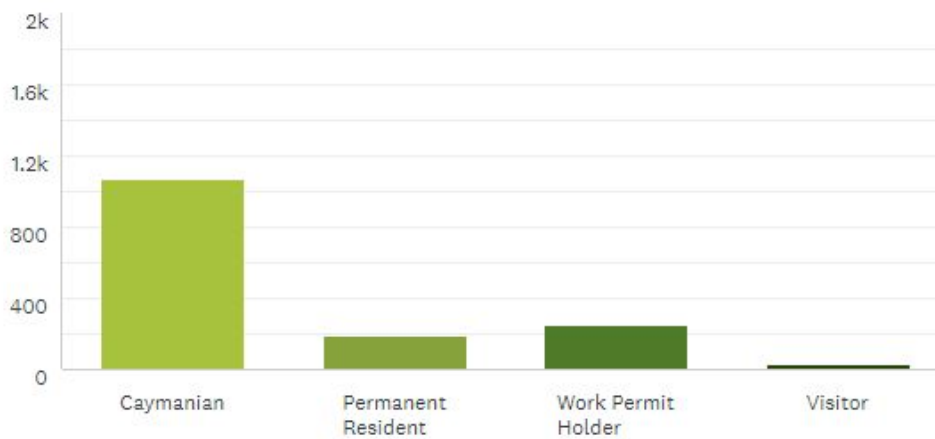
Survey completion rate | 100%

Average time spent | 4 minutes 57 seconds

Age Range



Immigration Status



**A total number of 1,537 responses were received however, 68 were duplicate and others did not have verifiable associated email addresses. In the case of duplicate responses, only the final submission was considered*

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The CES21 successfully captured the perceptions of those most impacted by Cayman's environmental governance systems and has allowed for a greater understanding of what the people of the Cayman Islands feel needs to be done to further protect and improve public spaces, preserve culture and heritage, and ensure sustainable use of Cayman's natural environment.

Resulting data provides a strong indication of support for the policy propositions set out in the National Conservation Council and the Department of Environment's document: *Seizing the Moment to Transition to a Greener Economy*, 5th June 2020. Incredibly, this support does not vary based on age group, district residency or even immigration status.

- Overall, 83.5% of respondents felt that the natural environment was in a worse state than when the Environment Charter was signed 20 years ago.
- From a people and planning perspective, 78.8% of respondents feel that environmental needs are not sufficiently considered for new developments.
- There appears to be a disconnect between the views of local people and decisions made by the Government with regards to development, as 75.8% feel their opinions are not considered and they are not listened to.
- Encouragingly, environmental planning and community engagement could be improved as over 90% of respondents support national and neighbourhood plans, with effective consultation processes. This should ensure fit-for-purpose infrastructure and spaces for people, commerce and nature are created in future.
- The relationship between quality of life and how our environment protects and provides, is central to environmental stewardship, or, in other words, how we look after our land and water-based systems. 94.1% of respondents indicate that we should protect traditional farmland and 99% feel that the protection of mangrove wetlands is either important or very important, highlighting the need to consider the inclusion of designated areas to safeguard mangrove and other priority habitats in national and neighbourhood plans.

- The survey results indicate that the management of freshwater pollution is an area that needs to be improved and there was a strong expression (83.2%) from respondents that polluters of the natural environment are not being dealt with strongly enough.
- In November 2021 the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) will take place to accelerate global action on climate change. This issue should be close to the heart of Cayman Islanders, given the predicted increase in the strength of hurricanes and our low-lying geography in terms of sea level rise. It is therefore unsurprising that 93.9% believe it is important that the Cayman Islands implement effective climate change policies. This is a message that should influence the Government's commitment to timely action on climate change.
- Reassuringly, the appetite for people to act is clear, with 96.4% indicating that they would be highly likely or likely to switch to community generated solar power, if affordable, to reduce carbon emissions.
- The Cayman Islands have a strong heritage which is closely linked to the islands' natural history. This was confirmed with 88.4% of people surveyed believing that more should be done to conserve and celebrate our natural and cultural heritage.
- The results from this survey suggest that there is a desire for environmental stewardship to be at the heart of the Cayman Island's national identity, exemplified by the strength of appetite for further knowledge sharing, with 95.7% of respondents desiring education programs about the environmental and health impacts of the products we use in our homes, workplaces, businesses.

The above findings confirm the significance of this moment in time, which is in part due to the disruptions and impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic. We have been given a unique chance to reset and reimagine our relationship with the rest of the biological world.

The will of communities to make change happen is clear, it is now the role of Government to see that this will is delivered for nature and for all people of Cayman.

RESULTS

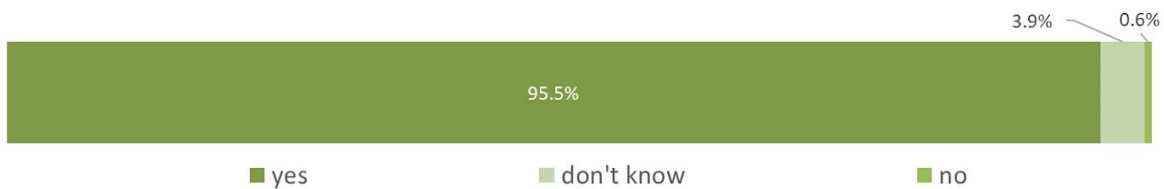
QUESTION 1 – General

Twenty years ago, the Cayman Islands Government signed an Environmental Charter meant to ensure the wise use of Cayman’s natural resources (for example; mangroves, wetlands, beaches, coral reefs and native wildlife). Do you feel that Cayman’s natural environment is in a better or worse position than it was 20 years ago?



QUESTION 2 – Planning and People

A neighbourhood plan is a guide that enables each district to provide suitable access to parks, beaches, playgrounds and other recreational spaces that improve our physical health and happiness. Do you support neighbourhood plans?



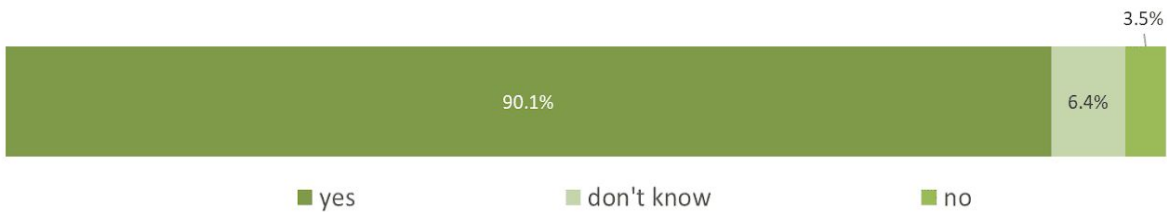
QUESTION 3 – Planning and People

Sustainable development is the idea that any commercial activity should consider its impact on our communities and the natural environment. Do you think that social and environmental needs are sufficiently included in the decision making process for new developments (buildings, roads, hotels etc.).



QUESTION 4 – Planning and People

The Development Plan for Grand Cayman is over 20 years old and there are no development plans for either Little Cayman or Cayman Brac. Do you support, with necessary public consultation, development plans for the three Islands, that identify appropriate areas for housing, community infrastructure, commerce and nature protection?



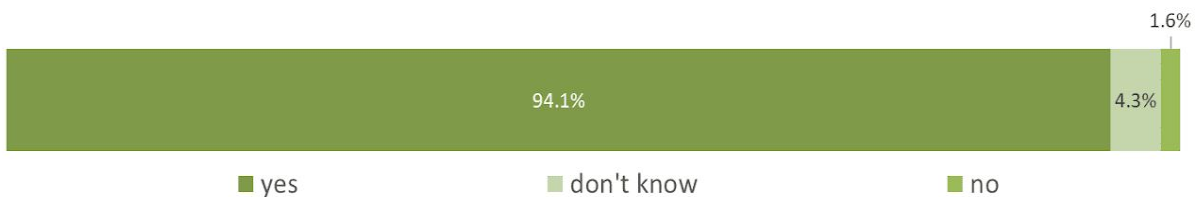
QUESTION 5 – Planning and People

Do you feel your voice is listened to when Government decisions are made that impact the places where you live, work and visit?



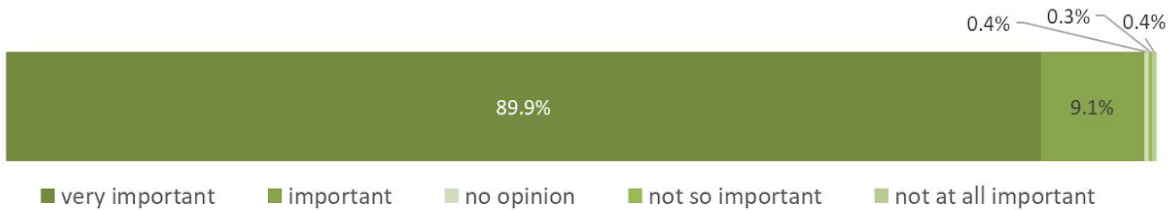
QUESTION 6 – Land and Water

Food security is the ability to have physical, social, and affordable access to safe and nutritious food. The threat of Covid-19 made many in the Cayman Islands fear for food access. As much as Cayman's food supply relies on imports, do you think that traditional agricultural farmlands should be protected for Grand Cayman and our Sister Islands?



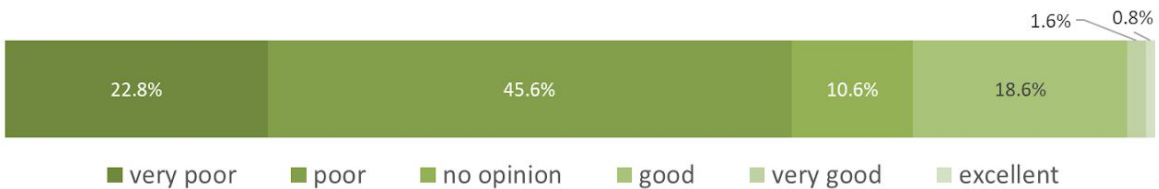
QUESTION 7 – Land and Water

Our mangrove wetlands are the heart of the Cayman Island's ecosystem. They are under constant pressure from developers, who are often looking to clear them, along with local forests and shrublands. How important is it to you that the Cayman Islands have laws and policies that protect this ecosystem?



QUESTION 8 – Land and Water

Storm water flooding can lead to the contamination of our freshwater lenses and send polluted water into our environment and the marine parks. How would you rate the current practices for managing flooding, for example from consistent heavy rains?



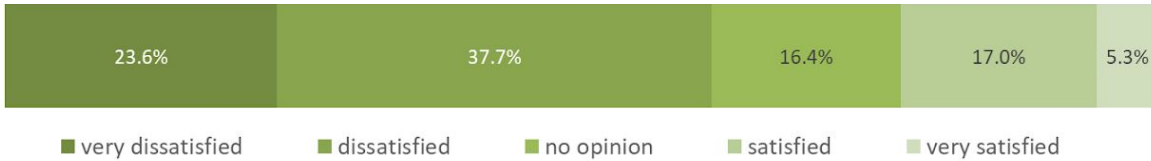
QUESTION 9 – Land and Water

The Cayman Island's Environment Charter includes the polluter pays principle. This is the idea that if a company or individual is found to be polluting (littering and illegal dumping), they would then have to pay a significant fine to address any impacts of the pollution. Do you feel that acts of pollution are dealt with strongly enough in the Cayman Islands?



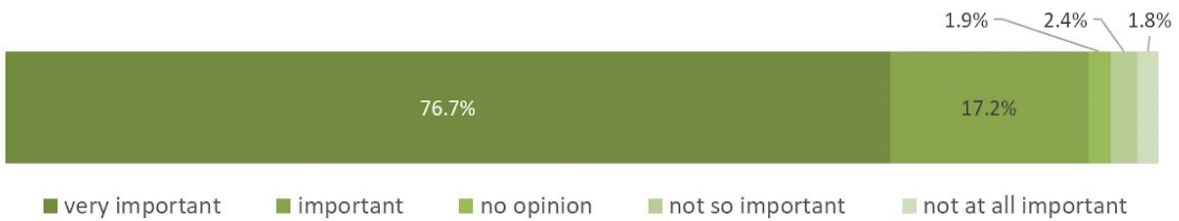
QUESTION 10 – Climate Change

In 2021 the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) will take place to accelerate action on climate change. How satisfied are you that the Cayman Islands are committed to climate change action?



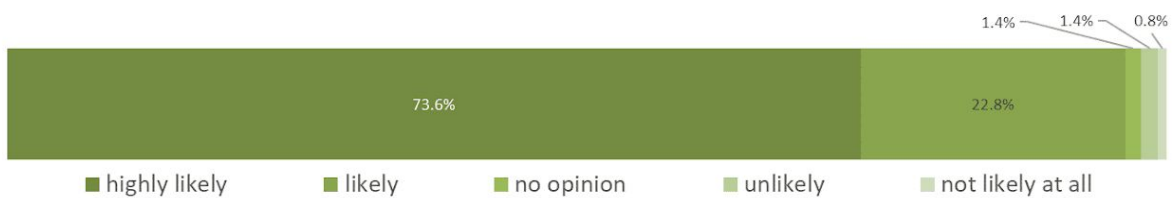
QUESTION 11 – Climate Change

As a country, the Cayman Islands are both low-lying and in a hurricane zone. This means it is directly impacted by climate change which includes rising sea levels and stronger hurricanes. Do you believe it is important that the Cayman Islands implements strong climate change policies?



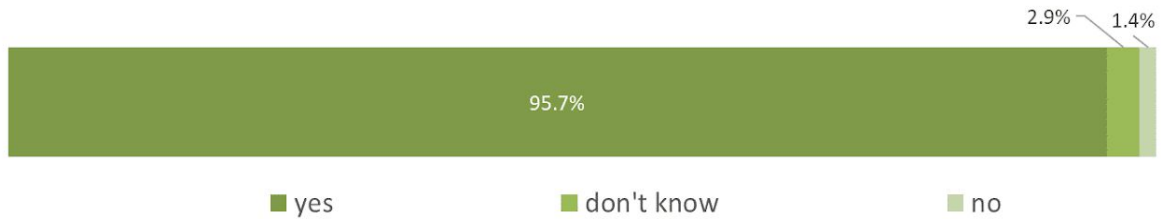
QUESTION 12 – Climate Change

Carbon emissions from fossil fuels such as oil, coal and liquefied natural gas from hydrocarbon deposits contribute to global warming and climate change. Solar power reduces carbon emissions. If affordable, would you switch to community generated solar power?



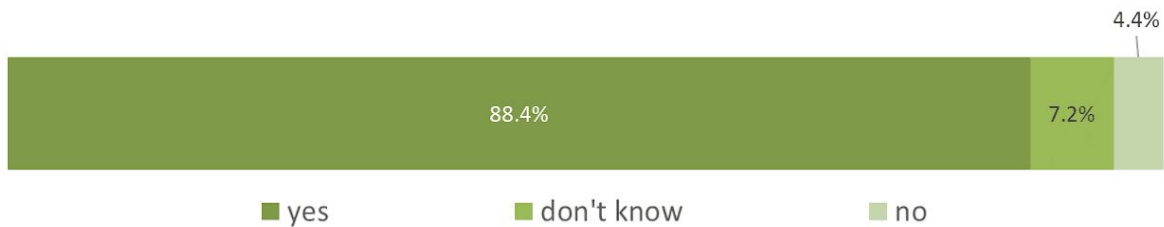
QUESTION 13 – Culture and Heritage

There is a need for a wider program of education about the environmental and health impacts of the products we use in our homes, workplaces, businesses etc.

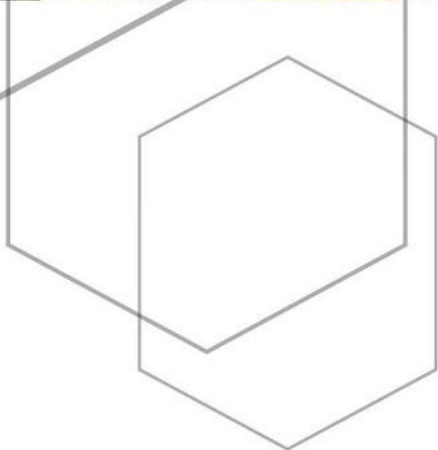
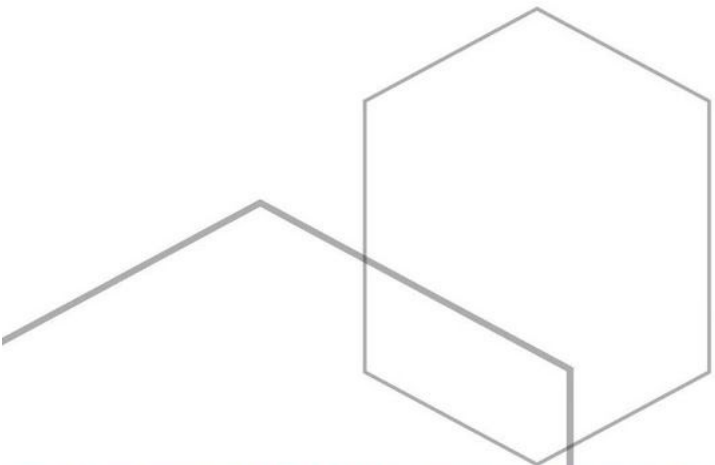


QUESTION 14 – Culture and Heritage

Cayman's national and maritime heritage is very important to Caymanian culture (such as ship building, architecture and thatch plaiting). Do you believe that more should be done to conserve and celebrate national heritage?



For additional questions or enquiries regarding the data or findings presented above, please contact amplifycayman@gmail.com.



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