

The Pew Charitable Trusts – Marine Life Survey

Topline Report • April 9, 2021

The survey was conducted for the Pew Charitable Trusts by SSRS, an independent research company, through the SSRS Panel and ABS. Interviews were conducted from February 11 – March 10, 2021 among a representative sample of 1,847 total respondents. The margin of error with design effect for the total respondents is +/-3.26% at the 95% confidence level.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

S1. What state do you live in?

	%
New England (NET)	13
Maine	1
New Hampshire	1
Massachusetts	7
Rhode Island	1
Connecticut	3
Mid-Atlantic (NET)	42
New York	18
New Jersey	8
Delaware	1
Maryland	6
Washington, D.C.	1
Virginia	8
Southeast (NET)	45
North Carolina	10
South Carolina	5
Georgia	10
Florida	21

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

S2/S2a. What is your age?

	%
18-24	10
25-29	9
30-49	33
50-64	26
65 or older	22

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Q1. Which of the following statements comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

	%
Most government environmental regulations are <u>necessary</u> and protect the environment.	78
Most government environmental regulations are <u>unnecessary</u> and harm economic growth.	22

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Q2. Which of the following statements comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

	%
It is <u>more</u> important for the federal government to protect endangered species.	43
It is <u>more</u> important for the federal government to protect and encourage economic growth.	57

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Q3. Now we would like to ask more about your familiarity with specific animals. Have you heard of (INSERT ITEM)?

a. Blue whales

	%
Yes	89
No	7
Not sure	4
Refused/Web blank	*

b. Humpback whales

	%
Yes	95
No	3
Not sure	1
Refused/Web blank	*

c. Right whales

	%
Yes	29
No	62
Not sure	8
Refused/Web blank	*

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

The North Atlantic right whale mainly lives along the east coast of the U.S. and Canada. They are migratory and are found in different areas of the ocean at different times of the year. They are considered “critically endangered.” However, there is disagreement on how—if at all—they should be protected, and at what cost to fishermen and consumers.

Q4. How important, if at all, do you think it is for the federal government to create policies that protect the right whale?

	%
Important (NET)	88
Very important	53
Somewhat important	34
Not Important (NET)	7
Not too important	5
Not at all important	2
Not sure	6

One of the leading causes of death among North Atlantic right whales is getting caught in the ropes of lobster fishing gear, particularly in areas where whales gather. Proposals to protect right whales from getting caught in these ropes involve controlling: (1) the type of lobster fishing gear used and/or (2) when and where lobster fishermen can operate. However, some believe such rules would hurt consumers and small businesses more than they would benefit whales.

The next set of questions ask your opinion regarding different proposed policies. For each one, indicate whether you support or oppose the policy.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Q5. Do you support or oppose this proposed policy?

- a. Allow lobster fishermen to operate as they have been while the federal government continues to conduct research on how and where right whales are harmed.

	%
Support (NET)	63
Strongly support	17
Somewhat support	45
Oppose (NET)	37
Somewhat oppose	25
Strongly oppose	12
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

- b. Require lobster fishermen to buy and use a newer kind of rope that is less likely to harm whales.

	%
Support (NET)	90
Strongly support	54
Somewhat support	36
Oppose (NET)	10
Somewhat oppose	6
Strongly oppose	3
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

- c. Require lobster fisherman fishing in areas where whales gather to use fishing gear that does not harm whales. This gear is expensive but would be partially paid for by the government.

	%
Support (NET)	89
Strongly support	54
Somewhat support	35
Oppose (NET)	11
Somewhat oppose	8
Strongly oppose	3
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

- d. Require lobster fisherman fishing in areas where whales gather to use fishing gear that does not harm whales. The gear is expensive and lobster fisherman would have to purchase this gear on their own.

	%
Support (NET)	59
Strongly support	20
Somewhat support	39
Oppose (NET)	41
Somewhat oppose	29
Strongly oppose	12
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

e. Close specific areas where whales gather to lobster fishing until long-term rules are created.

	%
Support (NET)	71
Strongly support	28
Somewhat support	43
Oppose (NET)	29
Somewhat oppose	21
Strongly oppose	7
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

f. Close specific areas where whales gather to all lobster fishing indefinitely.

	%
Support (NET)	41
Strongly support	12
Somewhat support	29
Oppose (NET)	58
Somewhat oppose	33
Strongly oppose	25
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Q6. In the last five years, have you eaten any lobster, including lobster rolls or lobster bisque?

	%
Yes	55
No	45

Based on Respondents who don't eat lobster (N=693)

Q7. What is the main reason you do not eat lobster?

	%
I don't like the taste or texture of lobster	39
It is too expensive	28
It is inhumane	7
I am allergic to lobster	5
It is too difficult to cook	3
I don't eat lobster for religious reasons	3
It is not good for the environment	1
Some other reason (Please specify)	13
Not sure	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Respondents who eat lobster (N=1,154)

Q8. Where do you typically eat lobster? (Please select all that apply.)

	%
Out at restaurants	70
At home, meals prepared by me or my family	37
At home, from restaurant take-out or delivery	21
At special events, like weddings or office parties	18
At the homes of others, such as friends or family, who prepare the food	12
Other	3

Based on Respondents who eat lobster (N=1,154)

Q9. In a typical year, how many times do you eat lobster?

	%
Less than once per year	20
Once or twice per year	46
3 to 6 times per year	26
7 to 12 times per year	6
More than 12 times per year	3

Based on Total Respondents who eat lobster out at restaurants or at home (N=1,091)

Q10. Which statement comes closest to describing your decision making about buying/ordering lobster, even if neither is exactly right?

	%
I usually choose to buy/order lobster based on affordability, meaning how much the lobster costs.	79
I usually choose to buy/order lobster based on sustainability, meaning lobster that is caught in ways that ensures the long-term well-being of lobster and other marine life.	21

Based on Respondents who eat lobster (N=1,154)

Q11. Some people argue that if the government required lobster fishermen to use new gear that is safer for endangered whales and other marine life, the fishing industry would have to pass those costs along to customers, which would mean more expensive lobster. Others say cost is irrelevant when it comes to protecting endangered whales and other marine life. Which statement comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

	%
It is worth it for customers to pay more for lobster if it results in fewer whale deaths from entanglement in fishing gear.	83
It is not worth the cost for customers to pay more for lobster, even if it could reduce the number of whale deaths from entanglement in fishing gear.	17
Refused/Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Respondents who eat lobster (N=1,154)

Q12. If the U.S. government required lobster fishermen to use gear that is safer for whales and other marine life, it would take time to implement. In the meantime, lobster would continue to be caught with gear that hurt whales. Safely caught lobster may not be widely available to seafood customers for a few years.

If the U.S. government passed these requirements to use safer gear and they were in the process of being implemented, which of the following statements would best describe your lobster consumption during this time?

	%
I will stop eating lobster until I know that safer gear is being used.	20
I will continue to eat lobster as I do now, but when it is available, I will seek out lobster that is caught using safer gear.	50
I will continue to eat lobster as I do now, no matter the type of gear used.	30
Refused/Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Q14. Have you done any of the following in the past five years?

a. Went online to learn about sustainable seafood practices and ratings from a website like Seafood Watch

	%
Yes	10
No	89
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

b. Asked a supermarket or restaurant employee for more information about the seafood they sell

	%
Yes	18
No	82
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

c. Signed a petition to ask a retailer, like a supermarket or restaurant, to buy sustainably caught seafood

	%
Yes	4
No	96
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

d. Shared concerns about sustainably caught seafood with friends and family **on social media**, like Twitter or Facebook.

	%
Yes	8
No	80
Not applicable/I don't use social media	12
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

e. Shared concerns about sustainably caught seafood with friends and **family in conversations**, like over the phone or in person.

	%
Yes	27
No	72
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

We have a few more questions about you.

Based on Total Respondents (N= 1,847)

D1. What is your gender?

	%
Male	48
Female	52
Other	1

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Z2. Which group describes your marital status?

	%
Single, that is never married	25
Single, living with a partner	11
Married	50
Separated	2
Widowed	3
Divorced	10
Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

Z4. Currently, are you yourself employed full-time, part-time, or not at all?

	%
Employed (NET)	50
Full-time	37
Part-time	13
Not employed (NET)	50
Retired	22
A homemaker	5
A student	5
Temporarily unemployed	9
Disabled/handicapped	7
Other	1
Refused/Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

D3. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

	%
Less than high school	9
High school graduate	27
Some college	29
College+	35
Refused/Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

D4/D5. Race Combo Table

	%
White Non-Hispanic	60
Black Non-Hispanic	17
Hispanic	14
Other Non-Hispanic	7
Refused/Web blank	2

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

D6. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself as:

	%
A Republican	22
A Democrat	39
An independent	34
Something else	3
None	2
Refused/Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents (N=1,847)

D8. Generally speaking, how would you describe your political views?

	%
Conservative (NET)	27
Very conservative	10
Somewhat conservative	16
Moderate	33
Liberal (NET)	31
Somewhat liberal	20
Very liberal	11
Not sure	9
Refused/Web blank	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.