

Survey – Orienteering and the Environment



The survey “**Orienteering and the environment**” was conducted in April 2011 by the IOF Environment Commission with the assistance of the IOF office.

Aims

- To gather information on the state of environmental issues in the IOF member countries and measures national federations have taken to manage environmental issues.

Use of the information

- Outlining an IOF charter and guidelines for the environmentally friendly conduct of all forms of orienteering events.

Respondents: 19 national federations

Europe

- Bulgaria
- Finland
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Italy
- Portugal
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey

Asia

- China
- Chinese Taipei
- Israel

Oceania

- Australia
- New Zealand

North America

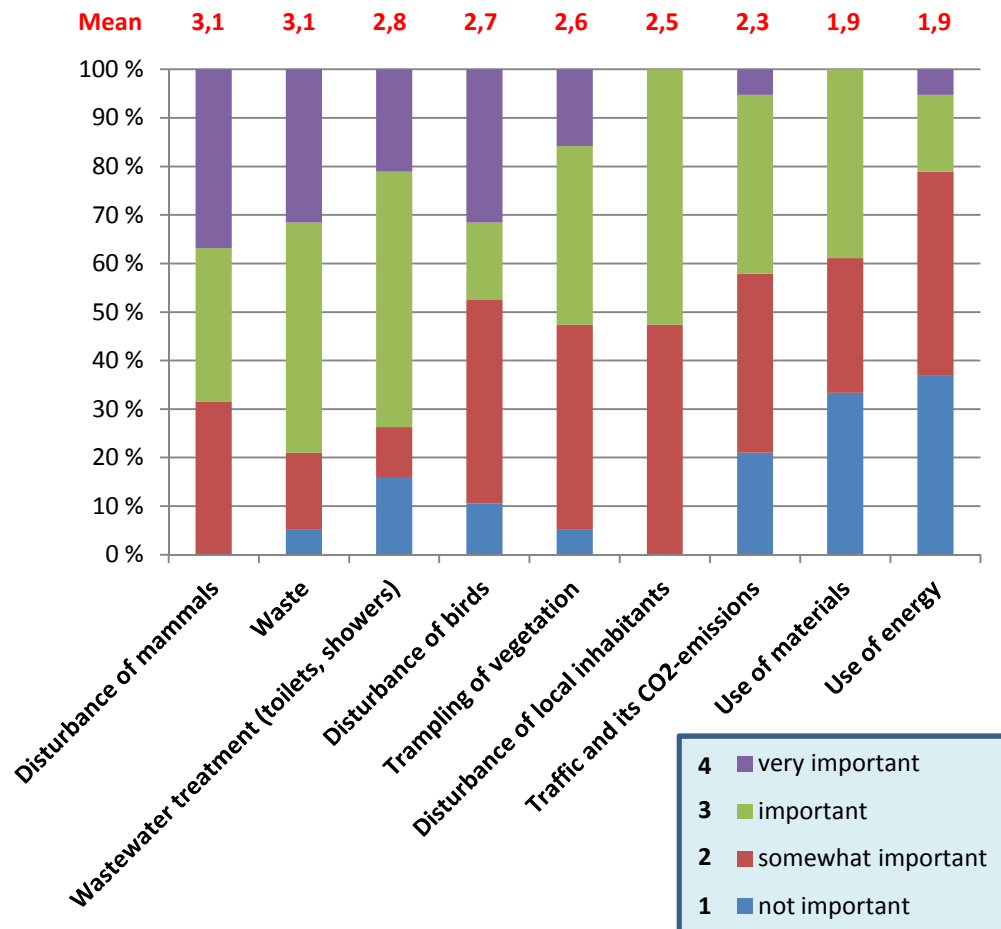
- Canada
- United States

Limitations of the survey

- The number of respondents was 19 federations, which were, fortunately, representing four different continents.
- It is possible that the survey gives too positive picture of orienteering's world-wide efforts in environmental issues. The results may be skew due the fact that probably the federations that answered were mostly those who had taken at least some actions in environmental issues.
- It is also possible that some federations skipped answering because they did not consider environmental issues an important factor in their national operational environment.
- There is also a possible error arising from the respondents' understanding of the concepts used and meaning of the question. Therefore, some conclusions made may not be correct.
- Taken into account these limitations, we can say that the survey gives an overall picture of the state of environmental issues in different parts of the orienteering world.

QUESTION 1: Importance of different environmental aspects

How would you assess the importance of the following environmental aspects of orienteering in your country (i.e., what aspects are important from the viewpoint of the public conception of orienteering)?



Comments:

- TOP 2: Disturbance of mammals & waste
- Trampling of vegetation has relatively low rank.
- Traffic not seen a big problem although it has the biggest environmental impact.
- Low use of energy & materials is one of orienteering's strengths.

QUESTION 1: Importance of different environmental aspects



Country specific observations

Waste

Very important: BUL, SRB, POR, SVK, FIN, TUR

Not important: GER

Wastewater treatment

Very important: BUL, SRB, SVK, USA

Not important: GER, NZL, GBR

Disturbance of birds

Very important: GER, SUI, SWE, SVK, USA, GBR

Not important: AUS, NZL

Trampling of vegetation

Very important: CAN, USA

Important: FIN, SWE, CHN, ESP, NZL, POR

Not important: ITA

Traffic and its CO₂-emissions

Very important: BUL

Not important: GBR, USA, AUS, NZL

Energy

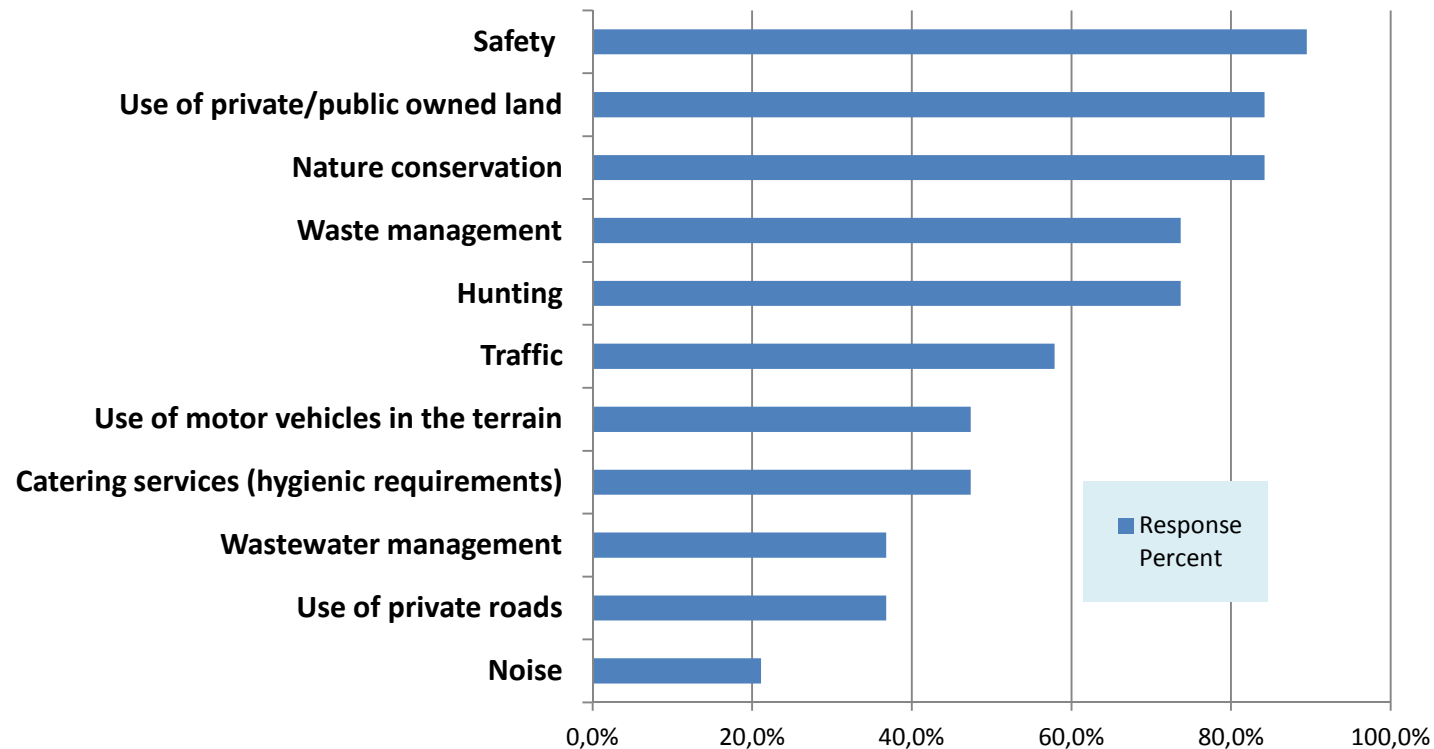
Very important: SWE

Important: TUR, BUL, SUI

Not important: GER, NZL, ITA, AUS, CAN, USA, GBR

QUESTION 2: National environmental legislation related to orienteering

What issues stated in your national environment related legislation have to be taken into account when organising orienteering competitions in your country?

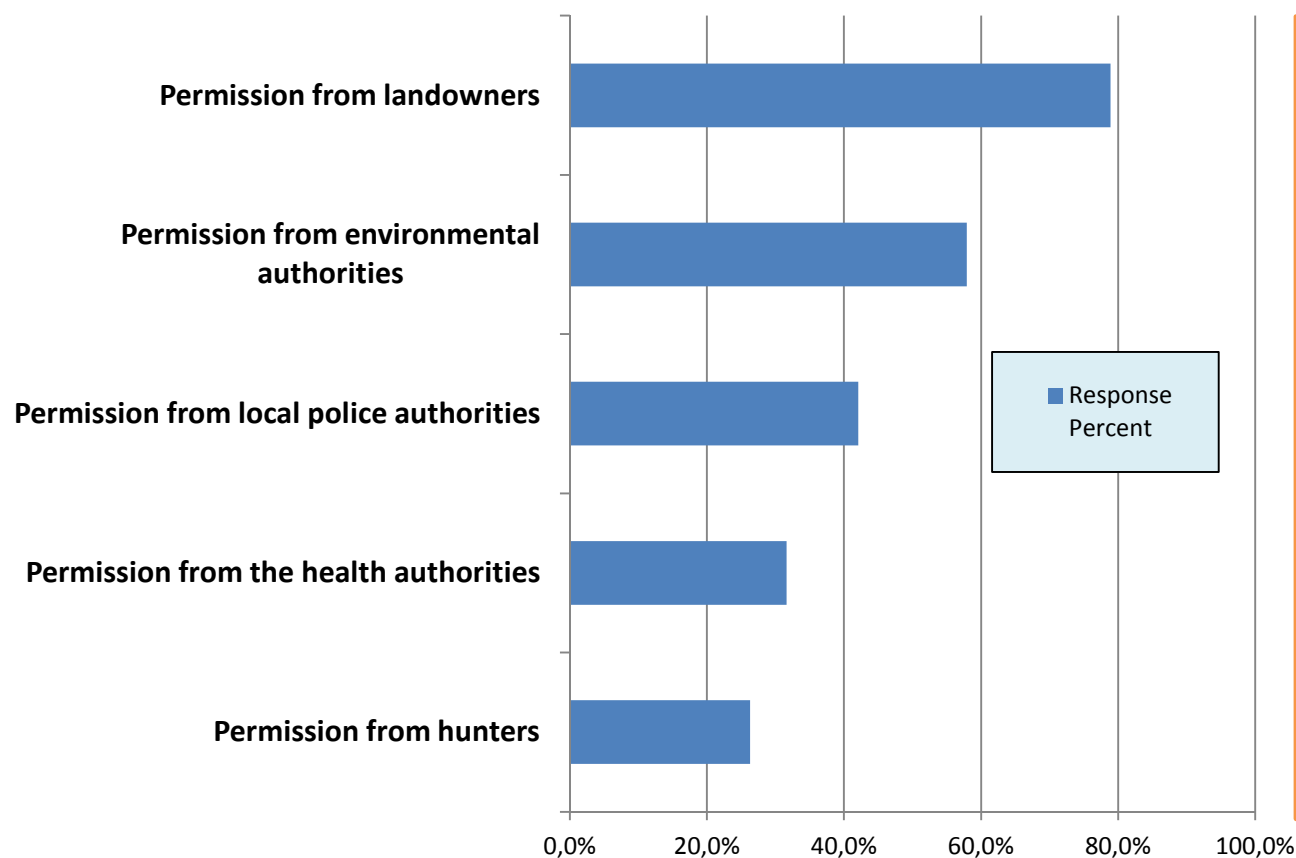


Comments:

- TOP 3: Safety, nature conservation and access to land
- Legislative requirements seem to vary much between different countries

QUESTION 3: Permissions required for organising an orienteering competition

What permissions must the organiser of an orienteering competition have in your country?

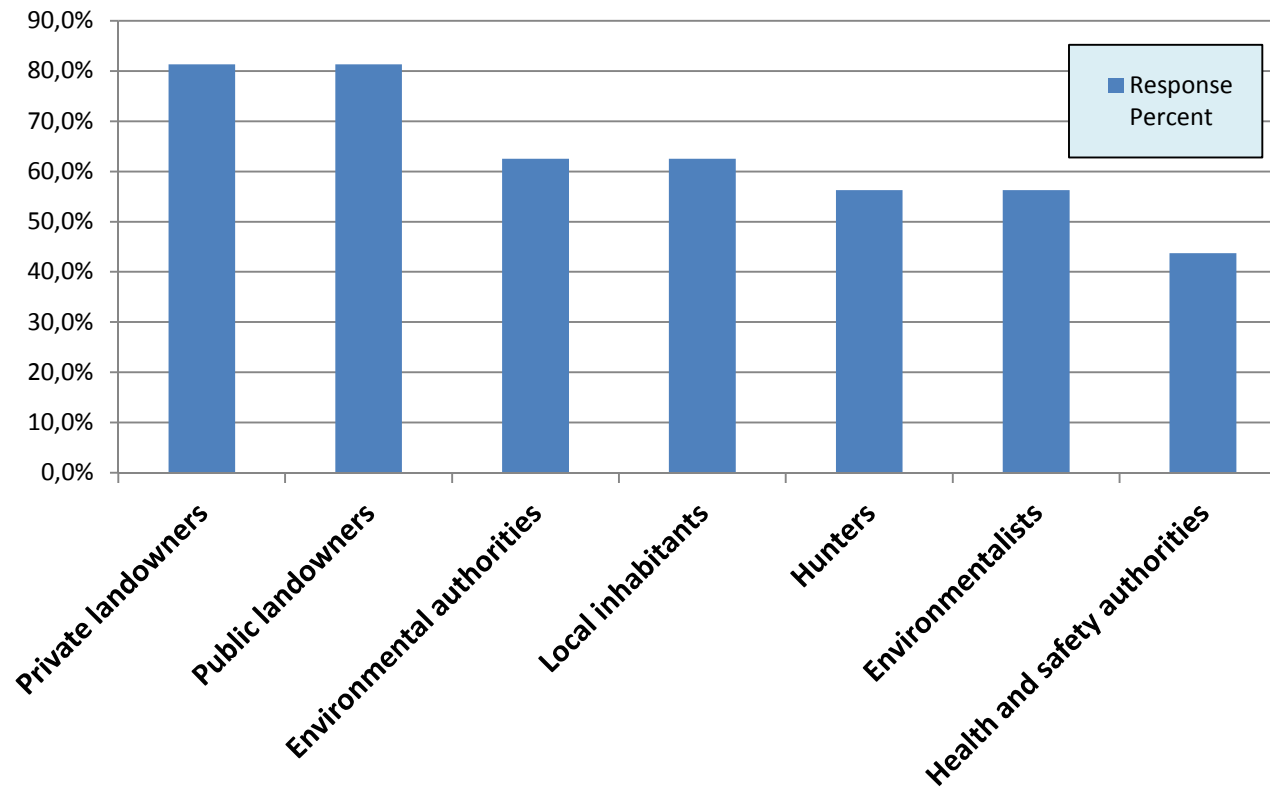


Comments:

- Permission from landowners needed in 80% of the countries
- Landowners' permission not needed: BUL, SUI, CHN, TUR
- Wide variety in required permissions between different countries

QUESTION 4: Cooperation with stakeholders

What kind of cooperation is usually undertaken with the stakeholders in the arrangements of orienteering competitions in your country?



NOTE: 3 respondents skipped the question

Comments:

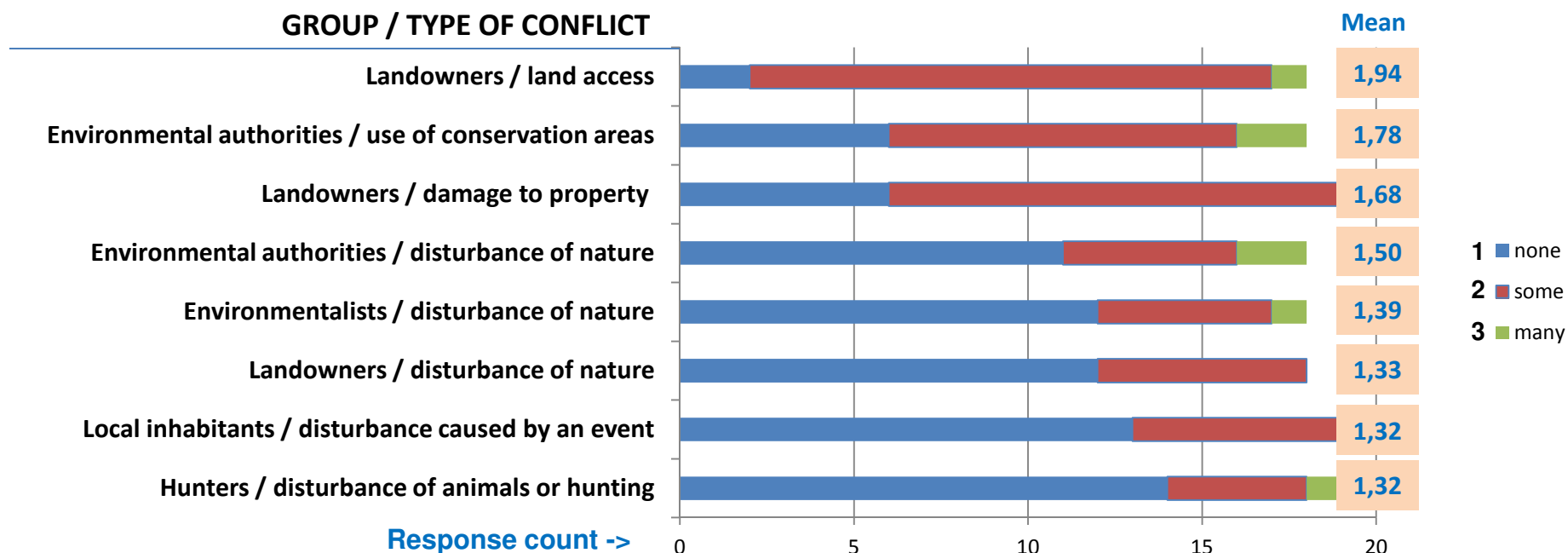
- Great variety in the need and form of cooperation between different countries

Stakeholder group	Examples of the form of cooperation
Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission • Discussion on land use and out-of-bound areas • Information • VIP's in the competition
Hunters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission • Information • Discussion on the date of the competition • Areas to avoid in course setting
Environmental authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission • Out-of-bound areas • Planning of waste management
Health & safety authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission • Written notice • Safety plan • Catering services (hygienic requirements)
Local inhabitants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information through the media in advance



QUESTION 5: Environmental conflicts

What kind of environmental conflicts have occurred in connection with the organisation of orienteering activities in your country (what is your federation's perception of the occurrence of the conflicts)?



Many conflicts reported in the following cases:

GERMANY: 1) conflicts with hunters who have rented the area for hunting and 2) environmental authorities on the use of conservation areas and disturbance of nature

SWITZERLAND: conflicts with environmental authorities/environmentalists on disturbance of nature

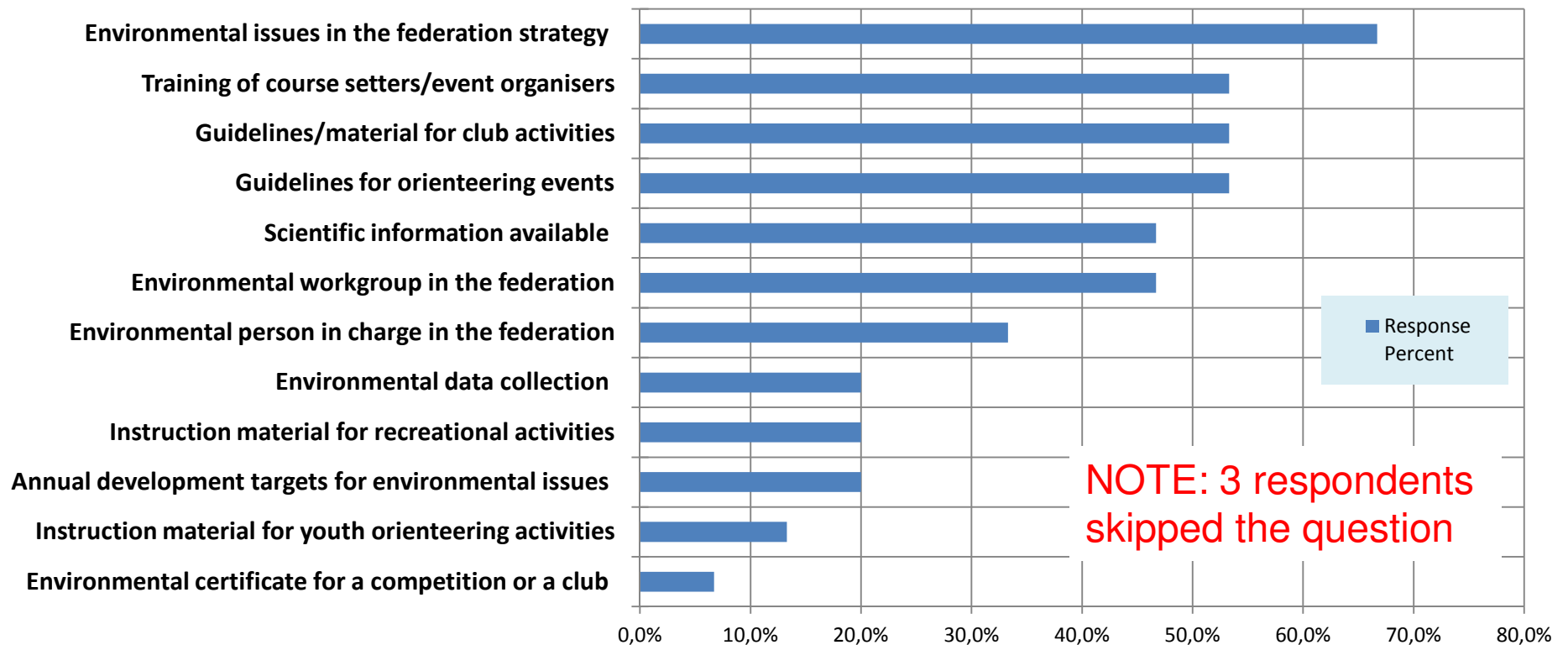
CHINESE TAIPEI: Conflicts with landowners on land access

UNITED STATES: Conflicts with environmental authorities on the use of conservation areas

QUESTION 6: Federation's environmental management



What kind of measures has your national federation taken for the management of environmental issues?



Comments:

- 2/3 of the federations have taken the environment as a strategic viewpoint
- Comprehensive measures of implementing the strategy are missing in most cases
- Improvement needed: national guidelines and training of course setters/event organisers
- Only few federations have produced instruction material for youth and recreational sectors

QUESTION 8: Use of orienteering's green image for marketing the sport

a) Have you used orienteering's green image as an argument when trying to get sponsors for your national federation or large orienteering events? What is your perception of the green image as a selling argument?

- **7 out of 16** respondents reported that they have **not used** green image as a selling argument (3 respondents skipped the question)

Those who answered "yes" gave following comments:

- **SWITZERLAND:** The importance of ecological issues in orienteering sports and the green image of the sport is always pointed out. However, it plays a minor role in the acquisition of sponsors.
- **SPAIN:** The green image and contact with nature gives a very good image for this sport.
- **SWEDEN:** Yes, orienteering is in Sweden recognized as an environmentally friendly sport. A recent study among the Swedish public gave very high marks for environmental issues related to orienteering.
- **CANADA:** We are just undergoing a sponsorship drive and we are using that angle. It's a good one.
- **FINLAND:** We have used green image as an argument when trying to get sponsors but it's not the "top argument". We think that many companies consider orienteering as a green sport. We inform our sponsors that we want to take care of nature and forests because it's our competition arena.

QUESTION 8: Use of orienteering's green image for marketing the sport

b) Have you used orienteering's green image for marketing our sport to new amateurs? In what way?

- **6 out of 17** respondents reported that they have **not used** green image for marketing orienteering for new amateurs (2 respondents skipped the question)

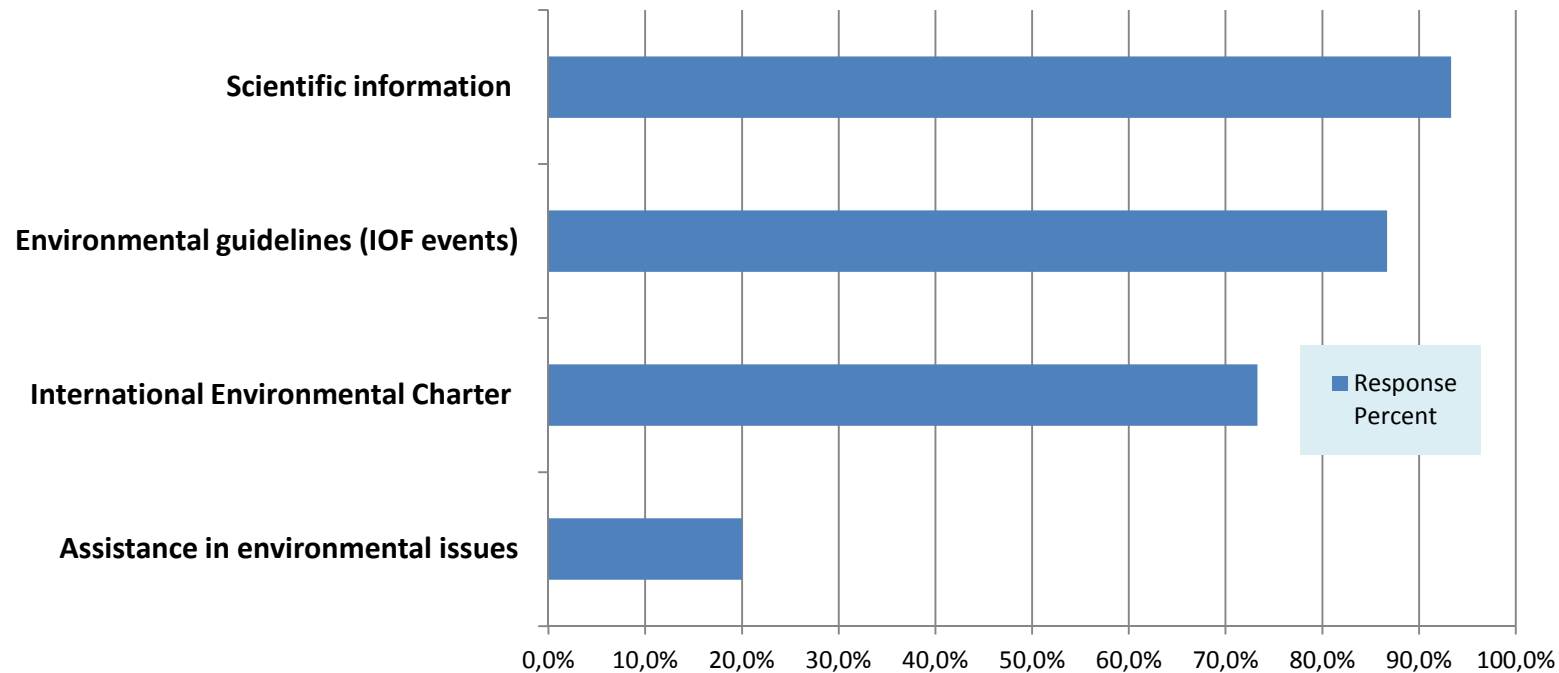
Those who answered "yes" gave following comments:

- **GERMANY:** We try to use the green image for marketing always.
- **SWITZERLAND:** In all our flyers orienteering is presented as an exceptional ecological sport.
- **SPAIN:** New amateurs are attracted to the family sport that respects the environment and is suitable for all ages.
- **AUSTRALIA:** Opportunity to experience nature.
- **SWEDEN:** Yes, primarily in the marketing of O-Ringen where we have certified the event to comply with national environmental standards.
- **CHINESE TAIPEI:** We use images and movies of orienteers in the forest to illustrate new amateurs the green image of the sport.
- **UNITES STATES:** Part of "Discover" campaign.

QUESTION 9: Needs of environmental assistance from the IOF



What kind of assistance would your federation need from the IOF with regard to environmental issues?



Comments:

- Scientific information: dissemination of IOF Environment Commission scientific summaries should be improved and new research studies implemented in new countries on the issues of national interest.
- Environmental guidelines for IOF events and IOF Environmental Charter are considered important.

Conclusions

CURRENT SITUATION

- Great variation from country to country in
 - the importance of different environmental aspects
 - requirements of legislation
 - required permissions for orienteering
- Most of the conflicts with stakeholder groups have occurred with landowners on land access and with environmental authorities on the use of conservation areas. It seems that the number of conflicts is on the manageable level.
- There is some concern about the disturbance of nature due to orienteering among landowners, environmental authorities and environmentalists. However, this seems to be only a local problem and does not threaten orienteering.

THE FUTURE

- It is predictable that in the future environmental issues will be more and more on the focus of politicians, authorities and the public. Even though the environmental impacts of orienteering are small, a wise strategy for our sport is to take a proactive approach in the management of environmental issues.
- This survey gives evidence that there is a clear need for more systematic and comprehensive environmental policies and measures in the IOF member federations. Orienteering's green image should also be used more efficiently for marketing our sport and gaining positive PR among the public.
- The assistance of the IOF is mostly needed in the dissemination of scientific information and formulation of orienteering's Environmental Charter and IOF Event Guidelines. Based on the findings of this survey, the guidelines have to be very general and connected with the event organising process (Event quality system).