



STATE OF RIVERS AROUND THE WORLD

INSPIRING ACTION TO **PROTECT, PRESERVE & EXPLORE** OUR WORLD'S RIVERS

Rivers are Life is on a mission to raise public awareness of the importance of our planet's rivers through a unique movement that reaches an active, global audience. Through dynamic films, diverse partnerships, and the support of community-based projects, Rivers are Life is building a global movement that engages river advocates, activists and supporters every day. Rivers are Life is a brand imagined by BeAlive – a digital and media production company focused on moments that matter.

THE SURVEY

Rivers are Life commissioned the global, inaugural "State of Rivers Around the World" survey, in partnership with Louisiana State University, of 6,645 people across 14 countries and four continents, including North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. The survey covered:

- Knowledge and Interest in Environmental Issues
- Importance of Rivers
- Concerns on Environmental Issues
- Perception of River Health and Pollution
- Knowledge and Ability to Clean Rivers
- Responsibility and Action for River Health
- Plastics and Trash in Oceans and Rivers
- Agricultural and Industrial Influence
- Recreational Use of Rivers
- Optimism for Future River Health

KEY FINDINGS: RIVER POLLUTION IS A GLOBAL ISSUE

The majority of respondents agree that river health is an issue that needs to be addressed.

- **9 in 10** people report rivers are important to climate change mitigation.
- **91%** say climate change needs to be acted on.
- **86%** agree that river pollution greatly affects human health.
- Majority would not eat a fish out of their local river.
- Two-thirds rated their local river health as fair/poor.
- **64%** believe plastic pollution has a large impact on the environment.
- Only **36%** agree that the health of their local rivers is getting better.
- Climate change was perceived as the #1 most concerning issue, followed by pollution, access to clean water, education and human rights.

GREATER EDUCATION IS NEEDED

The majority of respondents agree they don't know enough about rivers, or how to take action to clean them.

Majority have never taken action to clean their local river.

Nearly **50%** admit they don't know enough about current environmental issues and would like to know a lot more.

When ranking who is responsible for polluting rivers, people in Asia (**42%**) and those in South America (**36%**) felt that individuals were most at fault, while those in North America (**41%**) and Europe (**42%**) were most likely to select corporations.

74% participants believe more public awareness will improve the health of rivers (#2 greater law enforcement, #3 improved sanitation).

63% say lack of attention to the issue is a major obstacle to reducing water pollution.

81% agree that rivers are a primary freshwater source for human and animal consumption.

Younger generations across the board are more inclined to learn more about rivers compared to Baby Boomers.

URGENT ACTION IS REQUIRED

The majority of respondents agree rivers can reduce the impacts of climate change and addressing human behavior will help reduce water pollution.

- **76%** believe that human behavior is the biggest obstacle to reducing water pollution.
- **50%** believe no one is protecting their local rivers.
- **72%** of people around the world would like stricter policies or more regulation to curb river pollution.
- Only **10%** of participants strongly agree that their countries' leaders care about the health of rivers.
- **88%** believe there should be stronger legislation to prevent sewage drainage into rivers.
- Plastics and other trash in the ocean were cited as a top concern across all generations, with sewage pollution in rivers being a significant worry, especially in South America and Southeast Asia.
- **59%** of respondents plan to clean their local rivers in 2024.

TAKING ACTION

Providing education and solutions for those looking to get involved in addressing the issue and protecting our rivers is vital. That's why Rivers are Life is on a mission to encourage people to protect, preserve, and explore our world's rivers through awareness, visual storytelling and more.

METHODOLOGY:

Conducted by SAVANTA, a market research consultancy. Dates of fielding: October 3, 2023 to October 18, 2023. This survey was conducted in: U.S., Europe (UK, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain), South America (Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, and Peru), and Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand). The sample populations were: U.S. (n=1,590), Europe (n=1,925), South America (n=1,487), and SE Asia (n=1,643). The survey was in an online format and was conducted in English, German, Spanish, French, Portuguese (BR), Italian, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Thai, and Indonesian.

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