



Efforts to Advance Awareness, Understanding and Action around Ocean Acidification

Findings from baseline visitor surveys at leading partner institutions

UPDATED December 21, 2012

Prepared by Douglas Meyer with Wei Ying Wong and Bill Mott

Overview

- **Purpose**
- **Participation**
- **Findings**
 - Visitor awareness and concern about ocean acidification
 - Visitor expectations and appreciation of conservation information
 - Aquarium and science center visits as activation points
- **Conclusion**
- **Appendix: Relevant findings from the 12th site**

Purpose

Goals for the survey

- Establish a baseline for current visitor awareness and concern about the specific issue of ocean acidification
- Explore visitor expectations, trust and appreciation in relation to the ocean conservation information provided by aquariums and science centers
- Test the hypothesis that aquariums and science center visits are activation points (i.e. excellent opportunities for engaging the public on ocean issues)

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Participation

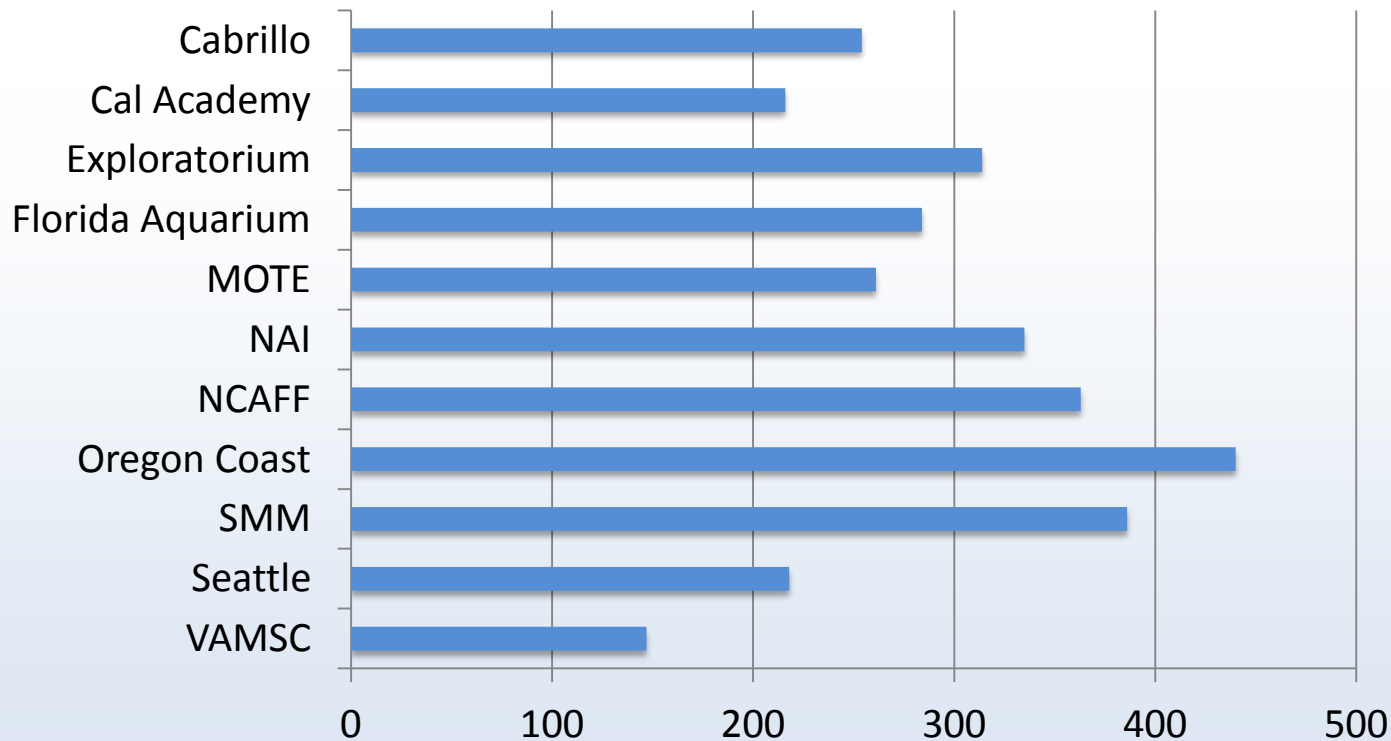
Selection of 12 partner institutions

- Cabrillo Marine Aquarium
- California Academy of Sciences (Steinhardt Aquarium)
- [Exploratorium](#)
- Florida Aquarium
- MOTE
- National Aquarium - Baltimore (NAI)
- North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher (NCAFF)
- Oregon Coast Aquarium
- [Pacific Science Center \(Appendix data only\)](#)
- [Science Museum of Minnesota \(SMM\)](#)
- Seattle Aquarium
- Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center (VAMSC)

Participation

Random sampling of visitors (n=3218)*

By institution

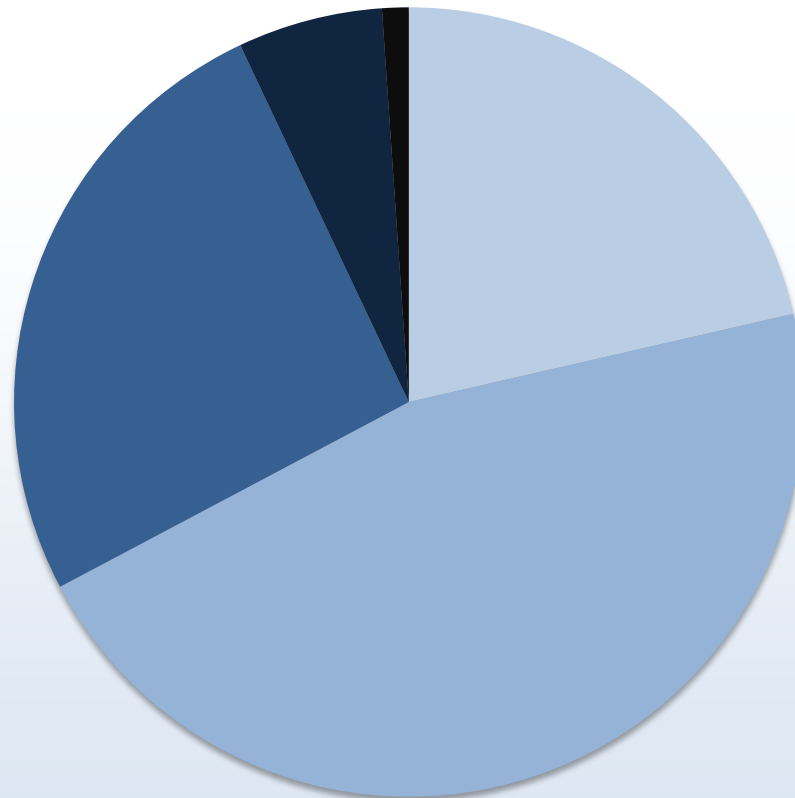


Participation

Random sampling of visitors (n=3218)

By age:

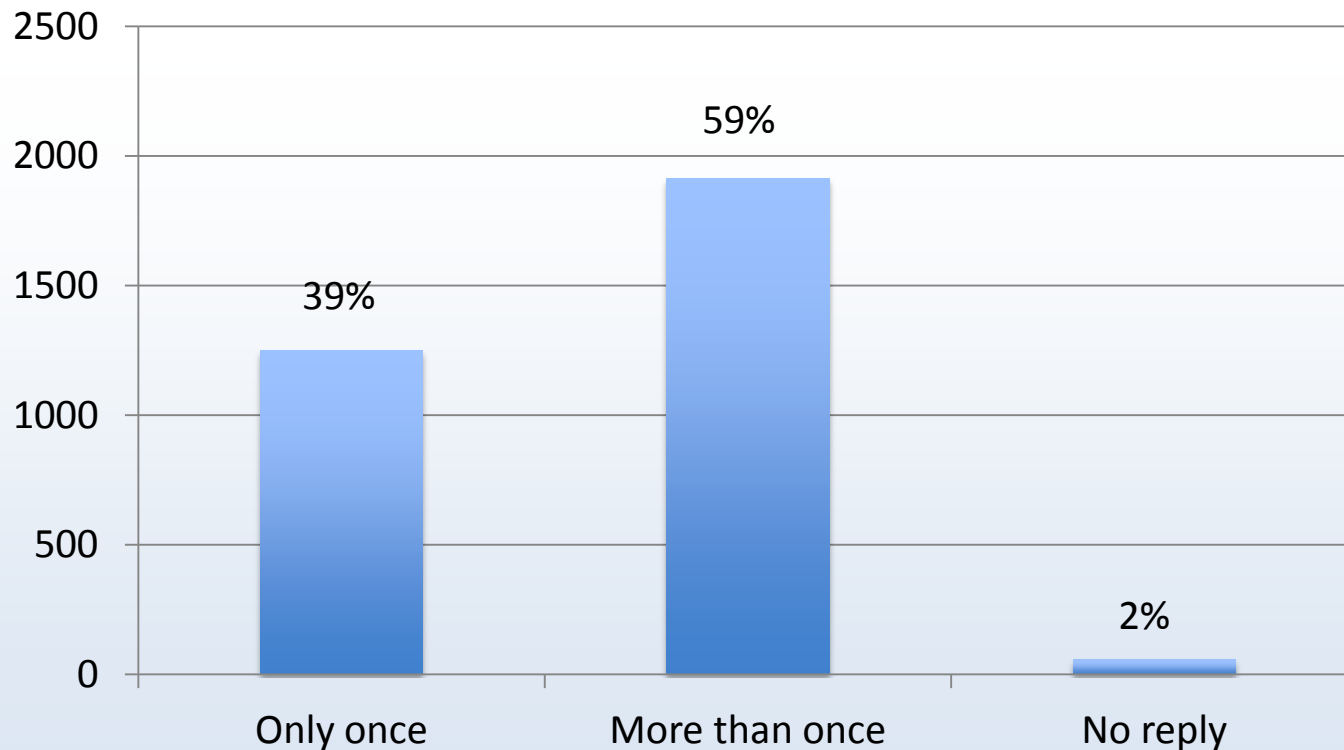
- < 25
- 25-44
- 45-64
- 65 >
- No reply



Participation

Random sampling of visitors (n=3218)

By expected number of visits to zoos and/or aquariums this year:



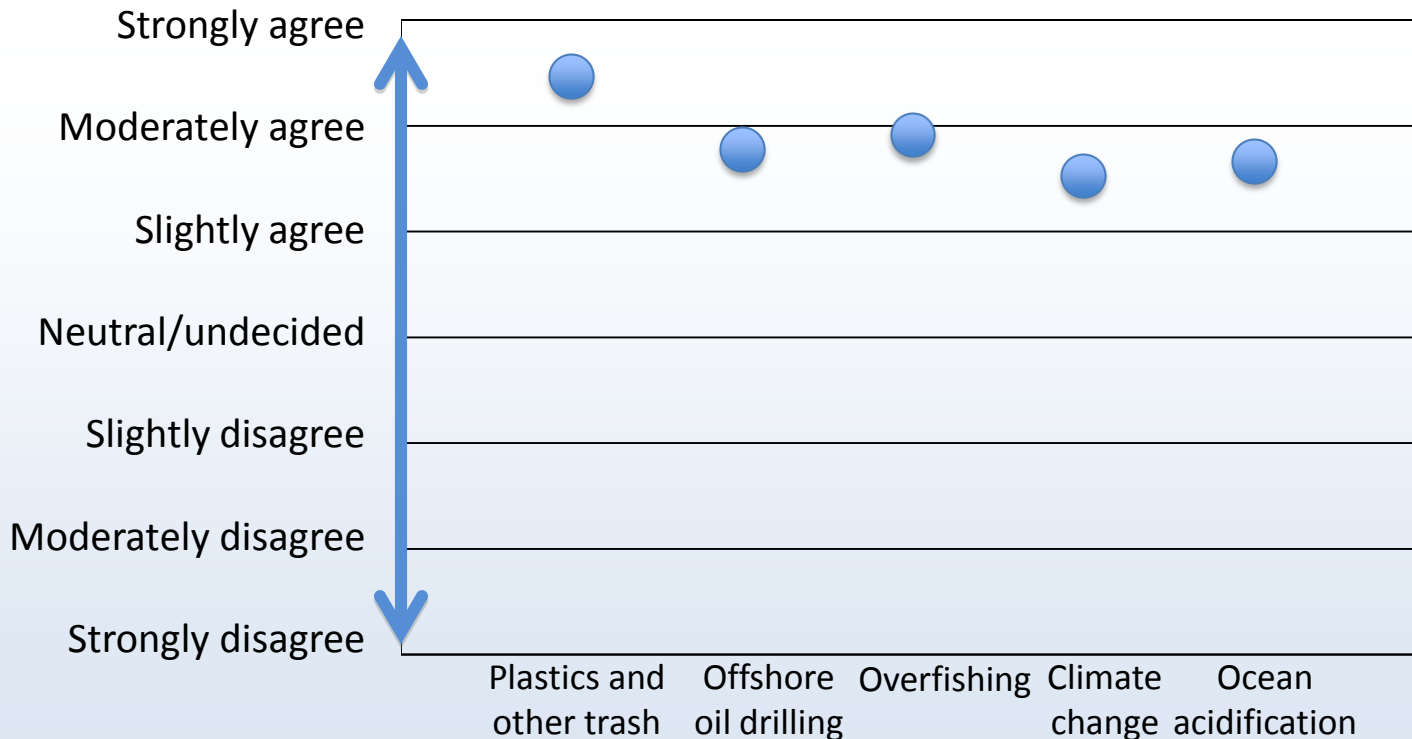
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Findings: Visitor awareness and concern about OA

Visitors express equal or slightly higher concern about all threats

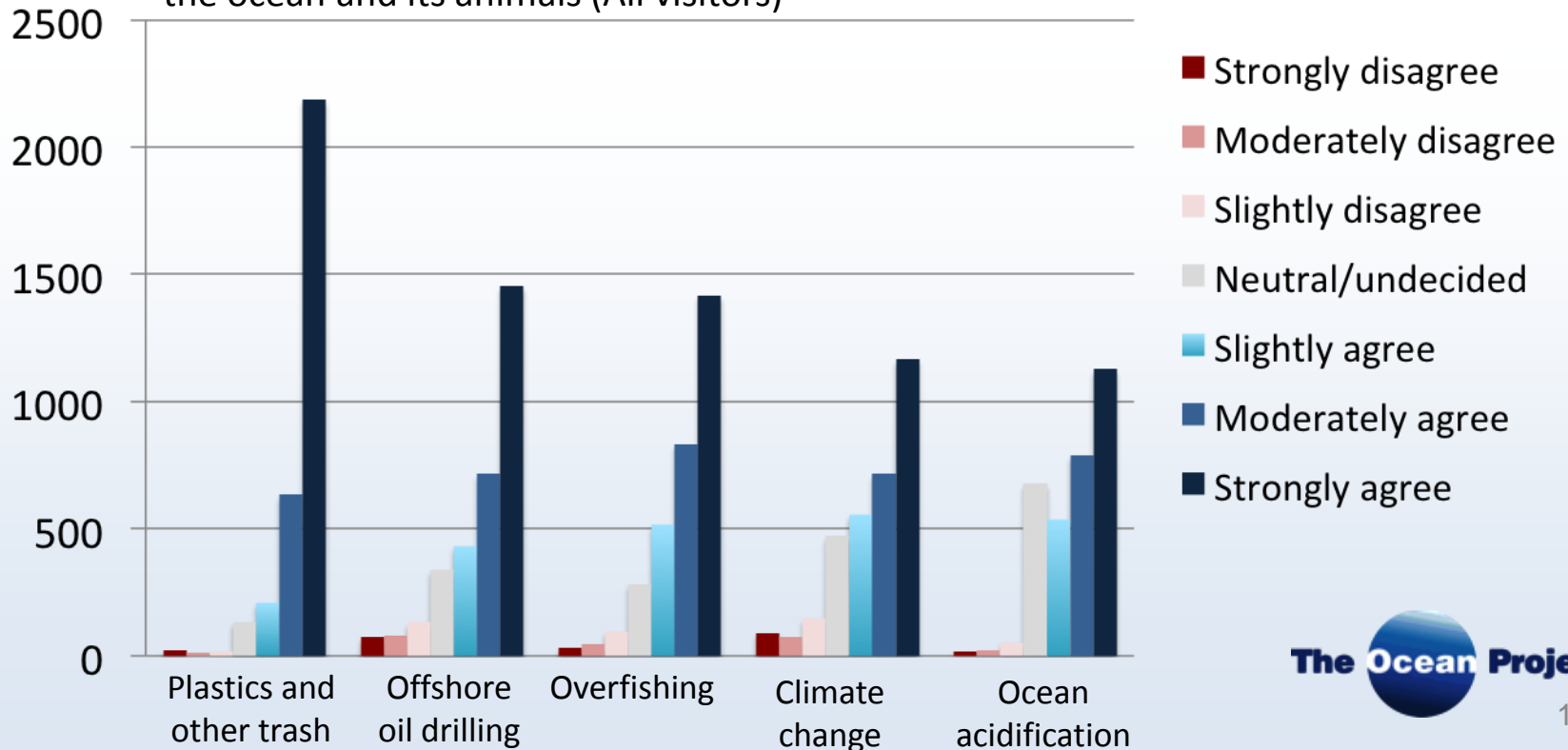
I believe the following pose a significant risk to the health of the ocean and its animals



Findings: Visitor awareness and concern about OA

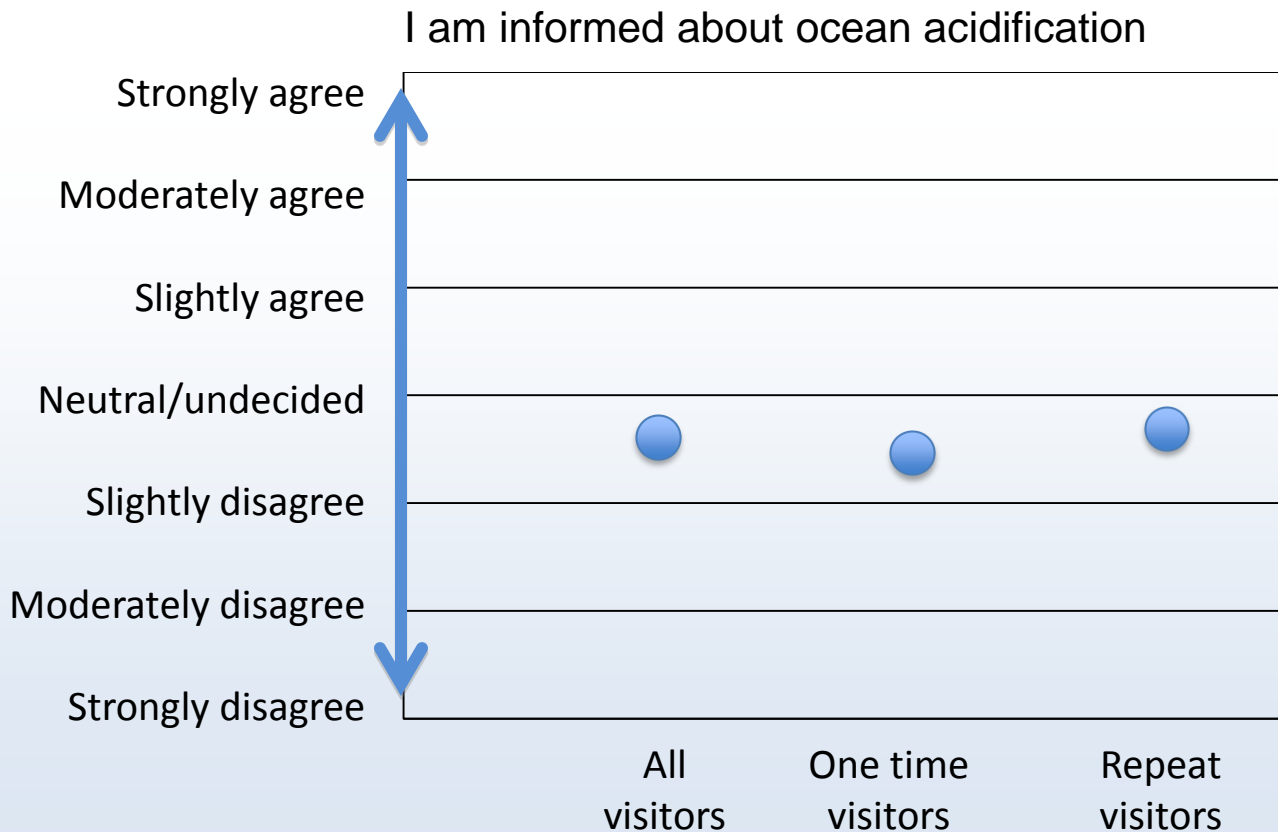
While sharing broader public's highest relative concern about debris

I believe the following pose a significant risk to the health of the ocean and its animals (All visitors)



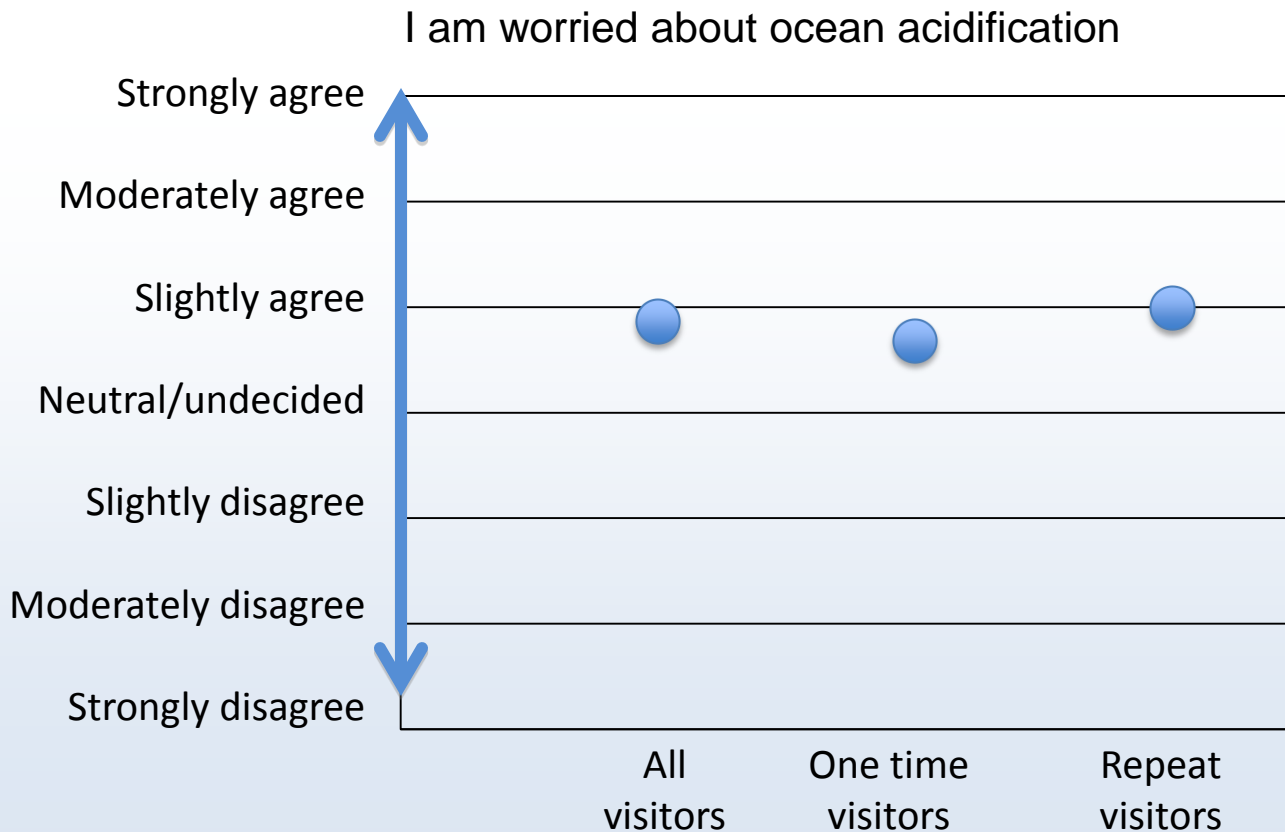
Findings: Visitor awareness and concern about OA

Visitors are more aware, yet still largely uninformed about OA



Findings: Visitor awareness and concern about OA

Visitors are also more concerned about OA



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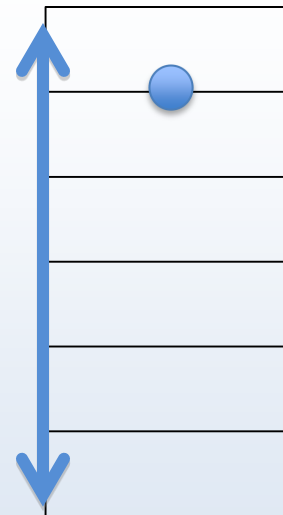
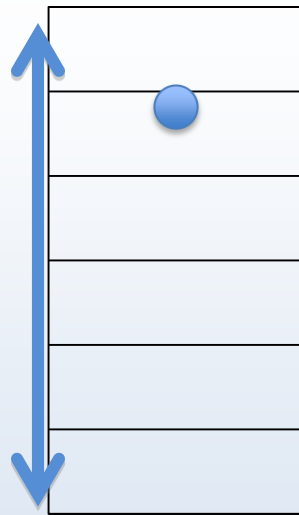
Findings: Visitor expectations and appreciation

Visitors expect and trust the information aquariums give them*

During my visit, I expect to learn about ways people like me can help conserve the ocean and its animals

I believe this aquarium is a good source of information about ocean conservation

- Strongly agree
- Moderately agree
- Slightly agree
- Neutral/undecided
- Slightly disagree
- Moderately disagree
- Strongly disagree

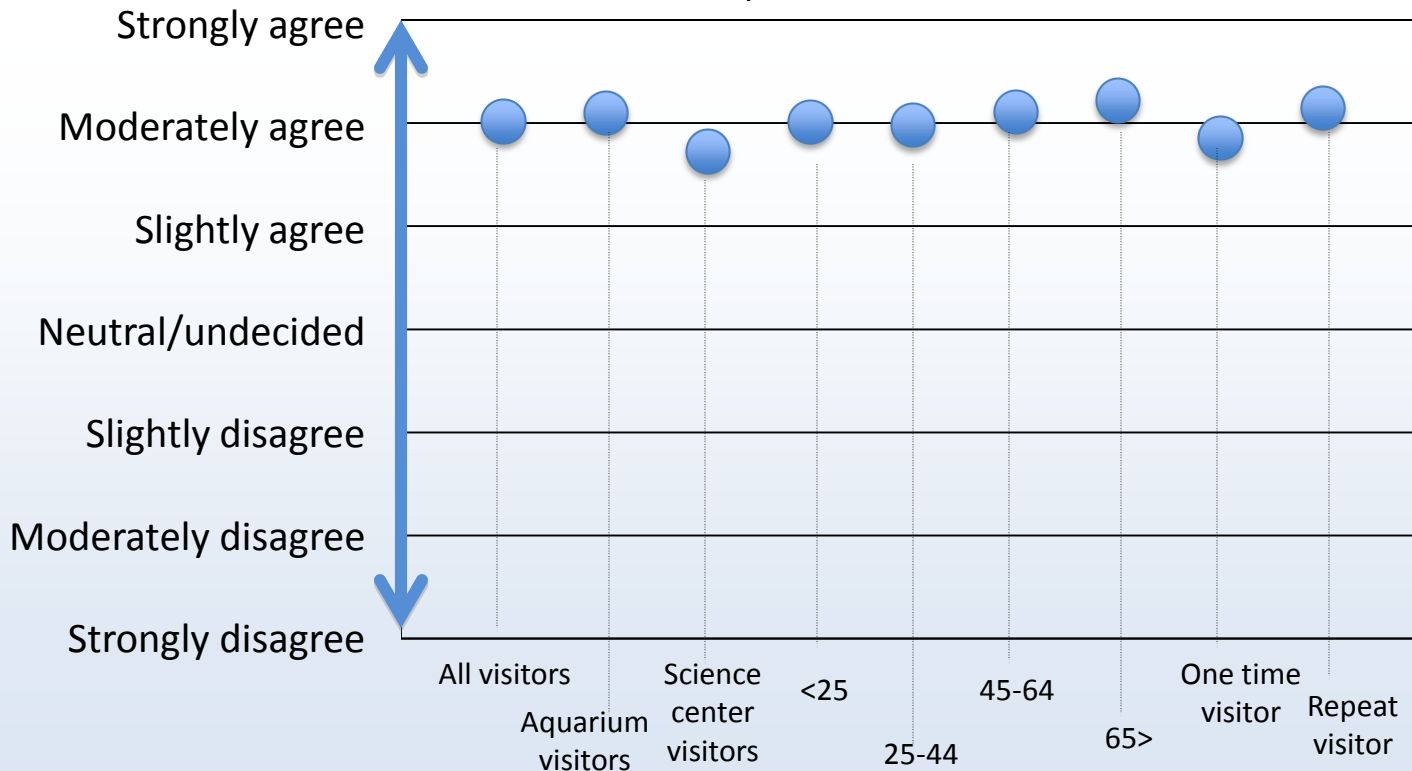


*Response shown for aquarium visitors only due to the wording of the question

Findings: Visitor expectations and appreciation

Receiving conservation information is part of a good experience

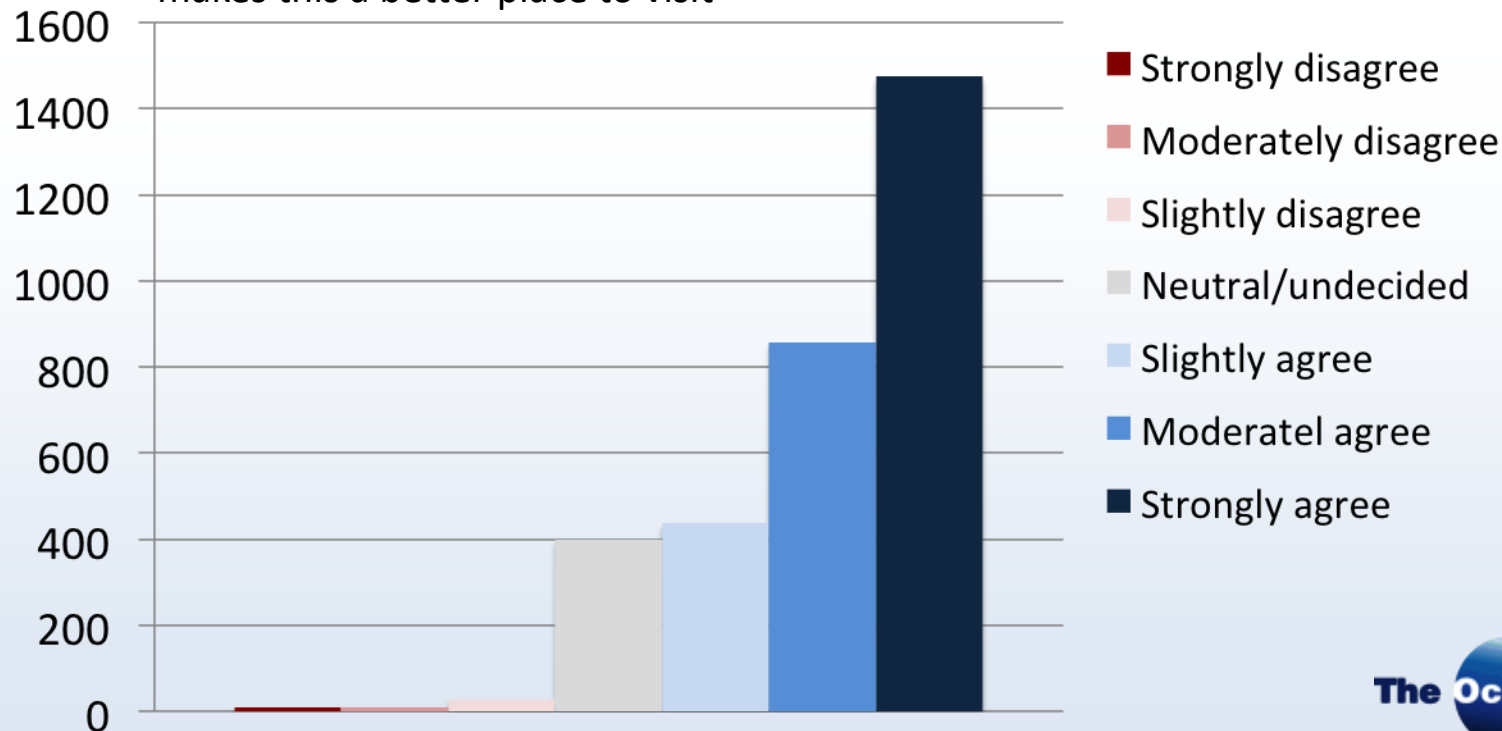
Learning how to help conserve the ocean and its animals makes this a better place to visit



Findings: Visitor expectations and appreciation

Receiving conservation information is part of a good experience

Learning how to help conserve the ocean and its animals makes this a better place to visit



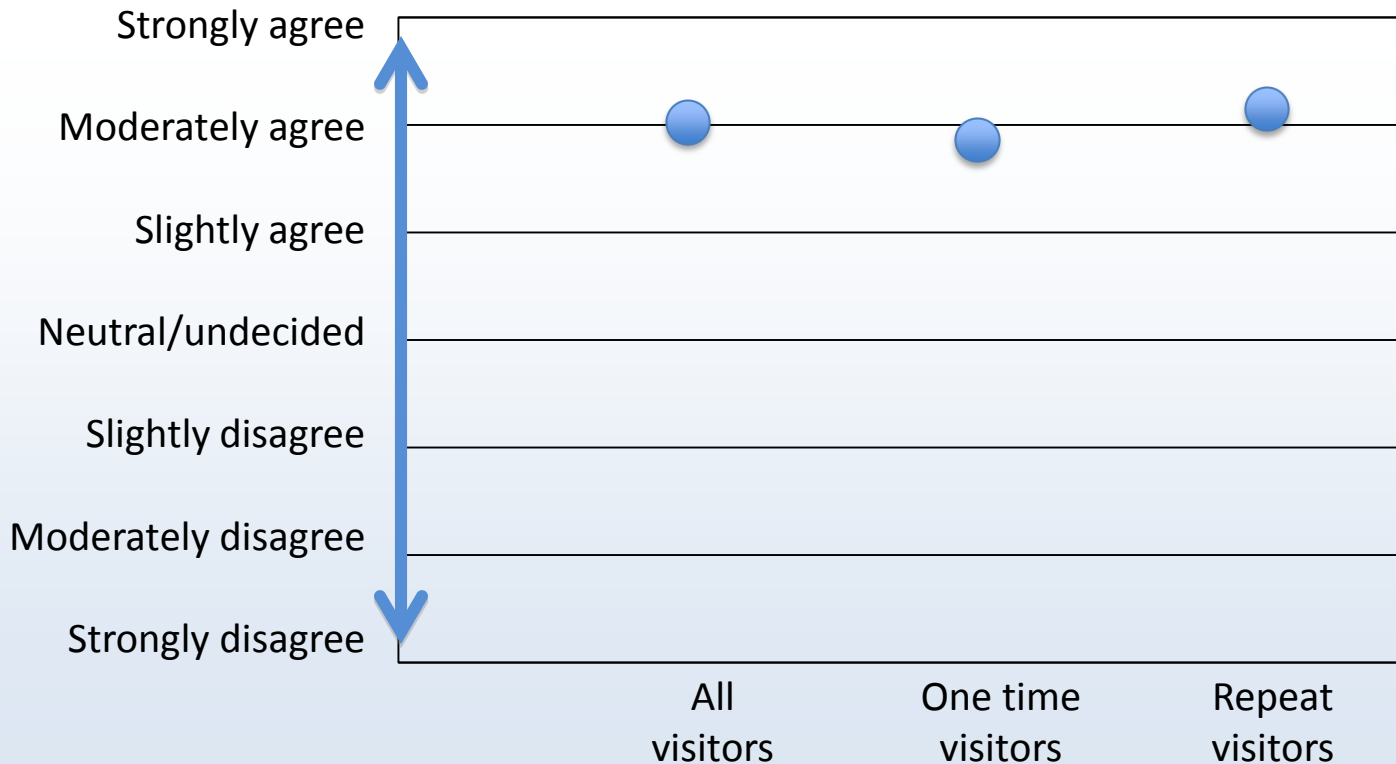
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Findings: Visits as activation points

Visitors express higher levels of personal concern for the ocean

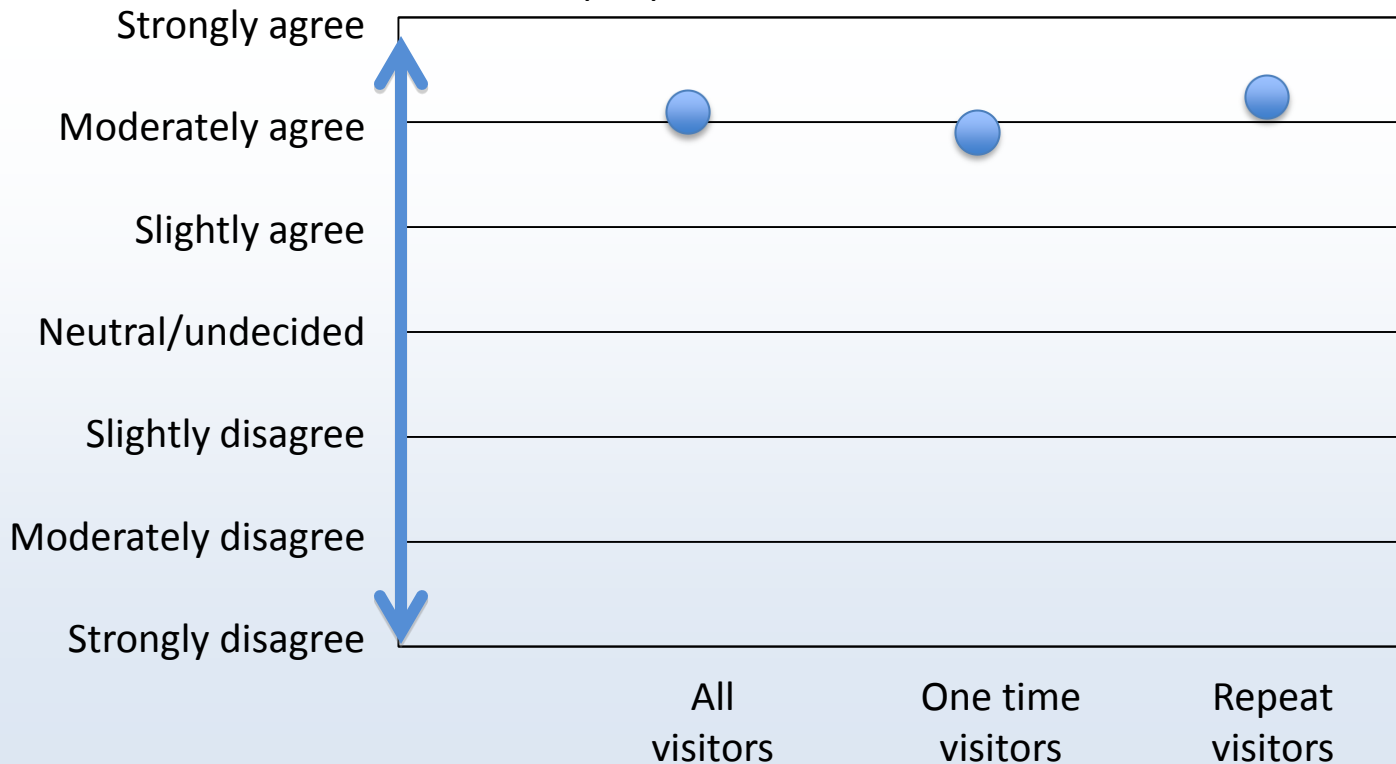
I worry about the future health of the ocean and its animals



Findings: Visits as activation points

While sharing the broader public's beliefs about personal impact

The health of the ocean and its animals is affected by the actions of people like me



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Conclusion

Strong evidence to support the following:

- Visitors have greater interest and concern about ocean acidification
- Visitors expect, trust and appreciate ocean conservation information, seeing receipt of such information as part of good experience
- Aquariums and science center visits are activation points, offering excellent opportunities for engaging the public on ocean issues

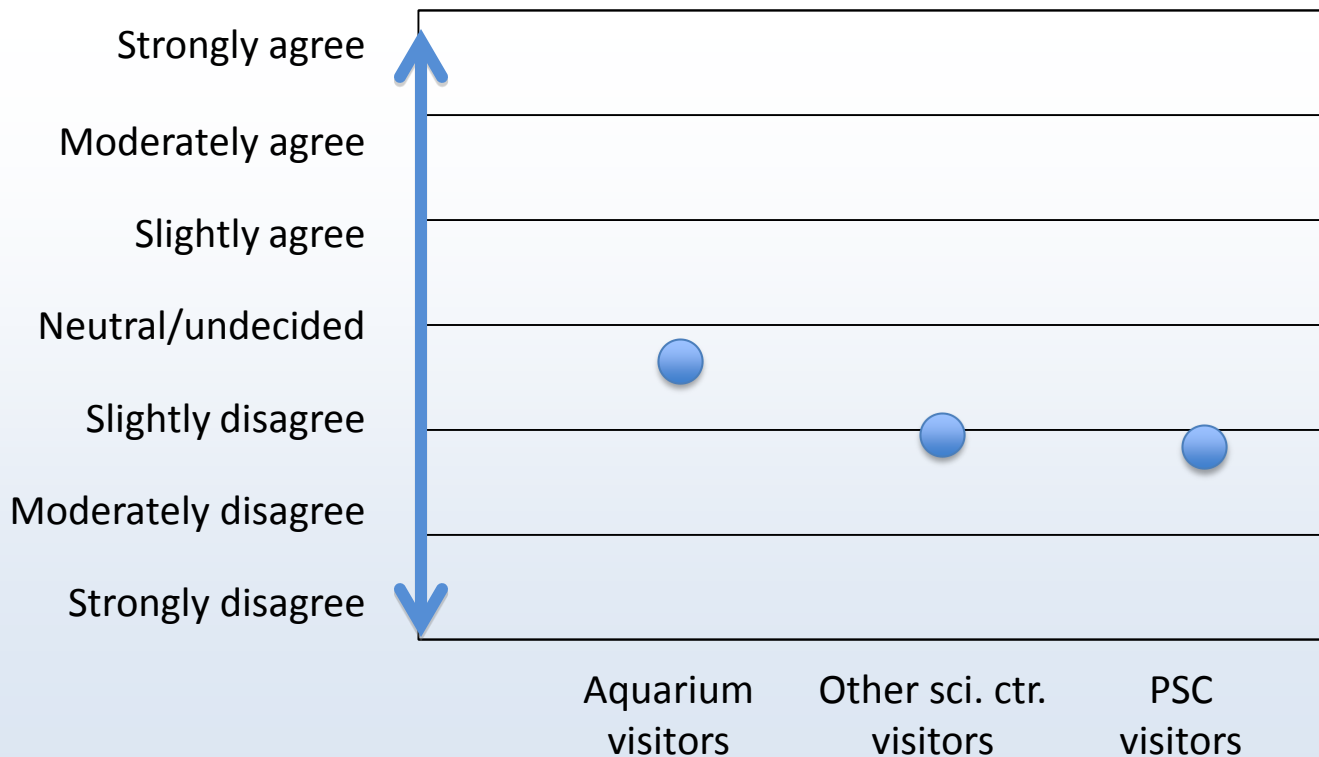
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Appendix: Findings from the 12th site (PSC n=246)

As with other science center visitors, more likely to sense the problems

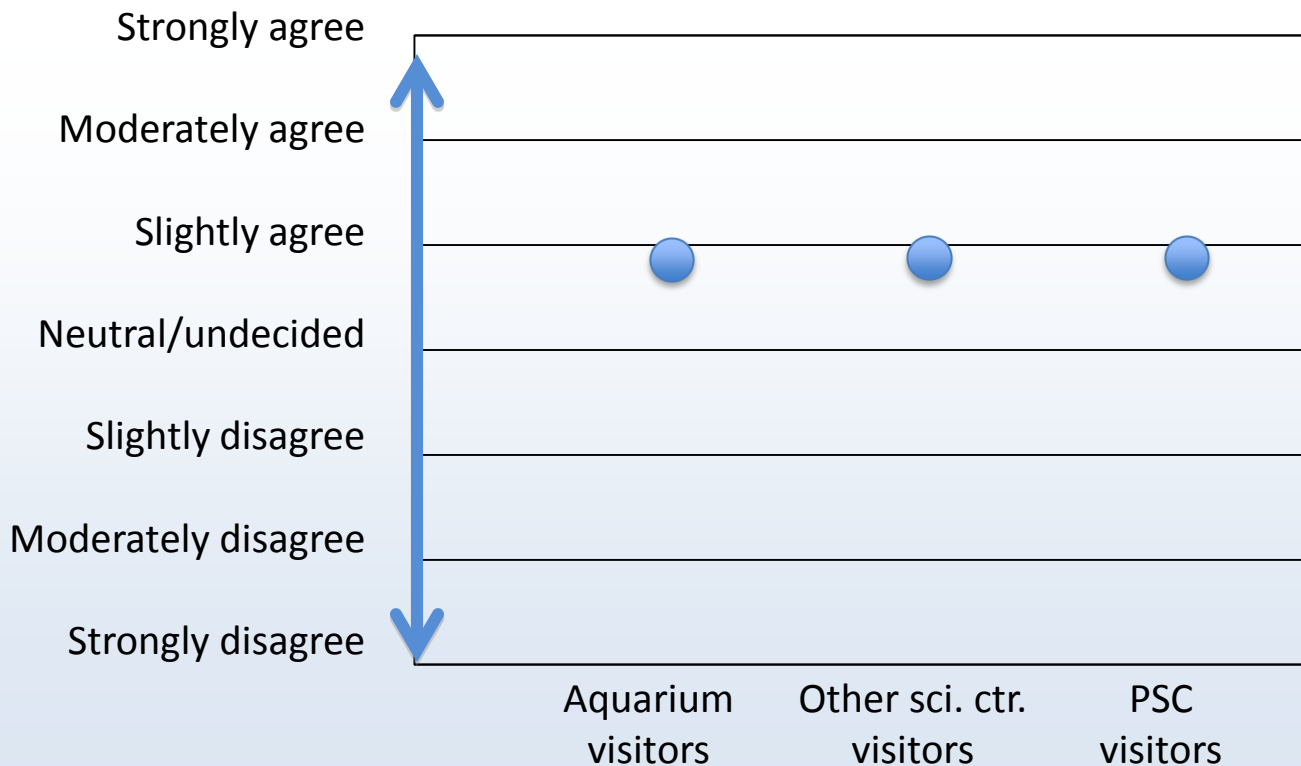
The ocean and its animals are in good health



Appendix: Findings from the 12th site (PSC n=246)

As with other science center visitors, slightly greater concern about OA

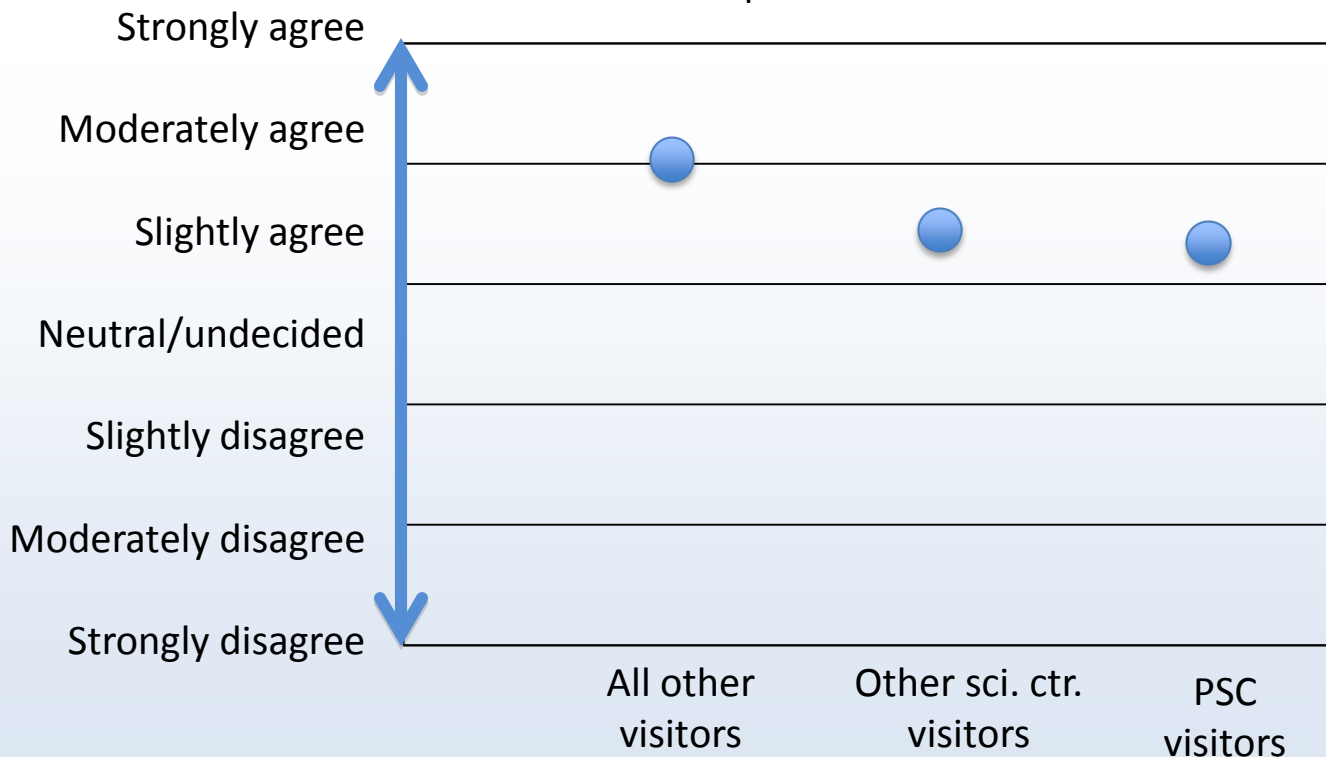
I am worried about ocean acidification



Appendix: Findings from the 12th site (PSC n=246)

As with other science center visitors, similar expectations in visits

Learning how to help conserve the ocean and its animals makes this a better place to visit



Conclusion (Additional)

Further support for our major findings, as well as additional insights about the differences between aquariums and science centers

- Science center visitors, especially on the West Coast, were more likely to express a general understanding that the ocean is in trouble, as well as a specific concern about ocean acidification
- Science center visitors, as a whole, were less likely to expect information connected to the conservation of the ocean and its animals
- While some regional differences do exist, the differences related to the type of institution (i.e. aquarium or science center) are likely to be more relevant to shaping future outreach efforts than regional considerations



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