



BEST Survey Overseas Feedback on Covid-19

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1. Background

In this unprecedented situation affecting all the Overseas, the BEST Secretariat launched a short survey targeting local stakeholders in order to understand the impacts of the outbreak on the environment and their activities. Such survey aims to get essential insights and suggestions on mitigation measures and how we could all adapt and react to this crisis. It also shows IUCN commitments to give a voice and accompany local actors at the forefront of nature conservation on the ground in a cooperative approach.

2. Methodology

The survey was launched on 15 April and ran until 3 May 2020. It consisted mainly of open questions, available in both English and French. Answers were anonymous.

The respective link to the survey:

<https://framaforms.org/best-overseas-feedback-covid-19-1586335740>

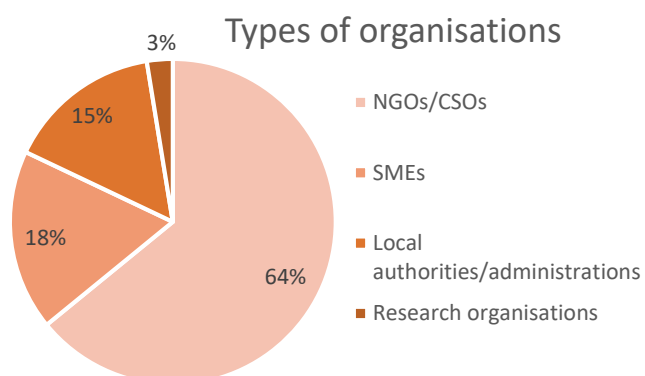
<https://framaforms.org/programme-best-retour-des-outr-mer-sur-le-covid-19-1586680370>

3. Participation

39 organisations took part in the survey

Including 23 former BEST beneficiaries,
i.e. ± 25% of them

11 ORs and OCTs from Amazonia, Indian Ocean, Macaronesia, Pacific and Caribbean

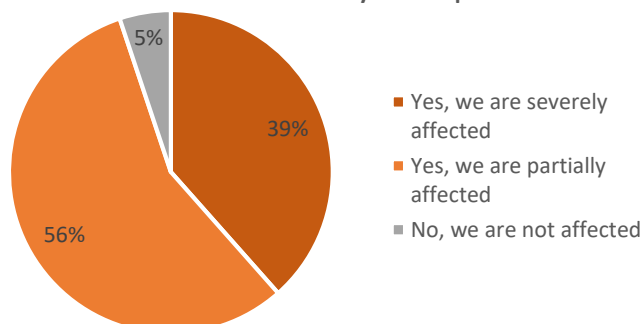


4. Outcomes

Except a few specificities, the outcomes developed underneath are quite similar across the different territories and organisations.

95%* of the respondents are affected by the crisis, independently of the gravity of the outbreak

Has the COVID-19 outbreak and associated measures disturbed your operations so far?



**The two negative replies stemmed out of a very specific context*

Problems encountered, priorities and measures taken

Almost **all programmes are suspended**. Educational activities are all on hold and field works are reduced significantly, with dire consequences on the ground.

All respondents stressed the need to resume their activities as soon as possible and already try to go on site whenever they can.

Even when working from home is relevant, organisations are **rarely equipped to telework** in territories where the internet connection is rather limited.

Respondents are often facing a **shortage of manpower** (volunteers, students, scientists) and **difficulties related to procurement** (e.g. supply delays), exacerbated by the travel restrictions. Keeping their network alive is of paramount importance.

Organisations are already confronted with **severe financial issues** while others will face them later on. "*La seule mesure d'atténuation possible est de ne pas se payer*". In April already, 27% of the organisations with at least 5 FTE put staff under partial unemployment or did not renew contracts.

All anticipate a reduction of funding putting the existence of some at risk. One organisation stated that priority will be given to projects that secure jobs.

A strong **lack of support from the authorities** is perceived, on areas which are not considered priorities.

Consequences will last far beyond the end of sanitary crisis and the lockdown. There is **no visibility** for 2020 and beyond. A lot of territories and respondents heavily rely on tourism.

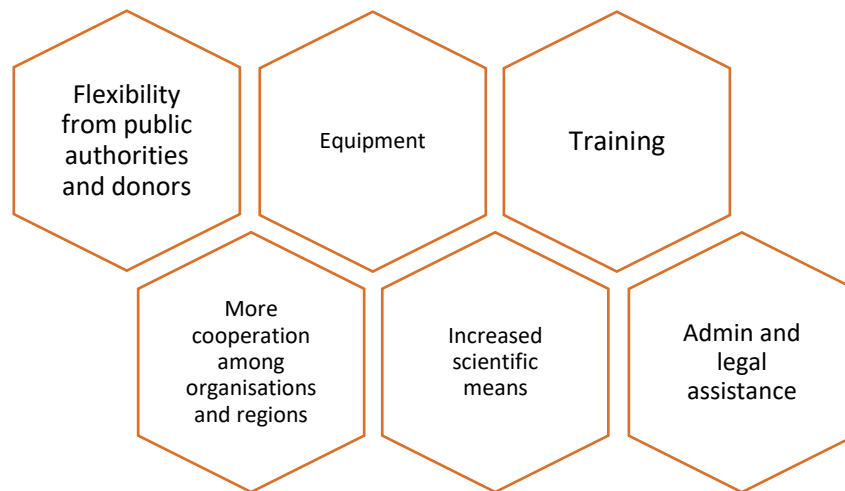
Another concrete example pointed out on education: *students will need to catch up on the programme, hence interventions on the environment are likely to be completely put aside*.

Mainstreaming biodiversity issues in all EU programmes, **awareness raising** and the **linkages between health and the environment** were mentioned as of utmost importance in the aftermath of the crisis.

Support needed

85% of the respondents stressed the needs for further financial support

In addition, the following needs were emphasised:



Conclusions from the respondents:

This crisis will bring new challenges to our outermost regions, which, without specific follow-up, will increase inequalities with the rest of Europe.

Nous espérons que ce message porté par des citoyens sera audible et pris avec toute son attention.

Un proverbe mahorais dit:

"La seule chose qui appartient à un être humain est sa place sous terre."

A nous de profiter de cette épidémie pour accepter que rien ne nous appartient, rien ne nous est acquis et surtout développer la part sociale, culturelle dans notre développement.