



Young People and Nature in Germany

Some Results of the Survey
"Jugendreport Natur 2006"

Rainer Brämer 7/2007

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Science by different methods

Nature sociology

Topic:

The subjective relationship of human beings
to their natural environment

Key question:

Which rôle does nature
play in everyday life?

Key factors:

knowledge, experience,
attitudes, behaviour

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Basic conditions of nature sociology :

**Living in a
glassmenagerie**

behind the glass

living, working, learning
spare time, sports, consumption,
in cars, buses and trains

in front of the glass

TV, PC, gameboy, internet, mail, mobile, ...



Reaction of adults

Back to nature

booming outdoor sports, hiking, gardening

**Reaction
of young people?**



The answer:

„Jugendreport Natur“

(Young People's attitude towards nature)

1997: „The Bambi-syndrome“

2.500 pupils, 10 – 17 years old, all kinds of schools

2003: „Sustainable alienation from nature“

1.400 pupils, 11 + 14 years old, all kind of schools

2006: „Nature obscure“

2.200 pupils, 11 + 14 years old, all kind of schools

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Young people have

much contact with nature

several times per week:

68% in the garden

47% in fields and meadows

38% in the forest

well tended nature

61% can reach the next forest within 5 minutes

I have often done that before:

66% climbing a tree

53% balancing on a log

45% walking alone in the forest

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Activities in forests during the last summer

I was

67% Hiking → (girls 77%, boys 53%)
 47% Biking
 37% Playing

I did

12% play forest games
 9% visit educational forest trails



Good bye nature (1)

Teenagers like doing this

	12 y.	15 y.
climbing a tree	40%	13%
moutaineering	40%	23%
canoeing	37%	27%
hiking	14%	8%
adventure	75%	56%
wilderness	46%	36%

Is nature only interesting for children?



Good bye nature (2)

I like doing this:

	2002	2005
canoeing	55%	32%
climbing	46%	32%
walking	30%	17%
hiking	28%	11%

Is nature out?

I have never done this before:

23% watching a roe in field or forest
 33% catching a butterfly or a beetle
 61% working on a farm
 63% working in a forest



Living in one's own artificial world

"Cocooning"

Home is like an island
 with connections to the outside world
 through pictures and sound

with full supply of everything needed,
 accompanied by an acoustic wallpaper

House arrest is no punishment,
 "stay-at-home" is no insult

Social network without obligation to time or place:

90% of teenagers own a mobile
 and spend 50% of their budget on it.



A two dimensional world (1)

Average time per day

	All pupils	User
television	93 min	97 min
internet	47 min	67 min
videogames	45 min	65 min
total per day	185 min	229 min
total per week	21 h	27 h

School lessons per week	22 h
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A two dimensional world (2)

	ownership on average	first ownership with ... years
television	77%	9,4
PC	74%	9,8
games console	60%	9,0
internet-access	60%	10,7

Time per day one's own equipment	without	with
television	67 min	102 min
PC-games	23 min	53 min
internet	17 min	58 min

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Screen versus nature

Favourite activities in nature with one's own television

	with	without
climbing a tree	23%	41%
building a hut	22%	33%
canoeing	27%	47%
be in the forest once a week	24%	38%
be in the garden	65%	77%

Favourite activities in nature with one's own PC

	with	without
riding a horse	16%	30%
walking	14%	24%
be in fields once a week	65%	77%



What's the Couolor of a duck?

yellow

← as in the media

	1997	2003
total	7 %	11 %
12 years old	6 %	5 %
11 years old	7 %	16 %
10 years old	16 %	
9 years old	30 %	
8 years old	50 %	
7 years old	70 %	

Survey Deutsche Wildtierstiftung 2006:

The roe deer is the stag's wife

Yes 63%

(children between 7 and 14 years)



Youthreport 1997/2003

The „Bambi-syndrome“

The teenagers' view



nature is important, positive, beautiful and harmonious

animals and plants possess a soul
you have to protect nature

you have to keep nature clean and must not disturb it
prohibition signs are good, walking across the forest is bad

planting trees and feeding birds is very important
felling trees is bad and killing animals is murder

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Someone has told me:

Moral behaviour in the forest (1)

In the forest you shouldn't

throw away litter 85%
make a fire 83%

catch an animal 79%
not pluck a plant 47%

Instead you should

be quiet 52%
stay on the paths 49%
not camp 26%

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Someone has told me

Moral behaviour in the forest (2)

supervisors

parents 53%
 teachers 38%

forest wardens 21%
 conservationists 17%
 hunters 12%

Hunters set priorities in:

be quiet
 don't camp
 stay on the path

Do not disturb

Conservationists set priorities:

don't cycle
 don't climb trees

Do not move



Teenagers themselves are convinced of this

Moral rules in nature

<u>That will harm nature:</u>	2005	2003
felling (tall) trees	85%	73%
hunting (roe deer)	72%	56%
picking wild flowers	27%	
mountainbiking	22%	
Walking across the forest	8%	45%
staying outdoors at night	3%	39%



The taboo of economics

Teenagers ...

forget about the necessity of
utilization of nature by human beings

know little about
the natural resources of common products

are not interested in
farm animals or plants

ignore the connection between planting and felling
trees („slaughter-house-paradox“)



Nature as a means of production

Teenagers' experiences

	often	never
working in the forest	12%	63%
working on a farm	16%	61%
seeing an animal being slaughtered	17%	60%

Natural resources in everyday life

don't have a clue what this is made of:

cream	20%	raisins	54%	china	90%
pudding	27%	cooking oil	60%	plastic	93%



Use and protection

**Teenagers who are interested
in nature and the environment**

- have more knowledge about resources
- are more often outdoors in their spare time
- have more often worked on a farm or in forest

Using nature is not contrary to protecting it



Hypothesis

**Without knowledge about the necessity
of an intensive utilization of nature**

**the demand for sustainability
does'nt make any sense**



2003: Open-end question about elements of sustainability

**The vast majority didn't understand
what sustainability means**

54% had no idea

35% were completely wrong

9% had just a faint idea

2% did know core elements



Morale instead of reason

**This is what teenagers think of sustainability if they answer
spontaneously**

**„Don't disturb animals“ / „Don't litter forests“ / „Don't
play so much in forests“**

**„Don't destroy anything“ / „Don't pick flowers“
/ „Don't kill an animal or a plant“**

**„If you water and cultivate flowers“ /
„To build frog-protections at roads“ / „To barricade forests“**

**Bambi-syndrome blocks
comprehension for sustainability**



This is almost right:

Sustainability means to save resources

(11%)

„Use less wooden things, more plastic“
“Don't fell more trees than there are”

„Nature should live for a long time“
„Turn off the light“

Small clue!



Is latent knowledge better than spontaneous knowledge?

Find 5 correct out of 15 answers for sustainability

Quote of answers: 80%

But: Quote of guessing at least 50%

independent of age, education or urban/rural area

Guessing dominates



Above average agreement

Don't litter forests
Treat nature with respect
Don't disturb animals
Keep nature clean

Bambi-syndrome

below average agreement

Don't spend a lot of time in nature
Stay on the path in forests
Support Greenpeace

Own interest

**Education for sustainability
with little effect**



Instead:

The aesthetics of cleanliness

Teenagers agree on this:

Don't disturb the forest
Keep the forest clean

silence and order

The rubbish-phobia

Moral rules in the forest	Rank No. 1	Don't litter
Good deeds for nature:	Rank No. 1	Pick up rubbish
Bad deeds in nature:	Rank No. 1	Litter
Attribute of sustainability:	Rank No. 1	Don't litter



Young countryside dwellers:

- + less electronical equipment
- + more contact with nature
- + more experience with nature

- Same impression of nature
- Little knowledge about natural resources
- Little awareness of sustainability

**No connection of
experiences and moral values**



Participants of environmental activities Members of nature protection groups:

- + More desire for adventure
- + More experience with nature
- + More working experience
- + More contact with nature
- + More moral perspective on nature

- Same impression of nature
- Same moral horizon
- Little awareness of sustainability

**They have picked
up much more rubbish**

**They have listened to
more instructions**

**The awareness of sustainability
is replaced by
the aesthetic of cleanliness**



Frequent visitors of the forest:

- + More contact with nature
- + More experience with nature
- + More rational attitude to nature
- + More desire for activity and adventure
- + Electronic media 2h less per day than someone who does not have any contact with the forest

**More emotions
for forests**

Has the forest a socialising element
to avoid alienation from nature, lack of exercise and addiction to
TV, PC etc. ?

- Less awareness of sustainability



Summary:

Sustainable alienation from nature

Although

- + nature is near by
- + having tried everything

- Less interest in nature
- Less experience with nature
- Growing distance because of puberty

- Moral standard of nature is not relevant
- Higher taboo to use nature economically
- Elements of sustainability are only guessed
- Non realistic impression of nature

**Is
nature
boring?**



Is there any way out?

Experience with nature as a value on its own

- + More nature instead of natural science in school
- + Experience with nature without pedagogical intentions
- + More space, freedom and emotions in nature

- + Experience of ones own nature



Just a beginning:

More nature in everyday life

- + Nature-kindergardens
- + Nature-days in full-time-schools
- + Hiking in schools more attractive
- + More offers of nature activities outside school time

- + Forest Youth Hostels
- + Farms for young people
- + voluntary ecological service



Is there a

Right to nature?

- + Nature as an appropriate human environment
- + Release of stress caused by the media
- + Nature allows the free development of our personality
- + Consolidation of one's own nature in the nature outside

Students Report on Nature 2001

„Each person has a right to a free access to nature“ Yes: 90%

Youthreport Nature 2003

„Each person has a right to nature“

Yes: 93%



More details in:

