

An Assessment of Biodiversity Integration within Ontario Business Practices

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Background

Many business leaders are recognizing that to remain competitive, biodiversity issues must be factored into their operations.

As biodiversity is not an infinite resource, business leaders need to make biodiversity a top priority and factor biodiversity conservation into their corporate planning and their decision-making.

Purpose

This project examines the extent that companies operating in Ontario have integrated biodiversity in their corporate planning and reporting.

Specifically, this research assesses the Ontario Biodiversity Council's Target #4: *By 2015, all sectors have initiated the development of implementation plans in support of Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy, and by 2020, those plans are implemented.*

As the first time this indicator has been assessed, the results serve as a baseline for future evaluations.

Table 1. Industries used to study biodiversity concern.

Primary Sector (n=15)	Secondary Sector (n=15)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture/Forestry Mining/Quarrying Oil/Gas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Manufacturing Utilities
Tertiary Sector (n=25)	Quaternary Sector (n=15)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation Finance/Insurance Real Estate Retail/Distribution Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Government Funded Research Technology

Methodology

- 70 companies operating in Ontario were examined
- Within each industry, the top five companies were examined based on public information including:
 - Corporate social responsibility reports
 - Sustainability reports
 - Webpages
- The level of biodiversity concern of each company was sorted into one of five stages (Table 2)

Table 2. Stages of biodiversity concern for companies.

Stage	Companies that:
1	Have no consideration of environmental issues
2	Report on environmental issues
3	Report on biodiversity, including impacts
4	Consider biodiversity consideration as a key issue
5	Have a biodiversity monitoring system and/or results of monitoring

Results

- Results will be published in the State of Ontario's Biodiversity Report, 2015

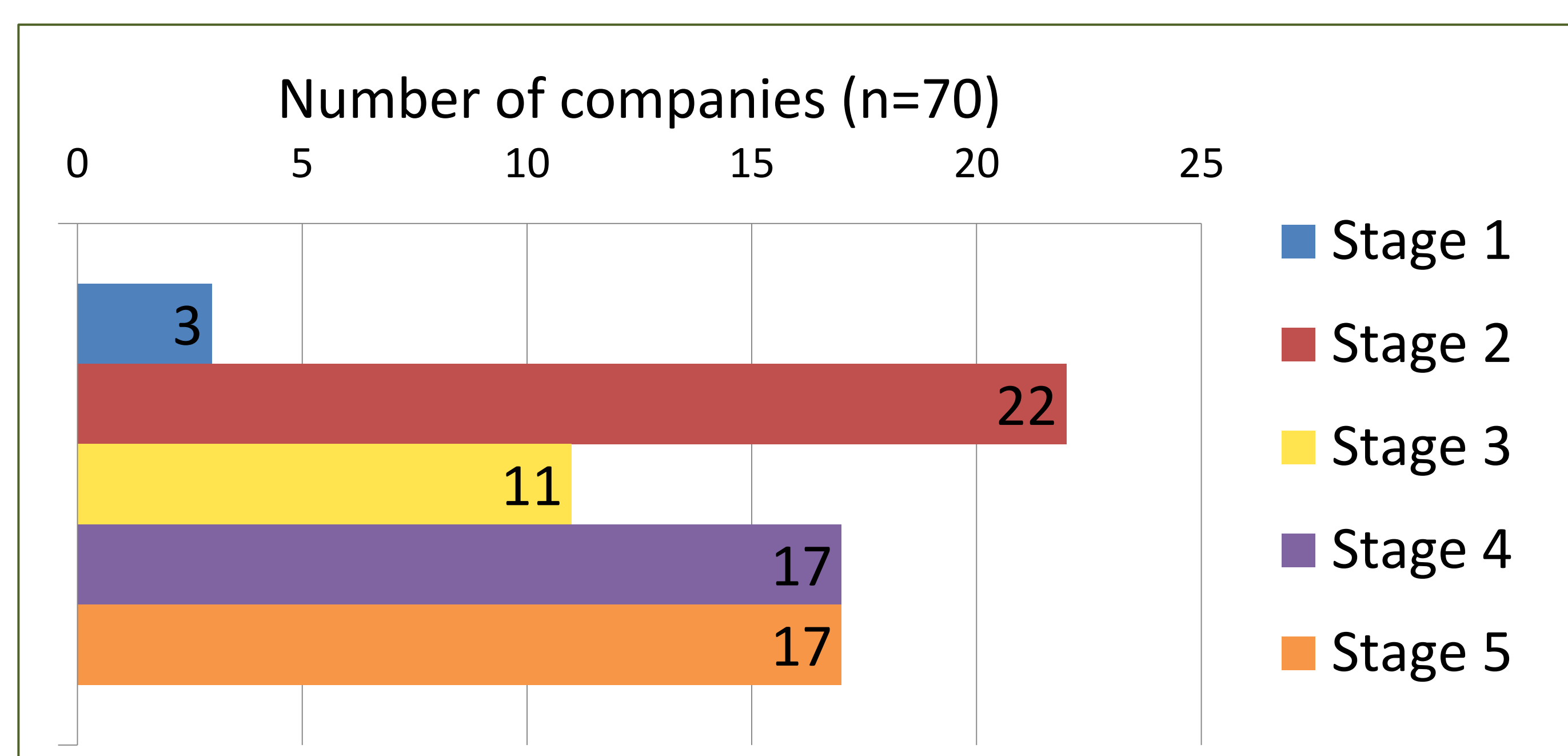


Figure 1. Biodiversity concern by stage in Ontario.

Discussion

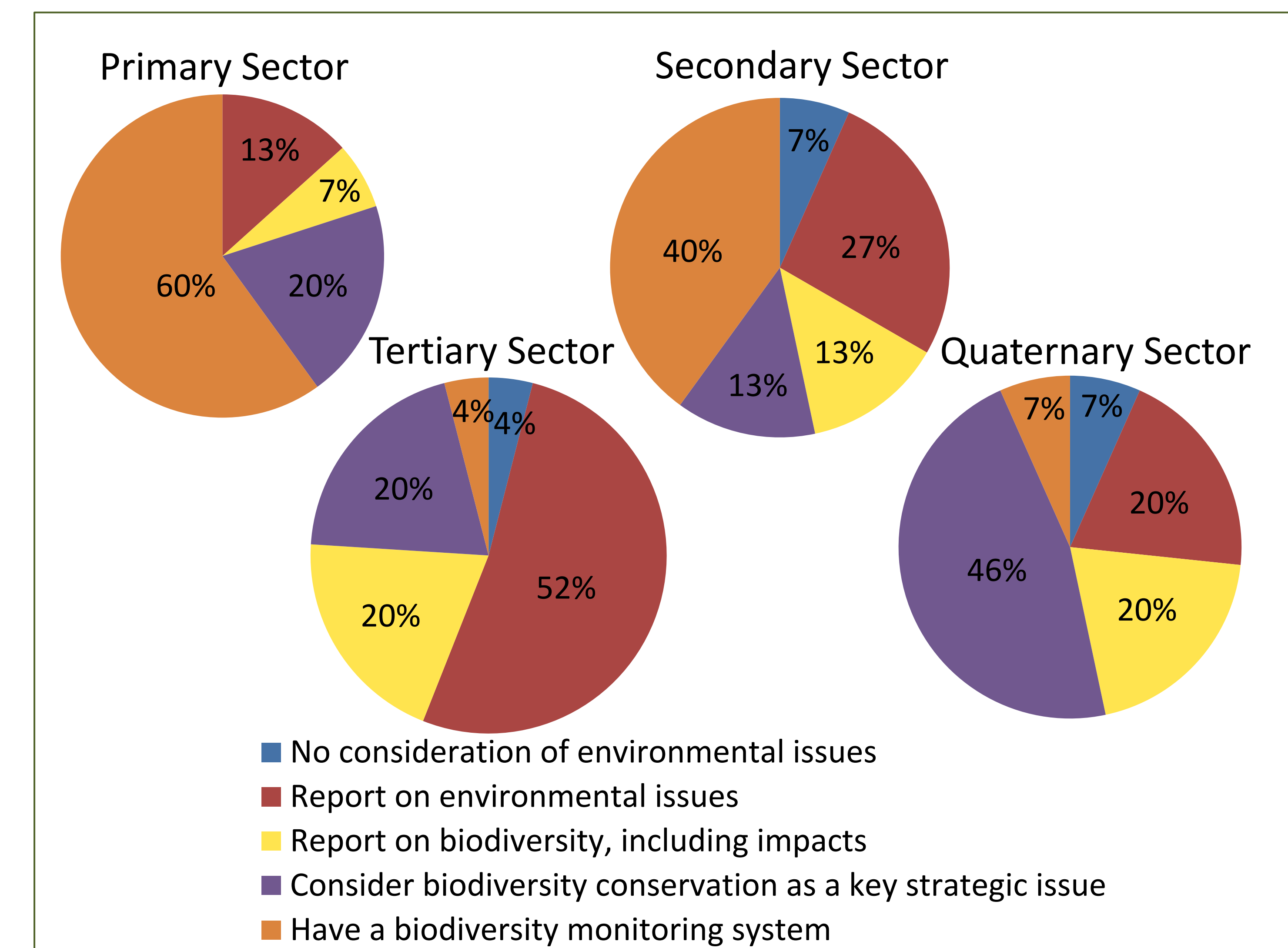


Figure 2. Biodiversity concern by sector in Ontario.

Status

- 4% of companies did not consider environmental issues
- 24% of companies had biodiversity monitoring
- The primary sector had the greatest level of biodiversity integration, followed by the secondary, quaternary, and tertiary sectors

Further Research

- Evaluate biodiversity concerns specific to Ontario by examining both the location of business impacts on biodiversity, as well as biodiversity plans
- Consult with companies, through interviews or surveys, to allow for a comparison between plans that are reported on, and biodiversity conservation practices being completed at sites