

Press release

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Increasing Global Imbalance between Grey and Green

New global report finds that time spent in forests and parks has decreased over the past five years

As more people move into cities around the world, the time we spend in forests and parks is decreasing. According to the Global Green Space Report, conducted by Husqvarna Group, one in three are dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend in green spaces, and 50 percent think that schools should take responsibility for this by scheduling green time for children. Improved health and wellbeing are among the reasons given for why we should address the increasing imbalance between grey and green in our lives.

Husqvarna Group, the world's largest manufacturer of outdoor products, has conducted a global study in nine countries to explore people's relationship to and interaction with forests, parks and gardens. The study is presented in Husqvarna's Global Green Space Report 2013, in which 4 500 people in Sweden, China, Russia, USA, Germany, Canada, Australia, Poland and France participated.

A "green gap" between what people want and how they behave

Something that unites all the countries is the belief that green spaces have the ability to affect people's quality of life (i.e. happiness and wellbeing). 91 percent of all respondents in the study believe that forests, parks and gardens have a positive effect on our quality of life. According to the respondents in the study, interaction with green offers more for our wellbeing than our jobs, sex lives, money or religion. 89% state that access to green should be considered as a human right.

But despite this, the time people spend in green spaces is decreasing all over the world. In total, five of nine countries in the study show that the time spent in forest and parks has decreased compared with five years ago. 40% visit parks only once every three months or less often and when it comes to forests people spend even less time.

Children experiencing less time in green

One group that distinguish themselves in the study is parents with young children; they are more often in forests and parks than any other group, regardless of country. Despite this, 65 percent of all parents believe that today's children spend less time in green spaces than they did when they were young. According to the study, only 48 percent of the parents have taken their children to a forest once in the past three months or more often. This "generation gap" is also apparent in relation to park visits. A majority (76 percent) of all respondents in the study think that children today should spend more time in green spaces.

“Husqvarna Group makes products which help people take care of forests, parks and gardens, so it is important for us to understand people’s attitudes and behaviors in relation to green spaces. In this year's report we find that people generally understand the value green spaces, but a significant portion are seldom getting out into the green, and are therefore experiencing the benefits less and less. On the positive side, we also see that many want to get their hands into the soil and increase their interaction with green”, says Hans Linnarson, President and CEO of Husqvarna Group.

Re-connect with green

A key finding from the report is that green feeds green; the more contact people have with green spaces, the more they seek. When asking how to solve the green gap, people in Poland (68 percent) believe that the best way is by scheduling green time in school. In France, however, it is believed that politicians have the best ability to increase time in forests and nature, and in the USA it is thought that commitment by private individuals is the best way to increase access to nature.

Generally, the study clearly shows that there is a great desire in all countries to contribute individual time, knowledge and money to help maintain public green spaces. The greatest desire comes once again from the parents of young children, where 62 percent are willing to offer their time, 39 percent are willing to offer their knowledge and 35 percent would be willing to give money in order to create a greener environment.

FACTS ABOUT HUSQVARNA AND THE REPORT

The Global Green Space Report 2013 by Husqvarna Group

In total 4676 interviews were conducted in 9 countries. The survey method used was an online questionnaire distributed by e-mail. The target audience was the general public over 18 in each country. The field period was the 9th of November to the 22nd of November 2012.

The population in each country was pre-stratified with regard to age, gender and geography. The ratio of gender and age was also double-checked when collecting the answers. This was done in order to ensure representativeness of the sample with regard to the total population.

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The report, related press materials and soundtrack are available at www.husqvarnagroup.com/media

Husqvarna Group

Husqvarna Group is the world's largest producer of outdoor power products including robotic lawn mowers, garden tractors, chainsaws and trimmers. The Group is also the European leader in consumer watering products and one of the world leaders in cutting equipment and diamond tools for the construction and stone industries. The Group's products and solutions are sold via dealers and retailers to both consumers and professional users in more than 100 countries. Net sales in 2012 amounted to SEK 31 billion, and the Group had 15,400 employees on average in more than 40 countries.

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