

Experiential learning to change understanding and beliefs

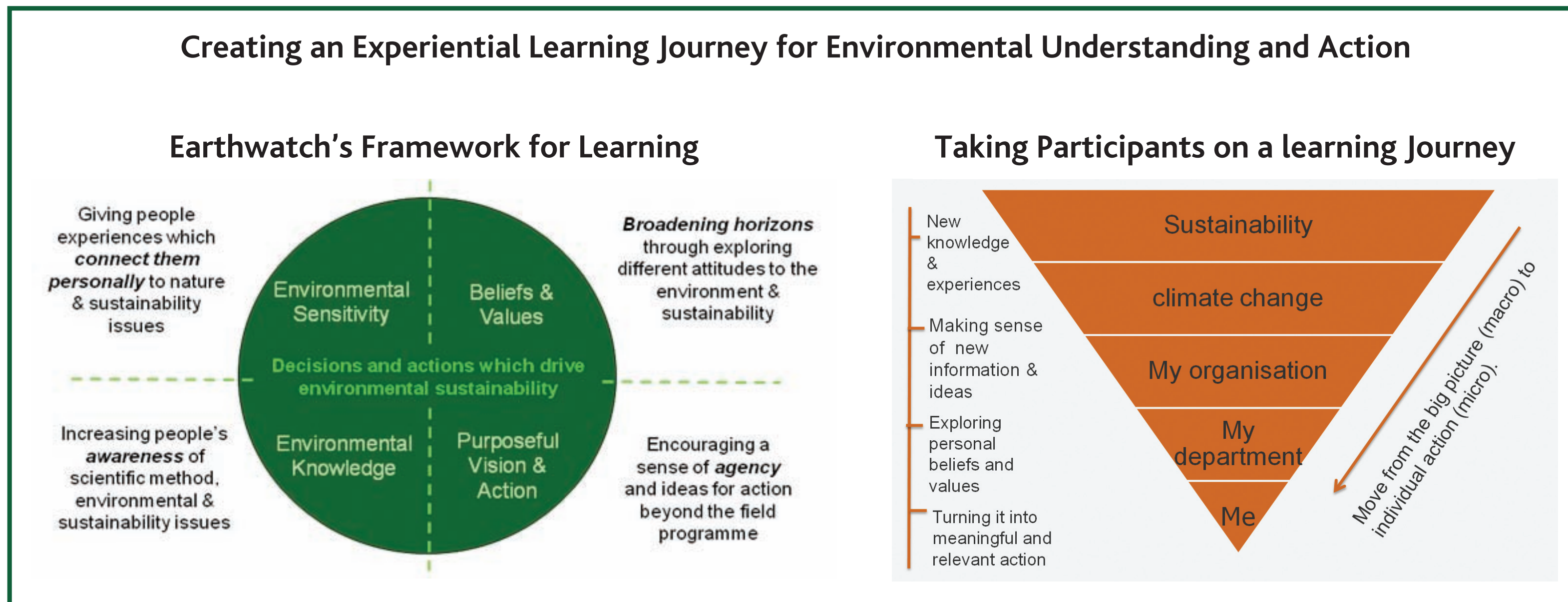
Rachel Phillips, International Director of Learning, Earthwatch (rphillips@earthwatch.org.uk)

Earthwatch is a citizen science organisation, involving people as volunteers in environmental field science and research. Our mission is to engage people worldwide in scientific field research and education to promote the understanding and action necessary for a sustainable environment. Spending time volunteering as a field research assistant on an Earthwatch project is an opportunity for people to be fully immersed in environmental research. Earthwatch funds and supports over 60 field research projects around the world addressing a range of issues. Over the last 40 years, Earthwatch has funded 2,800 field research projects in 120 countries, its volunteers contributing 11m hours of their time.

For the past 20 years, Earthwatch has extended this concept to working with international companies such as HSBC, identifying and engaging environmental champions across their organisations. Our experience of working with these organisations has informed the development of Earthwatch's educational and learning approach which seeks to engage people at a values level and motivate them to take action in support of more sustainable personal and business behaviour.



Photo: Malgorzata Lewandowska



Earthwatch works with a number of international companies, such as HSBC, Shell and Syngenta. Through working with our corporate partners, we aim to

1. Develop Environmental Leaders who
 - Value the environment and prioritise it in their every day choices and decision making
 - Have an authentic conviction & passion which influences others to do the same
2. Enable organisations and business to become more sustainable by building organisational capability to implement sustainable policies, processes and practices

Case study – HSBC Climate Champion Programme, 2007-2011

2,267 HSBC employees from around the world were selected to be 'Climate Champions'. As part of the Climate Champion Programme, they spent up to two weeks at a Regional Climate Centre, working with scientists in to monitor the impact of climate change on forests. They also took part in learning sessions to further their understanding of climate change, its relevance to corporate sustainability and HSBC's approach to sustainability. They built skills to communicate and influence around the sustainability agenda, generated ideas for business relevant projects and developed a Climate Champion action plan.

Returning to the workplace, each HSBC Climate Champion developed and implemented a business project that delivered both reductions in carbon generated and financial savings.

Programme Aims:

- Connect climate change issues to HSBC's business activities
- Provide easy to understand, broad-based education on climate change and other sustainability issues
- Deliver important research data for sustainable forestry management
- Create a network of active Climate Champions who lead activities around the world as part of the HSBC Climate Partnership
- Stimulate action within HSBC's commitment to sustainability

"Sustainability was low on my agenda but now it has really come to the top. I need to do the right things and stop relying on someone else or 'I'll do it tomorrow' style of thinking."

Climate Champion Project Examples:

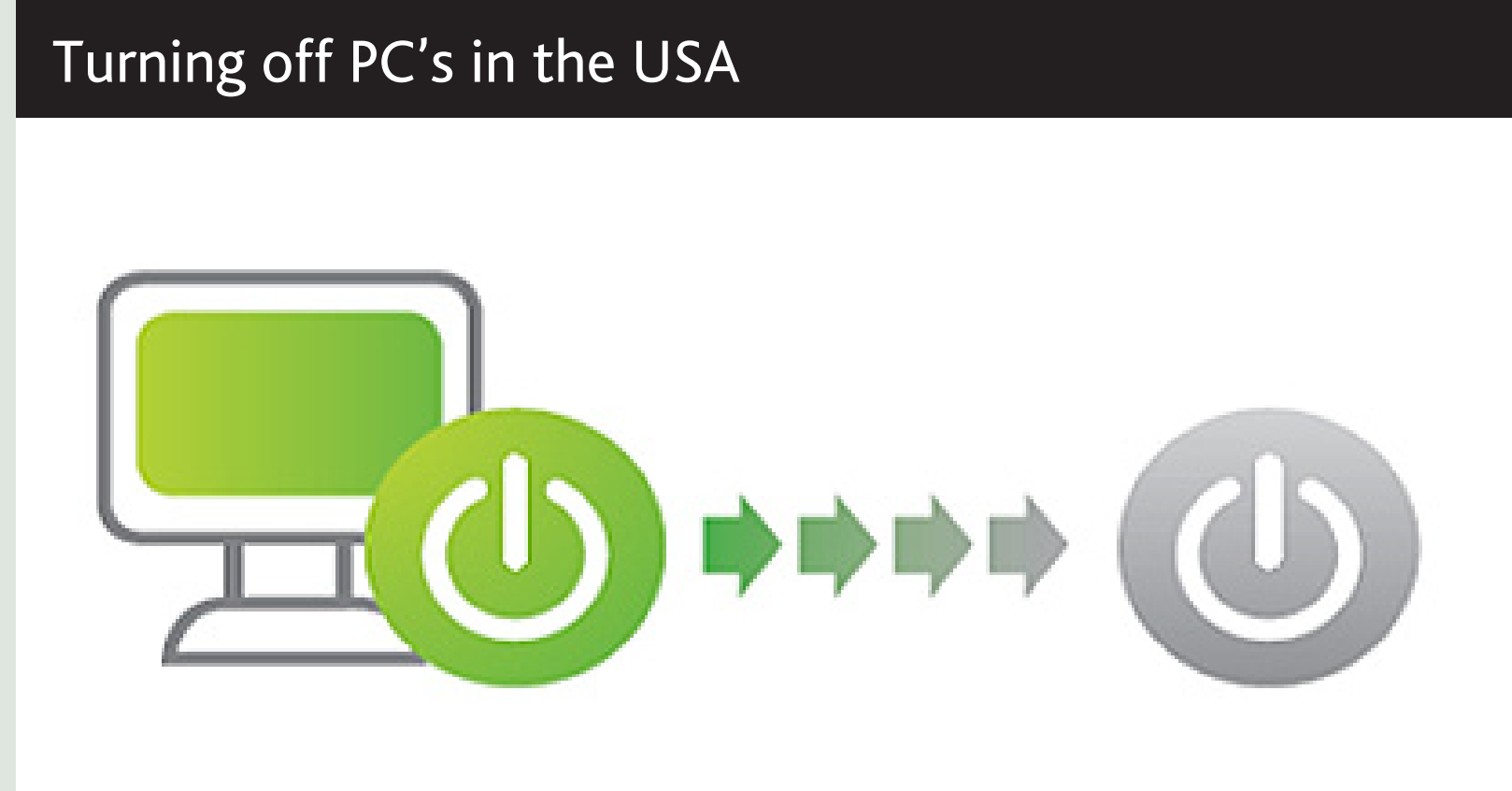


The success of Eliza's project was the result of outstanding cross-functional teamwork of her colleagues at HSBC Insurance.

Creating an eAdvice service to HSBC Corporate Medical Insurance Customers achieved:

- Savings of US\$50,000 in 2009
- Half a million welcome packs, saving US\$400,000 per year
- Savings of more than 10 million sheets of paper annually

"This great project has brought about truly inspirational change to our business, our customers and the environment"
Regional Head of Insurance Asia-Pacific, HSBC

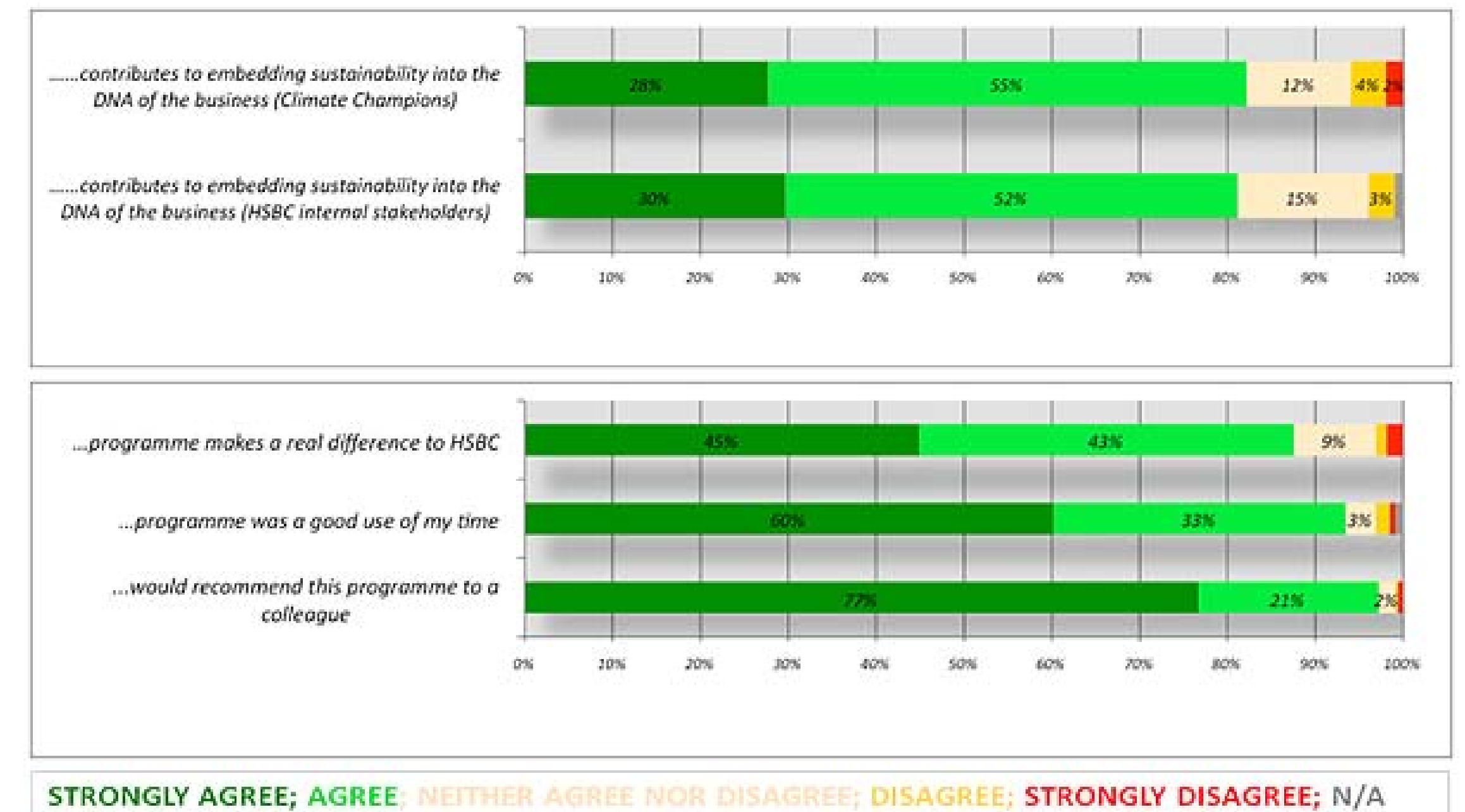


Linda Bartos devised the 'Turn if Off' project to deliver energy and cost savings through shutting down PC's overnight. Since 2008 the project has:

- Saved 4.5 million kilowatt-hours of electricity and 907 metric tonnes of CO2
- Increased energy efficiency by up to 40% on PCs

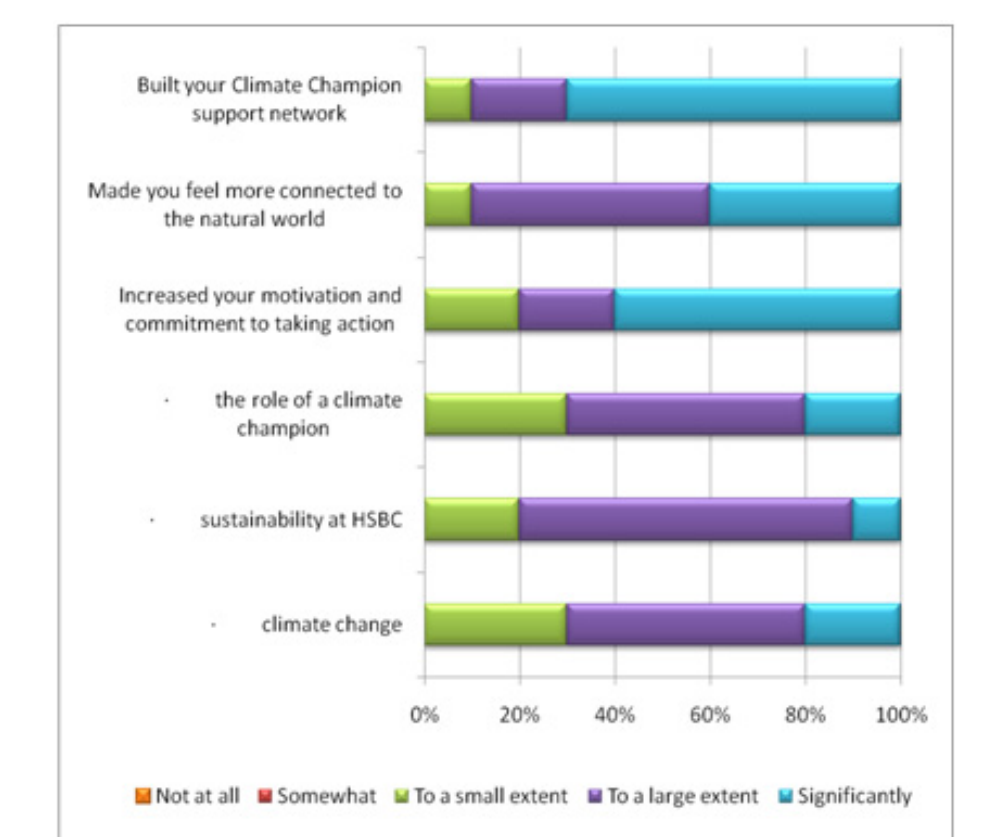
"Turn it Off is already delivering considerable energy and cost savings across North America. Linda's project is an outstanding example of how making small changes to the way we work can have a significant impact on cost efficiency whilst also reducing HSBC's carbon footprint"
Group Head of Sustainability, HSBC

The impact of this programme on HSBC Climate Champions has been verified by research from Ashridge Business School.



STRONGLY AGREE; AGREE; NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE; DISAGREE; STRONGLY DISAGREE; N/A

To what extent did participation in the Programme:



"They come back and say it's the best thing they've ever done. It's meaningful to them – and it sticks. They know the difference between a 'talking head' and somebody who believes what they're saying about what's going on. And that makes a big difference."

Bill Thomas, Group Head HTS Sustainability

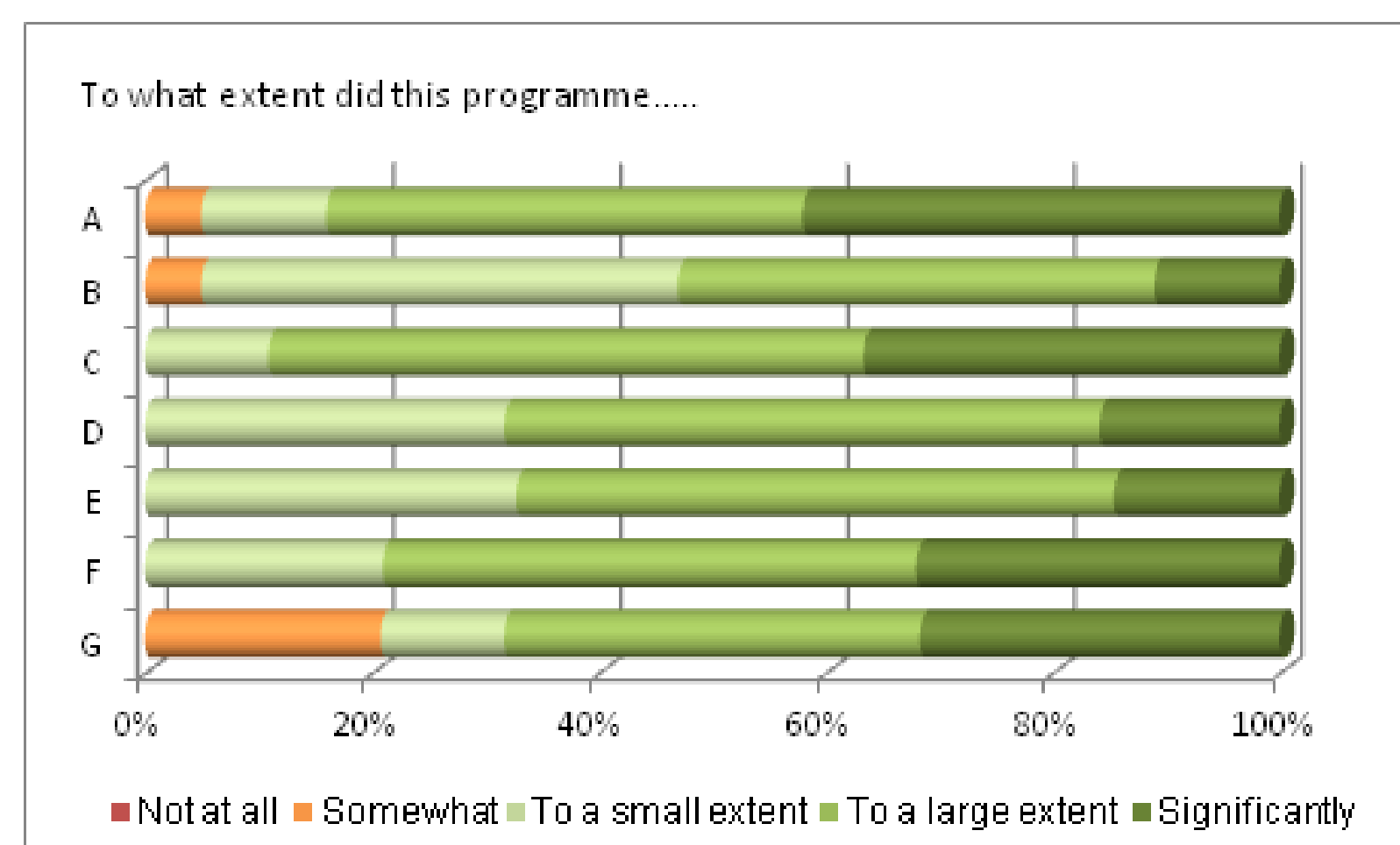
Case Study – Syngenta Living Landscapes Programme

50 senior managers were selected to take part in the Syngenta Living Landscapes Programme. They completed knowledge building exercises about biodiversity and sustainable agriculture, before joining relevant sustainable agriculture field research projects for a week. They worked with scientists to monitor the impacts of farming practices on biodiversity and took part in learning activities, discussions and action planning sessions.

Programme Aims:

- Build understanding of global sustainable agriculture issues and the role of applied scientific research in informing sustainable agriculture practices for the future
- Open new perspectives on the potential for the organisation to be part of the solution to global food security and sustainable agriculture in the future
- Provide opportunities for leadership development, increasing motivation and commitment to their contribution as leaders of the organisation
- Create a global community of ambassadors who will inspire others by communicating and taking personal action

"Great experience both in the sustainability / biodiversity and leadership development directions."



Impact measured
A Increase your understanding of sustainable agriculture
B Increase your understanding of the role Syngenta can play in sustainable agriculture
C Increase your confidence to engage others in conversations about sustainable agriculture
D Increase your confidence to engage others in conversations about the contribution of Syngenta
E Increase your motivation to being part of Syngenta's purpose
F Increase your commitment to the role that you can play in making decisions in Syngenta which support sustainable agriculture
G Given you a network of Ambassadors to support you to take sustainability-related action

"I now have responsibility to share/ educate/ influence my colleagues with regards to sustainable agriculture and biodiversity."

The success of its approach to helping employees understand sustainability issues has inspired companies such as Syngenta, Ernst & Young, Rio Tinto, Alcoa BAT, Shell, Tata and JSW Steel to partner with Earthwatch to engage their employees and embed sustainability into their businesses.

Earthwatch currently works with 25 such companies worldwide, and in 2011 won an International Green award for employee engagement.