# The religious sources of pro-environmental attitudes

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# The reasons to study the connection

1. **Theoretical reasons**
    1. Lynn White hypothesis (1967) – the relations between religion and ecological crisis
    2. The results so far are highly inconsistent (Schultz et al., 2000; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2013)
    3. There is a lack of research on the relations between the environmental attitudes and non-western religions
2. **Pragmatical reasons**
    1. Growing field of research – how to engage people in environment protection activities (Clayton, 2006; APA, 2012)?
    2. Referring to existing but not to environmetal values may be the sollution (Feinberg, 2013)

# Religion and ecology – historical relations

- Lynn White hypothesis (1967)
    - The theological foundations of environmentally destructive development in the West.
    - God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and **subdue** it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that move on earth.'
    - Genesis 1:28

# Problems with theory

▸ Is Lynn White still valid or not?

　▸ Original hypothesis refer to historical development of ecological crisis

　▸ Religious attitudes towards nature change:

　　▸ „Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty toward nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith" (John Paul II, 1990)

▸ What is the relations between different denominations and ecology?

# Theory deathmatch:

- Lynn White vs religious prosociality:
  - religious beliefs facilitates acts which benefit others at a personal cost
  - may be one of the mechanism supporting the social group cohesiveness
- The relation between religiosity and prosocial attitudes is stronger in countries with low levels of religion enforcement (Stavrova, Siegers, 2014)

# Hypothesis:

(1) The proenvironmental attitudes and behaviour may be considered as a special case of prosocial behaviour.

(2) Basing on previous research there should be a positive relation between religiosity and environmental attitudes. Please note that this is in contrary to original Lynn White (1967) hypothesis but in line with Stavrova and Siegers (2014)

(3) This link should be strengthened especially in those countries where the religious enforcement is lower

# Research:

- WVS 2008; 54 countries with different religious denomination

# Models:

- Dependent variables:
  - The general environmental attitudes:
    - (1) "Would give part of my income for the environment;
    - (2) "Increase in taxes if used to prevent environmental pollution
  - Economy vs nature:
    - what is more important: "protecting the environment" or "economy growth and creating new jobs"
  - Level of trust in pro-environmental organizations

# Models II:

▸ Main independent variable:

  ▸ "How often do you attend religious services"

    ▸ "never" to "several times a week".

  ▸ Would you describe yourself as religious persons

    ▸ (on a scale that ranged from "a convinced atheist" [1] to "a religious person" [3])

▸ Moderator for the strength of the relations:

  ▸ Country specific level of religious reinforcement:

    ▸ "Politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office" (EVS 2011 & IVS 2009 – Stavrova, Siegers, PSPB 2014)

▸ Controls: gender, age, income, denomination, GDP per capita

▸

# The general environmental attitudes:

| | Personal religiosity | Personal religiosity + religios enforcement | Full Model |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Personal religiosity** | 0.04*** | -0.02 | 0.05** |
| **Per. Rel x Rel. Enf.** | | 0.04** | 0.02** |
| **Gender** | | | -0.01 |
| **Age** | | | -0.001*** |
| **Income** | | | 0.04*** |
| **GPD/capita** | | | -0.00 |
| **Anglicans** | | | -0.14* |
| **Buddhist** | | | -0.01 |
| **Evangelic** | | | -0.06 |
| **Hindu** | | | -0.15** |
| **Muslims** | | | -0.07* |
| **Orthodox** | | | -0.21*** |
| **Roman Catholics** | | | -0.06* |
| **Protestants** | | | -0.04 |

**Level 1:**

Y = B0 + B1*(gender) + B2*(age) + B3*(Personal religiosity) + B4*(Anglicans) + B5*(Buddhist) + B6*(Evangelic) + B7*(Hindu) + B8*(Muslim) + B9*(Orthodox) + B10*(Roman Catholics) + B11*(Protestants) + B12*(Income) + R

**Level 2:**

B0 = G00 + G01*(GDP/capita) + U0

B3 = G30 + G31*(Religious enforcement)

# Economy vs nature:

| | Personal religiosity | Personal religiosity + religios enforcement | Full Model |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Personal religiosity** | 0.03** | -0.07** | -0.04 |
| **Per. Rel x Rel. Enf.** | | 0.08** | 0.08*** |
| **Gender** | | | 0.03 |
| **Age** | | | -0.002** |
| **Income** | | | 0.02*** |
| **GPD/capita** | | | 0.00 |
| **Anglicans** | | | 0.49*** |
| **Buddhist** | | | -0.20* |
| **Evangelic** | | | 0.0l |
| **Hindu** | | | 0.22 |
| **Muslims** | | | -0.24** |
| **Orthodox** | | | -0.08 |
| **Roman Catholics** | | | -0.06 |
| **Protestants** | | | 0.06 |

**Level 1:**

$\text{Prob}(Y=1|B) = P$

$\log[P/(1-P)] = B0 + B1*(\text{gender}) + B2*(\text{age}) + B3*(\text{Personal religiosity}) + B4*(\text{Anglicans}) + B5*(\text{Buddhist}) + B6*(\text{Evangelic}) + B7*(\text{Hindu}) + B8*(\text{Muslim}) + B9*(\text{Orthodox}) + B10*(\text{Roman Catholics}) + B11*(\text{Protestants}) + B12*(\text{Income}) + R$

**Level 2:**

$B0 = G00 + G01*(\text{GDP/capita}) + U0$

$B3 = G30 + G31*(\text{Religious enforcement})$

# Trust in pro-environmental organizations

| | Personal religiosity | Personal religiosity + religios enforcement | Full Model |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Personal religiosity** | 0.03*** | -0.01 | -0.007 |
| **Per. Rel x Rel. Enf.** | | 0.03*** | 0.03*** |
| **Gender** | | | 0.02** |
| **Age** | | | -0.000 |
| **Income** | | | 0.01*** |
| **GPD/capita** | | | 0.000 |
| **Anglicans** | | | 0.01 |
| **Buddhist** | | | 0.01 |
| **Evangelic** | | | 0.01 |
| **Hindu** | | | 0.05 |
| **Muslims** | | | -0.04 |
| **Othodox** | | | -0.12*** |
| **Roman Catholics** | | | 0.01 |
| **Protestants** | | | -0.02 |

**Level 1:**
Y = B0 + B1*(gender) + B2*(age) + B3*(Personal religiosity) + B4*(Anglicans) + B5*(Buddhist) + B6*(Evangelic) + B7*(Hindu) + B8*(Muslim) + B9*(Orthodox) + B10*(Roman Catholics) + B11*(Protestants) + B12*(Income) + R
**Level 2:**
B0 = G00 + G01*(GDP/capita) + U0
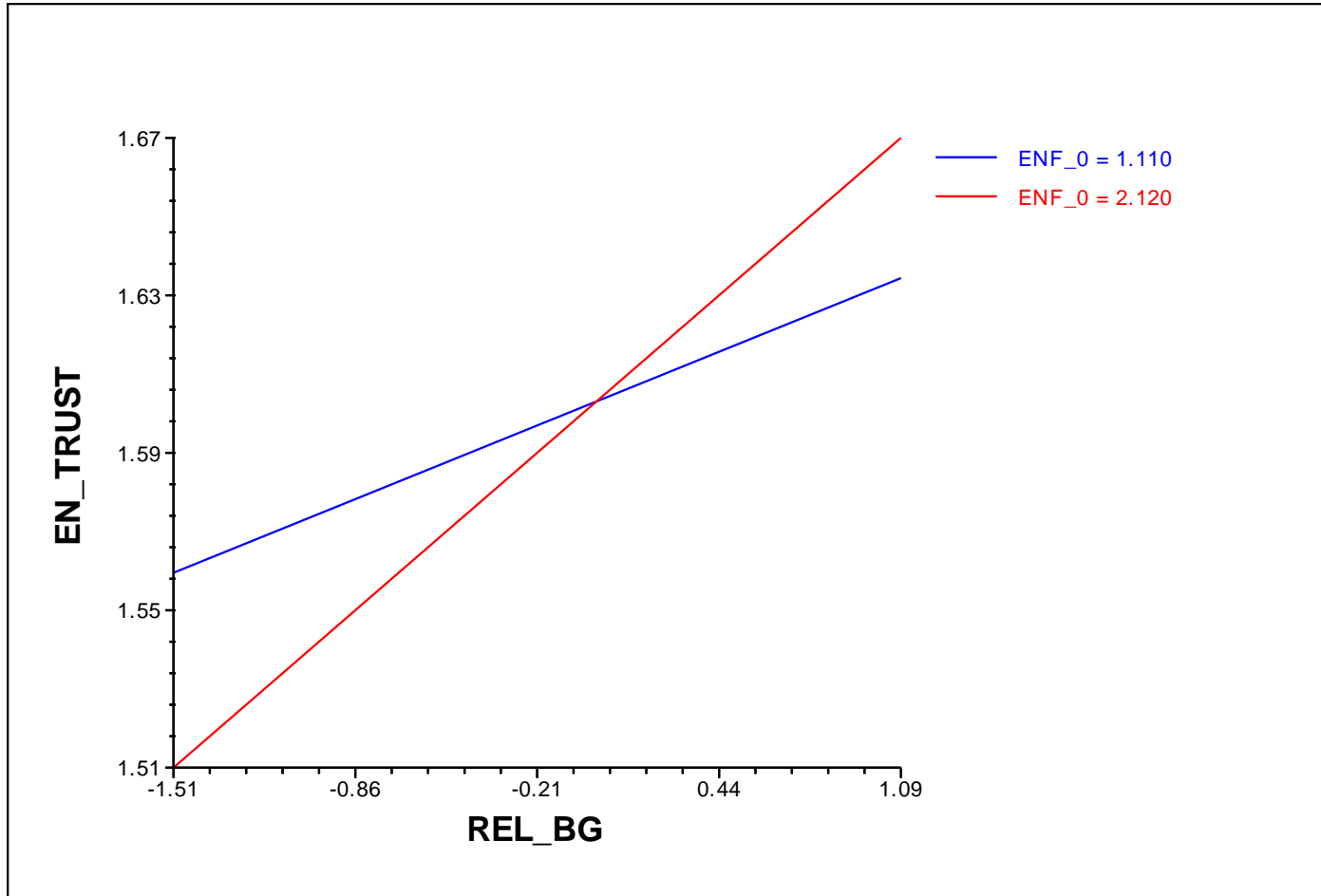B3 = G30 + G31*(Religious enforcement)

# Moderation: GEA
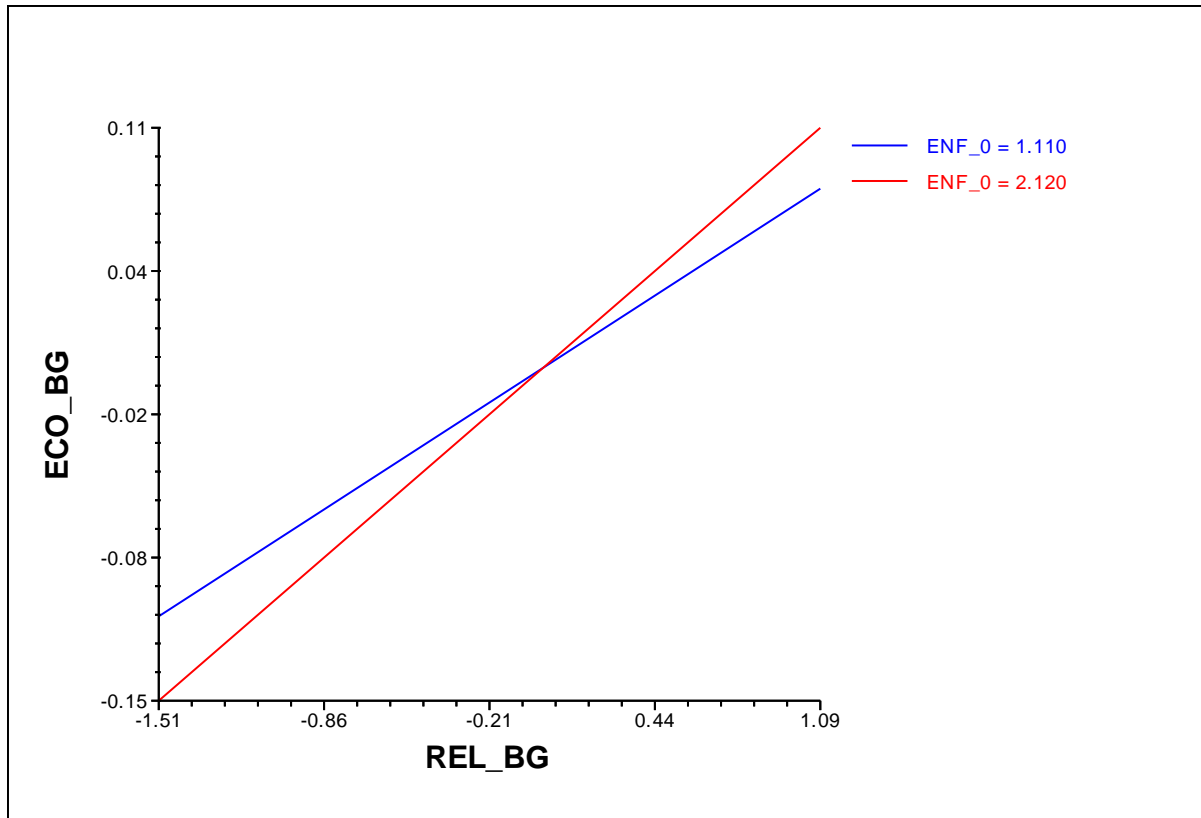
# Moderation: economy vs nature
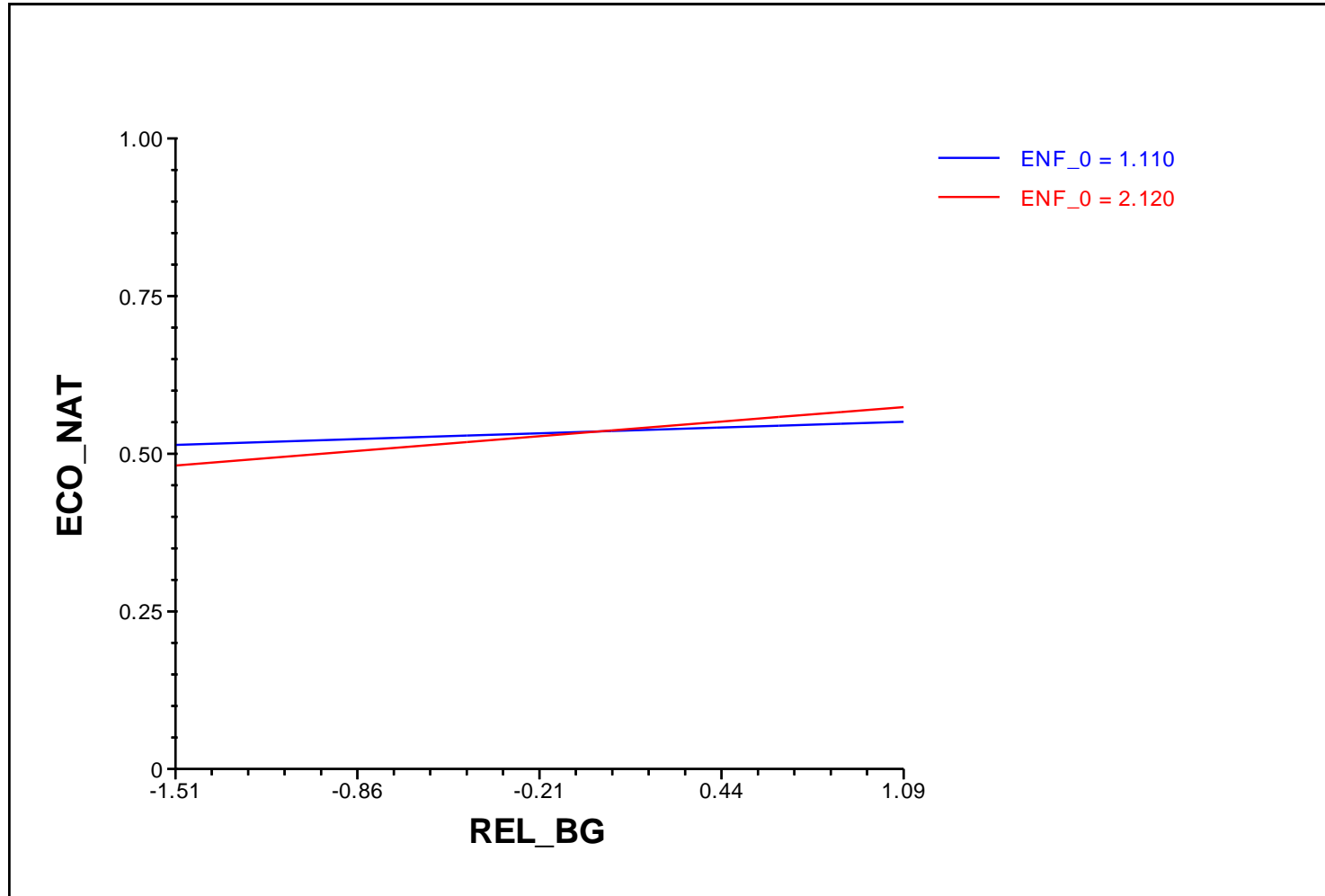
# Moderation: trust in pro-environmental organizations

# Summary:

‣ The general relations between religiosity and pro-environmental attitudes is positive

‣ Support for the religious prosociality hypothesis

‣ However the moderation effect is inversed to what work of Stavrova and Siegers would suggest

Thank you for your attention!