

Fact Sheet

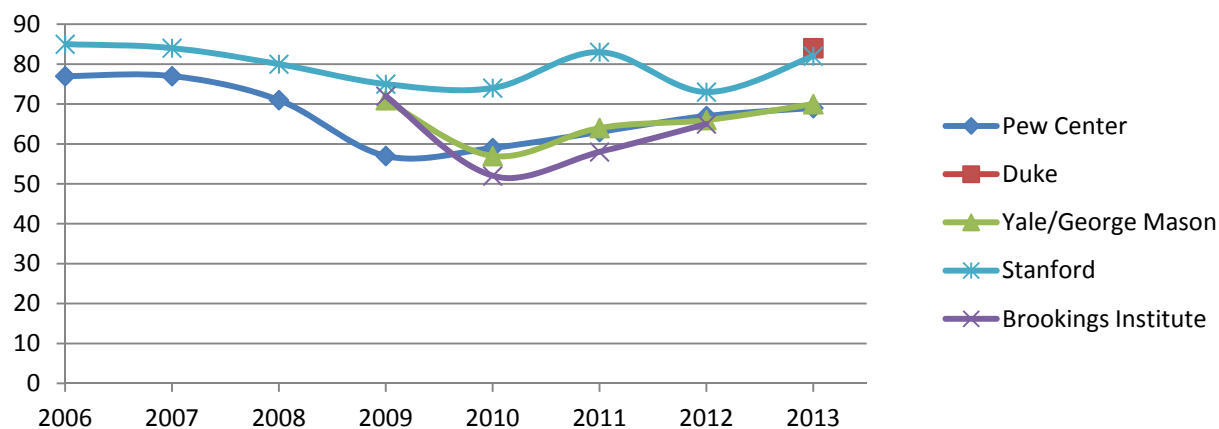
Polling the American Public on Climate Change

April 2013

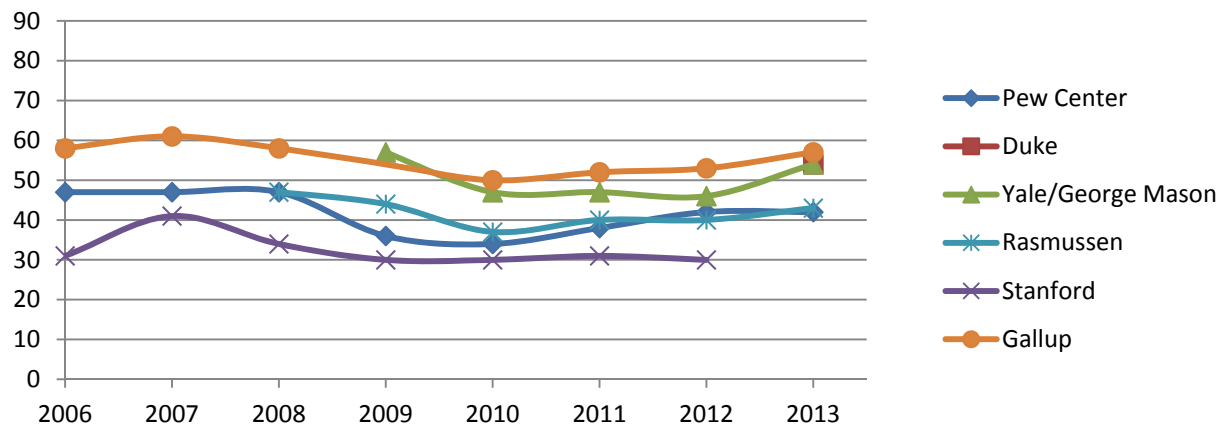
This fact sheet provides information on climate change polling in the United States over the last year from a variety of sources. Overall the studies show:

- The American public's concern about climate change, while still below 2007 levels, is on the rise nationwide.
- This trend holds across party lines, with greater numbers of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans viewing this as a serious issue that will affect them in their lifetimes.
- Additionally, more are convinced that global warming is caused by human activities rather than natural causes.
- Higher percentages of minorities say climate change is happening and support the president taking steps to address the issue.
- While a majority of Americans support the increased deployment of clean and renewable energy and regulation of power plant emissions, support remains weak for a carbon tax or cap-and-trade measures.

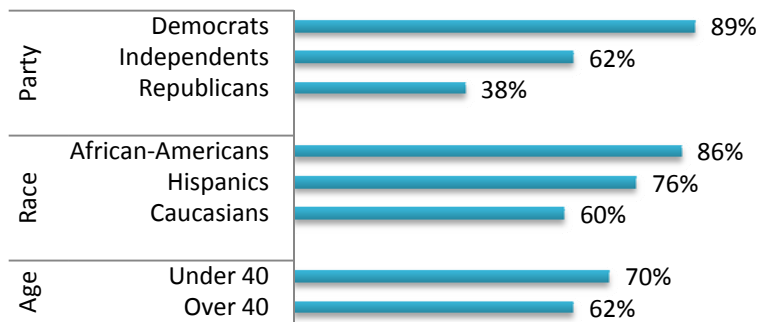
Americans Who Say that Climate Change is Happening



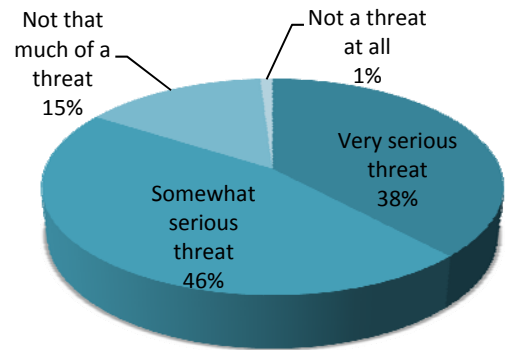
Americans Who Say that Climate Change is Caused by Human Activity



Percentage of Americans who support the President taking significant steps to address climate change now (NLCV poll Feb. 2013)



How serious of a threat is climate change?
(Duke poll Jan. 2013)



CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEYS: 2012-2013

Stanford Woods Institute

March 13-18, 2013

Sample: 1,174 American adults

- **77% say that rising sea levels caused by global warming will be moderately, very, or extremely serious for the United States over the next hundred years**
- 82% say that we should prepare for coastal damage caused by sea level rise before it happens

Pew Research Center

March 13-17, 2013

Sample: 1,501 American adults

- **69% say there is solid evidence that the average global temperature has been rising over the past few decades, up from 57% in 2010**
- 42% say the Earth is warming due mostly to human activity
- 33% say that global warming is a very serious problem, down six points from October 2012

Gallup

March 7-10, 2013

Sample: 1,022 American adults

- **58% say they worry a fair amount to a great deal about global warming**
- 62% say there is scientific consensus on global warming
- 64% think global warming will be a threat to them or their way of life in their lifetime

Pew Research Center

February 13-18, 2013

Sample: 1,504 American adults

- **62% of Americans favor setting stricter emission limits on power plants**
- 54% say we should invest in renewable energy sources—up seven points from October 2012—while 35% think we should expand the production of oil, gas, and coal
- 47% of Democrats and 15% of Republicans think it is essential that the president and Congress enact new climate change policies this year

Natural Resources Defense Council

February 12, 2013

Sample: 1,218 registered voters

- **62% say it is important to combat climate change for the sake of our children and our future**
- 57% say that the steps Obama laid out for tackling climate change in his State of the Union address should be a priority
- 58% think climate change is causing recent extreme weather events, and that we must “act before it’s too late”
- 60% support the president using his authority to reduce dangerous carbon pollution

Rasmussen Reports

February 12, 2013

Sample: 1,000 likely voters

- **61% say it's at least somewhat important for Congress to pass major energy legislation this year to reduce climate change, including 38% who say it's very important.**

National League of Conservation Voters

February 3-5, 2013

Sample: 800 registered voters

- **93% agree that "Americans have a moral obligation to future generations to leave them a planet that is not polluted or damaged"**
- 61% say global warming is affecting them or will affect them personally in their lifetime
- 65% of Americans support President Obama taking significant steps to address climate change now

Duke University

January 16-22, 2013

Sample: 1,089 American adults

- **84% think climate change is probably happening, including 50% who are convinced it is happening**
- 92% of Democrats, 85% of Independents and 69% of Republicans think climate change is a serious threat
- 31% of Democrats and 9% of Republicans trust scientists to provide impartial information on climate change
- 64% support requiring utilities to generate "a large amount" of their power from low-carbon sources
- 29% of Americans strongly support or somewhat support a carbon tax
- 64% support greenhouse gas regulations for factories and power plants and increased vehicle fuel efficiency

CNN/ORC International

January 14-15, 2013

Sample: 814 American adults

- **49% agree with President Obama that global warming is a proven fact and is caused by emissions from cars, power plants and factories, down seven points from 2007**

Yale and George Mason Universities

January 12-27, 2013

Sample: 726 Registered Republicans

- **52% say that climate change is happening, versus 26% who say it isn't and 22% who 'don't know'**
- 35% of respondents agree with the Republican Party's position on climate change
- 62% say that their elected representatives are unresponsive to their views on climate change
- 77% support using more renewable energy in the U.S. than we are using today; 51% support using less fossil fuels

University of Michigan

November 26 – December 5, 2012

Sample: 998 Americans

- **51% of Republicans say they think climate change is occurring, the first majority since 2008**
- Following Hurricane Sandy, 45% said that extreme weather events such as major storms and floods had a very large impact on their belief that the Earth is getting warmer

National Wildlife Federation

November 7, 2012

Sample: 1,016 American adults

- **57% say climate change is making extreme weather such as Hurricane Sandy and summer droughts more severe**
- 69% are greatly or somewhat worried about the growing cost and risks of severe weather brought on by climate change

Rasmussen Reports

November 5, 2012

Sample: 1,000 likely voters

- **68% think global warming is a serious problem, up from 46 percent in 2009**

Yale and George Mason Universities

August 31-September 12, 2012

Sample: 839 registered voters

- **61% would support a candidate who is for a revenue-neutral carbon tax if it created more American jobs**
- 77% think climate change should be a high or medium priority for the president and Congress
- 61% say the U.S. should reduce greenhouse gas emissions regardless of whether other countries take action
- 66% support regulation of carbon dioxide as a pollutant, down from 80% in 2008

[Yale and George Mason Universities](#)

August 31-September 12, 2012

Sample: 1,061 American adults

- **70% of Americans are alarmed, concerned, or cautious about climate change, while 9% are disengaged and 21% are doubtful or dismissive**
- Public health, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, creating green jobs and improving the economy rank among the five top perceived benefits of the nation taking action to reduce fossil fuel use and global warming

[National Wildlife Federation](#)

August 23-September 1, 2012

Sample: 800 hunters and anglers

- **69% of sportsmen support reducing carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to climate change**
- 66% think we have a moral responsibility to confront global warming to protect our children's future
- 49% of sportsmen prefer protecting natural resources on public lands over their use for oil and gas extraction, when given a choice between the two options (35% preferred prioritizing fossil fuel production)

[University of Texas](#)

July 12-16, 2012

Sample: 1,039 online respondents

- **70% think the climate is changing, up from 65% in March 2012**

[Sierra Club and National Council of La Raza](#)

June 14-26, 2012

Sample: 1,131 registered Hispanic voters

- **77% of Latinos think that global climate change is already happening, compared to 52% of Americans overall**
- 83% agree that "coal plants and oil refineries are a thing of the past. We need to look toward the future and use more energy from clean sources"
- 86% prefer that the government invest in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind
- 58% would pay more on their monthly electricity bills to receive their electricity from clean energy sources

[Stanford University/Washington Post](#)

June 13-21, 2012

Sample: 804 adults

- **55% think a "great deal" or "good amount" can be done to reduce future global warming, while 60% say it will be extremely or very difficult to stop it**
- 74% oppose the federal government increasing taxes on electricity to reduce climate change

[The Chicago Council on Foreign Affairs](#)

May 25-June 8, 2012

Sample: 1,877 American adults

- **45% think the government isn't doing enough to stop climate change, 35% think it is doing the right amount, and 18% think it is doing too much**
- 42% think that scientists' views on climate change are evenly divided, whereas 38% think there is a consensus between scientists on the issue
- 33% think that tackling climate change should be a "very important" foreign policy goal for the U.S.

This fact sheet is available electronically (with hyperlinks to the surveys) at www.eesi.org/papers.

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The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) is a non-profit organization founded in 1984 by a bipartisan Congressional caucus dedicated to finding innovative environmental and energy solutions. EESI works to protect the climate and ensure a healthy, secure, and sustainable future for America through policymaker education, coalition building, and policy development in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, agriculture, forestry, transportation, buildings, and urban planning.