

NEWS Release

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Partisanship Drives Opinion LITTLE CONSENSUS ON GLOBAL WARMING

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Partisanship Drives Opinion

LITTLE CONSENSUS ON GLOBAL WARMING

Americans generally agree that the earth is getting warmer, but there is less consensus about the cause of global warming or what should be done about it. Roughly four-in-ten (41%) believe human activity such as burning fossil fuels is causing global warming, but just as many say either that warming has been caused by natural patterns in the earth's environment (21%), or that there is no solid evidence of global warming (20%).

Evidence that The Earth is Warming?									
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind					
	%	%	%	%					
Yes, solid evidence Due to human activity Due to natural patterns	70	58	81	71					
	41	24	54	47					
	21	25	19	19					
Don't know No, no solid evidence	8	9	8	5					
	20	32	10	20					
Mixed/Don't know	100	100	9	9					
	100	100	100	100					

The public also is divided over the gravity of the problem. While 41% say global warming is a very serious problem, 33% see it as somewhat

serious and roughly a quarter (24%) think it is either not too serious or not a problem at all. Consequently, the issue ranks as a relatively low public priority, well behind education, the economy, and the war in Iraq.

The divided public attitudes toward global warming – and modest expressions of concern over the issue – distinguishes the United States from other industrialized countries. Last month's Pew Global Attitudes Project survey showed that only 19% of Americans expressed a great deal of personal concern about global warming. Among 15 countries surveyed, only the Chinese expressed a comparably low level of concern (20%).

The latest nationwide survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted June 14-19 among 1,501 U.S. adults, finds that the public opinion about global warming is deeply polarized along political lines. Democrats are far more likely than Republicans to say there is solid evidence that temperatures are rising (by a margin of

Americans Less Concerned About Global Warming

	Pers	onally co	ncerned			
	A great A fair Only a little/					
	deal		Not at all	DK		
	%	%	%	%		
United States	19	34	47	1		
Great Britain	26	41	32	1		
Spain	51	34	14	2		
France	46	41	14	0		
Germany	30	34	36	1		
Russia	34	31	34	*		
Indonesia	28	48	23	1		
Egypt	24	51	23	1		
Jordan	26	40	34	*		
Turkey	41	29	23	8		
Pakistan	31	25	39	5		
Nigeria	45	33	20	2		
Japan	66	27	7	0		
India	65	20	13	2		
China	20	41	37	2		

Based on those who have heard about the "environmental problem of global warming."

See June 13, 2006 America's Image Slips, but Allies Share U.S. Concerns over Iran, Hamas at www.pewglobal.org for full survey results.

81% to 58%), and that human activity is the root cause (by 54% to 24%). Democrats also place a far higher priority on the issue – believing it is a serious problem and rating it far higher in importance among issues facing the nation. For the most part, independents see global warming in the same way as Democrats in terms of whether there is solid evidence for the phenomenon and the importance of global warming relative to other issues.

Aside from these political divisions, however, there is little difference of opinion on global warming across other demographic and social lines. Men and women hold virtually identical beliefs about the issue, as do younger and older people, and those with more and less education.

Causes of Global Warming

Seven-in-ten Americans say there is solid evidence that the earth's average temperature is rising. A majority of those who think warming is happening attribute the changes to human activities – representing 41% of Americans overall. But many think the temperature is rising due to natural patterns in the earth's environment (21%), or are unsure of why the earth is heating up (8%). Another 20% say there is *no* solid evidence of global warming.

Roughly four-in-ten say that global warming is a very serious problem, and this view is strongly linked to whether or not a person believes humans are the cause of climate change. Fully two-thirds of those who say human activity has made the earth hotter rate it as a very serious problem, compared with just 31% who see the earth warming but attribute it to natural patterns in the earth's environment. Among those who say there is no solid evidence of global warming, most say it is either not a problem at all (36%) or not too serious of a problem (28%).

Global Warming: How Serious a Problem?							
		Due to	Due to	No			
		human	natural	solid			
	<u>Total</u>	activity	patterns o	evidence			
	%	%	%	%			
Very serious	41	66	31	11			
Somewhat serious	33	29	42	24			
Not too serious	13	3	17	28			
Not a problem	11	2	10	36			
Don't know	<u>2</u>	*	*	<u>1</u>			
	100	100	100	100			
Number of cases	(1501)	(597)	(330)	(307)			

Democrats are more than twice as likely as Republicans (54% vs 24%) to say global warming is a very serious problem. But across party lines, those who say human activity such as the burning of fossil fuels has driven global warming rate the issue as far more serious.

Fully 71% of Democrats who say human activity has caused temperatures to rise rate it as a very serious problem, along with 54% of Republicans who hold the same belief. By contrast, 38% of Democrats who say temperatures are rising due to natural causes say it is a very serious problem, compared with just 22% of Republicans who believe this explanation.

Solving	the	Problem

Fully two-thirds of those who believe there is solid evidence of global warming think it is possible to reduce the effects of climate change – just 22% say this is not possible. And those who see human activity as the cause are the most likely to say the

problem can be solved. Fully 80% of those who attribute climate change to human activity say the effects can be reduced, compared with just 48% of those who say rising temperatures are a natural pattern in the earth's environment.

But reducing the effects of global warming will require major sacrifices, according to most who think it is possible. Overall, 39% of people who believe there is solid evidence of global warming think we will have to make major sacrifices to solve the problem, while 23% think technology can solve the problem without major sacrifices and 22% think it is not possible to reduce the effects of global warming at all.

Causes and Party Shape Seriousness of Issue									
Rate global warming as									
a very serious problem	%	(N)							
Republicans	24	452							
Due to human activity	54	104							
Due to natural patterns	22	119							
No solid evidence	6	141							
Democrats	54	501							
Due to human activity	71	272							
Due to natural patterns	38	99							
No solid evidence	14	48							
Independents	43	460							
Due to human activity	66	199							
Due to natural patterns	26	93							
No solid evidence	13	99							

Possible to Reduce the Effects of Global Warming?					
	Due to	Due to			
	human	natural			

	Total*	human activity	natural patterns
	%	%	 %
Yes, possible	67	81	48
Major sacrifices	39	49	24
Technology can solve	23	27	20
Don't know	5	5	4
No, not possible	22	13	40
Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>
	100	100	100
Number of cases	(1043)	(597)	(330)

^{*} Based on those who believe there is solid evidence that the earth is getting warmer.

While those who believe human activity has caused global warming are the most optimistic about the possibility of reducing the effects, they are also the most likely to believe we will have to make major sacrifices in order to do so. Roughly half (49%) of those who attribute global warming to human activities say it will take major sacrifices to reduce the effects, 26% say technology can

reduce the effects more easily, and 13% say the effects of warming cannot be alleviated.

Even for Democrats, Not a Top Priority

Despite widespread agreement among survey respondents that there is solid evidence that global warming is happening, and a broad sense that its effects can be mitigated, dealing with global warming remains a relatively low priority for the American public. Asked to rate the importance of various issues, 44% rate global warming as "very important." This is among the lowest of 19 issues tested, including top-ranked education (82% very important), the economy (80%) and health care (79%). The only issue rated as less important than global warming is gay marriage (34% very important).

Part of the low rating reflects Republican skepticism about the evidence for, and seriousness of, global warming. Just 23% of Republicans rate global warming as a very important issue, lower than any other issue tested. But even among Democrats and independents, most of whom see global warming as a serious issue, it ranks low relative to other issue priorities. Just over half of Democrats (56%) say global warming is a very important policy issue, well below such other concerns as Social Security, the job situation and raising the minimum wage. Independents, too, give more importance to the issue than do Republicans, but rate global warming well down the list of major national issues.

Global Warming a Low Public Priority Percent rating each issue as "very important"								
Republicans		Democrats		Independents				
Terrorism	84	Health care	89	Education	83			
The economy	80	Education	86	Health care	79			
Education	75	The economy	80	The economy	78			
Taxes	74	Social Security	79	Terrorism	72			
Social Security	73	Situation in Iraq	78	Situation in Iraq	72			
Situation in Iraq	72	Job situation	78	Social Security	71			
Health care	69	Terrorism	69	Energy policy	67			
Immigration	64	Minimum wage	68	Taxes	63			
Flag burning	60	Taxes	66	Job situation	63			
Energy policy	56	Energy policy	66	Environment	58			
Inheritance tax	54	Environment	64	Immigration	57			
Job situation	52	Budget deficit	62	Budget deficit	55			
Abortion	50	Global warming	56 g	Global warming	49			
Budget deficit	47	Immigration	52	Minimum wage	48			
Gay marriage	43	Gov. surveillance	e 52	Gov. surveillance	e47			
Minimum wage	36	Flag burning	44	Inheritance tax	45			
Gov. surveillance	e 33	Abortion	39	Flag burning	44			
Environment	30	Inheritance tax	37	Abortion	41			
Global warming	23	Gay marriage	31	Gay marriage	28			

Bush Job Approval

Overall, the public is dissatisfied with the president's handling of the environment and energy policy, and as Bush's overall job approval has fallen over the past year criticism on these issues has only grown more intense. By a 51% to 32% margin more Americans disapprove than approve of the president's handling of the environment, and disapproval outweighs approval when it comes to energy policy by more than two-to-one (56% to 26%).

Bush Job Approval Ratings						
	App-	Dis-	D.U.			
	rove	approve				
TD 1 1 1	%	%	%			
Terrorist threats	47	41	12 = 100			
Foreign policy	37	51	12 = 100			
Overall job approva	l 36	54	10=100			
Situation in Iraq	35	57	8=100			
The economy	33	57	10 = 100			
The environment	32	51	17 = 100			
Immigration policy	32	52	16=100			
Global warming	26	44	30=100			
Energy policy	26	56	18=100			

Many Americans have no opinion of how the president is handling the issue of global warming

specifically, but the general sentiment is more negative than positive among those who do have an opinion. A 44% plurality say they disapprove of how Bush is handling global warming, while 26% approve and 30% have no opinion.

Not surprisingly, this attitude is closely linked to views on the issue of global warming overall. People who believe global warming is being caused by human activity disapprove of the president's performance on this issue by more than five-to-one (67% to 12%). People who believe global warming is happening but due to natural patterns in the earth's environment are mixed in their view of the president's performance (37% approve, 30% disapprove). People who see no solid evidence of global warming approve of the president's handling of the issue by two-to-one (50% to 24%).

Bush's Handling of Global Warming								
	App-	Dis-						
Is global warming	rove	approve	e <u>DK</u>					
happening?	%	%	%					
Yes, solid evidence	20	52	28=100					
Human activity	12	67	21=100					
Natural patterns	37	30	33=100					
No, no solid evidence	50	24	26=100					
How serious a problem?)							
Very serious	13	66	21=100					
Somewhat serious	27	39	34=100					
Not too serious	40	22	38=100					
Not a problem	55	11	34=100					

SOLID EVIDENCE THAT THE EARTH IS GETTING WARMER?

WARMING IS DUE TO							
		Human	Natural	Don't know/		Mixed/	Number
	Yes	<u>activity</u>	<u>patterns</u>	<u>Refused</u>	<u>No</u>	Don't Know	of cases
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	70	41	21	8	20	10=100	(1501)
Sex							
Male	69	43	20	6	23	8	(731)
Female	70	40	21	9	17	13	(770)
Race							
White	69	40	21	8	21	10	(1243)
Non-white	73	45	20	8	16	11	(245)
Black	75	47	23	5	14	11	(149)
Race and Sex							
White Men	67	40	21	6	24	9	(606)
White Women	71	40	22	9	18	11	(637)
Age							
Under 30	65	45	17	3	21	14	(239)
30-49	71	43	21	7	21	8	(477)
50-64	74	40	26	8	18	8	(410)
65+	66	34	20	12	19	15	(357)
Sex and Age							
Men under 50	68	45	19	4	23	9	(358)
Women under 50	69	43	20	6	19	12	(358)
Men 50+	70	39	23	8	22	8	(367)
Women 50+	71	35	24	12	16	13	(400)
Education							
College Grad.	70	45	20	5	22	8	(512)
Some College	70	43	19	8	20	10	(372)
H.S. Grad or less	69	38	22	9	19	12	(609)
Family Income							, ,
\$75,000+	68	43	20	5	23	9	(379)
\$50,000-\$74,999	70	41	24	5	17	13	(208)
\$30,000-\$49,999	70	43	18	9	22	8	(297)
\$20,000-\$29,999	70	37	25	8	19	11	(177)
<\$20,000	74	42	22	10	14	12	(245)

Question:

From what you've read and heard, is there solid evidence that the average temperature on earth has been getting warmer over the past few decades, or not? Do you believe that the earth is getting warmer mostly because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels or mostly because of natural patterns in the earth's environment?

Continued on next page...

SOLID EVIDENCE THAT THE EARTH IS GETTING WARMER?

		WA	ARMING IS I	OUE TO	-		
		Human	Natural	Don't know/		Mixed/	Number
	Yes	<u>activity</u>	patterns	<u>Refused</u>	No	Don't Know	of cases
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	70	41	21	8	20	10=100	(1501)
Region							
Northeast	73	45	17	10	18	9	(253)
Midwest	67	38	25	4	20	13	(355)
South	70	40	21	9	21	9	(557)
West	69	42	19	8	20	11	(336)
Religious Affiliation							
Total Protestant	68	38	22	8	22	10	(855)
- White Evangelical	66	32	25	9	26	8	(343)
- White Non-Evangelical	69	43	19	7	18	13	(358)
- Black Protestant	74	43	25	6	15	11	(116)
Total Catholic	70	41	22	7	18	12	(355)
- White Non-Hispanic	69	39	23	7	21	10	(278)
Secular	75	46	20	9	17	8	(168)
Party ID							
Republican	58	24	25	9	32	10	(452)
Democrat	81	54	19	8	10	9	(501)
Independent	71	47	19	5	20	9	(460)
Party and Ideology							
Conservative Republican	56	21	26	9	33	11	(302)
Moderate/Liberal Rep.	61	31	23	7	30	9	(143)
Conservative/Mod. Dem.	79	50	20	9	10	11	(310)
Liberal Democrat	86	66	16	4	9	5	(167)
Presidential Approval							
Approve	58	26	23	9	33	9	(555)
Disapprove	79	53	20	6	12	9	(807)

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,501 adults, 18 years of age or older, from June 14-19, 2006. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on form 1 (N=749) and form 2 (N=752) the sampling error is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of six projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS JUNE 2006 NEWS INTEREST/BELIEVABILITY FINAL TOPLINE

June 14 - 19, 2006 N=1,501

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? [IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]

	<u>Approve</u>	Disapprove	DK/Ref
June, 2006	36	54	10=100

More specifically...

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling [INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS] How about [NEXT ITEM]?

		<u>Approve</u>	Disapprove	DK/Ref
a.	The economy	33	57	10=100
b.	The situation in Iraq	35	57	8=100
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=749]:				
c.F1	Terrorist threats	47	41	12=100
d.F1	The environment	32	51	17=100
e.F1	The nation's immigration policy	32	52	16=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:				
f.F2	The nation's foreign policy	37	51	12=100
g.F2	Energy policy	26	56	18=100
h.F2	The issue of global warming	26	44	30=100

FOR FULL TRENDS ON Q.1 AND Q2a-q2g, SEE JUNE 20, 2006 "IRAQ VIEWS IMPROVE, SMALL BOUNCE FOR BUSH"

On a different subject...

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:

Q.28F2 Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be a more important priority for this country... (**READ AND ROTATE**)?

			Mid-		
		Sept	March	Feb	May
		<u>2005</u>	2005	2002	2001
35	Protecting the environment [OR]	36	42	45	42
60	Developing new sources of energy	57	49	48	49
_5	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>
100		100	100	100	100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=749]:

Q.29F1 Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be the more important priority for U.S. energy policy... (READ AND ROTATE; READ RESPONSE NUMBER TO CLARIFY OPTIONS)

		Feb 2006	Mid-Sept <u>2005</u>	Feb 2002	May 2001
	Expanding exploration, mining and drilling,				
35	and the construction of new power plants	41	43	37	44
	[OR]				
	More energy conservation and regulation				
57	on energy use and prices	52	48	54	49
8	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	9	9	7
100		$1\overline{00}$	$1\overline{00}$	100	100

Q.41 From what you've read and heard, is there solid evidence that the average temperature on earth has been getting warmer over the past few decades, or not?

IF "YES" (1 IN Q.41) ASK:

Q.42 Do you believe that the earth is getting warmer [**READ AND ROTATE**]?

70 Yes
41 Mostly because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels, OR
21 Mostly because of natural patterns in the earth's environment
8 Don't know/Refused
20 No
1 Mixed/some evidence (VOL.)
9 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

100

- Q.43 In your view, is global warming a very serious problem, somewhat serious, not too serious, or not a problem?
 - 41 Very serious
 - 33 Somewhat serious
 - Not too serious
 - 11 Not a problem
 - <u>2</u> Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

100

Q.44 Do you think it is possible to reduce the effects of global warming, or not?

IF "POSSIBLE" (1 IN Q.44) ASK:

Q.45 To reduce the effects of global warming will we have to make major sacrifices, or can technology solve the problem without requiring major sacrifices?

BASED ON SOLID EVIDENCE OF EARTH GETTING WARMER IN Q.41 [N=1043]:

- 67 Yes, possible
- 39 Have to make major sacrifices
- 23 Technology can solve the problem without major sacrifices
- 5 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)
- No, not possible
- 11 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

100