

30-Country Poll Finds Worldwide Consensus that Climate Change is a Serious Problem

April 25, 2006

Concern Growing Sharply

Since Katrina, Americans No Longer See Unusual Weather as Natural

[Questionnaire](#)

A poll of 30 countries from around the world finds that a large majority of people in all countries polled believe that climate change or global warming is a serious problem. No country has more than one in five saying it is not a serious problem.

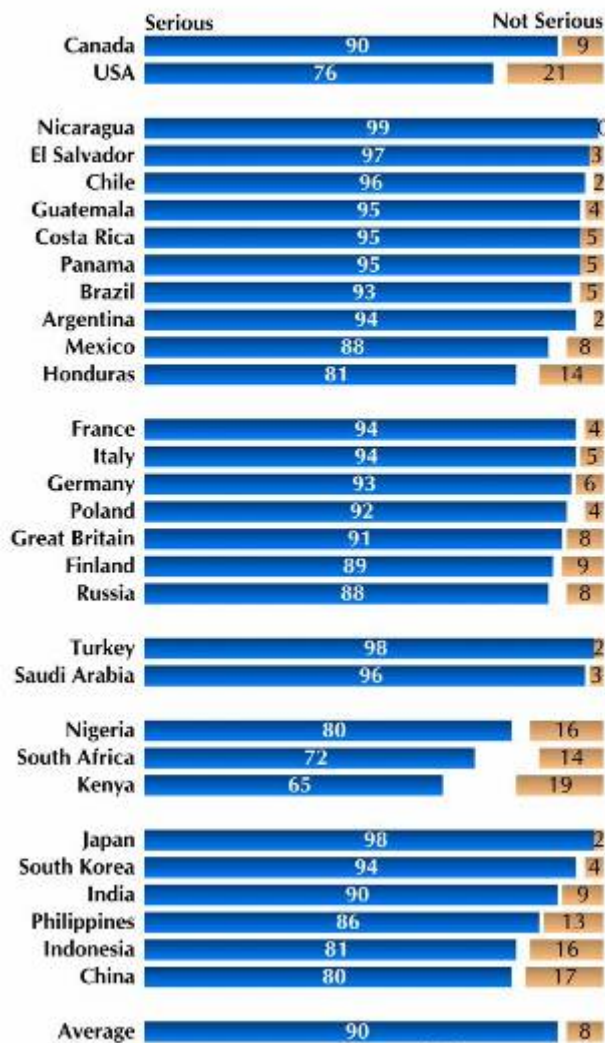
The poll of 33,237 people from all major regions of the world was conducted by GlobeScan Incorporated between October 2005 and January 2006, and analyzed in conjunction with WorldPublicOpinion.org. The margin of error for each country was plus or minus 3 percent.

Across all countries, on average 90 percent say that "climate change or global warming, due to the greenhouse effect" is a serious problem. Only three countries have less than eight in ten endorsing this view (the United States 76%, South Africa 72%, and Kenya 65%).

In no country do more than one in five say that climate change is not a serious problem. On average only 8 percent say it is not serious. The highest percentage was found in the United States (21%), followed by Kenya (19%), China (17%), and Nigeria (16%).

Perhaps most significant, in 23 countries a majority says that global warming is a "very serious" problem. On average, 65 percent say that it is a very serious problem. The only countries where this is not a majority position are six developing countries (China 39%, Indonesia 44%, Kenya 44%, South Africa 44%, Philippines 46%, Nigeria 47%,) and the United States (49%).

Climate Change: A Serious Problem or Not?



Globescan, 12/2005

Concern appears to have grown sharply over the past three years. Sixteen countries were polled in 2003 as well as 2005. On average, for all 16 countries the percentage saying that the problem is very serious increased from 49 percent to 61 percent. In no country did the percentage rating the problem as very serious diminish. In four countries it was relatively unchanged: China (with 39% very serious), India (65%), Mexico (67%), and Brazil (78%). China and India, interestingly, are two countries where the government has opposed committing to take action to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Steven Kull, director of PIPA, comments: "The universality of the consensus that climate change is a serious problem is quite extraordinary."

The hurricanes Katrina and Rita may have had an impact on Americans-- perceptions of the role of human causes in extreme weather patterns. Asked in the fall of 2004 (before the hurricanes) how they viewed "extreme weather patterns, including violent storms,

flooding, and drought," 58 percent said they saw it as "part of a natural pattern." In the fall of 2005 (after the hurricanes) when asked the same question, the percentage attributing it to natural causes dropped 19 points to 39 percent. Now 59 percent of Americans say they see these patterns as unusual.

With this change Americans have come more in line with world opinion on this question. In the fall of 2004 GlobeScan found that among 19 countries, on average 40 percent assumed that these extreme weather patterns were due to natural causes and 56 percent saw them as unusual. The United States, with 58 percent saying that they were due to natural causes, was one of the four countries with the highest number holding this view. Now the United States is almost exactly in line with the global average.

GlobeScan president Doug Miller concludes, "A tipping point appears to have been reached on this issue. Concern levels are at historic highs and the reality and impact of climate change has been internalized by most citizens, suggesting that well-designed political and corporate initiatives to reduce the problem will likely receive substantial support."

These findings are drawn from the 2006 GlobeScan Corporate Social Responsibility Monitor, based on a global public opinion poll with citizens across 30 countries (n=1,000 in most countries), conducted between October 17, 2005 and January 26, 2006 by research institutes in each participating country, under the leadership of GlobeScan. Each country's findings are considered accurate to within 3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.