

Multi-Country Poll Reveals That Majority of People Want Action on Climate Change, Even if it Entails Costs

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The full poll findings can be accessed via www.worldbank.org/wdr2010/climatepoll



A new poll of 15 nations, most of them in the developing world, finds that majorities of the people canvassed want their governments to take steps to fight climate change, even if that entails costs. People signaled they would support public measures to limit greenhouse gas emissions and step up adaptation measures. For example, respondents would support higher fuel efficiency standards for cars, preserving or expanding forests, and extending funding to vulnerable countries so they can develop hardier crops suited to more severe climates.

"The poll's findings shed light on global attitudes at a particularly important moment: the run-up to the conference on climate change to be held December 7-18 in Copenhagen. Hearing from people in the developing world offers a new lens on this issue," says Katherine Sierra, World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development.

Carried out by WorldPublicOpinion.org and commissioned by the World Bank, the poll questioned 13,518 respondents in 15 nations-- Bangladesh, China, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Russia, Senegal, Turkey, the United States, and Vietnam.

Other key findings include:

- Public concern about climate change is high worldwide, but it's generally higher in developing countries.
- Publics, particularly in developing countries, believe climate change is already having negative effects.
- In most countries, wealthy and poor alike, large majorities are willing to pay to fight climate change.
- Support for increased adaptation funding to poor countries is widespread worldwide

"It is encouraging indeed to see strong across-the-board support for committing to emissions limits in both developed and developing nations, since behavior change and attitudes will help determine whether we succeed or fail in addressing this global issue," says Marianne Fay, World Bank Chief Economist for Sustainable Development and Co-Director of the World Development Report 2010: Development and Climate Change.

Ms Fay explained that the poll was commissioned as a follow-up to the recently released WDR. The aim was to gain a better understanding of how the recommendations of the Report to invest substantially and immediately to manage climate change ("Act now, act together, and act differently") resonate in a cross-section of countries.

In the low-income country of Vietnam, for example, 98% say their government should commit to limiting emissions as part of a deal, and 93% support the same course in the absence of a deal. At the other end of the wealth spectrum, the people of France express 97% support if an agreement is reached at Copenhagen, and 87% if no agreement emerges.

Majorities in 14 of 15 countries are willing to pay to fight global climate change. In each country, the poll asked people whether they were willing to bear higher prices for energy and other goods, as part of taking steps to fight climate change. These price increases were calculated as 0.5% and 1.0% of each country's per capita GDP, and then described to respondents as defined monthly amounts in local currency. Majorities in six countries-- China (68%), Vietnam (59%), Japan (53%), Iran (51%) and Mexico (51%)--say they are willing to pay 1%. In addition, majorities in an additional eight countries are willing to pay between 0.5% and 1.0%.

Majorities in most countries also support measures that would raise costs for energy and transportation.

Majorities in all countries support "limiting the rate of constructing coal-fired power plants, even if this increases the cost of energy." In China, which is highly reliant on coal, 67% support this measure. On average across all countries polled, 68% support the idea (31% strongly) and 26% oppose it (8% strongly).

Similarly, majorities in 12 countries support "gradually increasing the requirements for fuel efficiency in automobiles, even if this raises the cost of cars and bus fares." Majorities in 11 countries support "gradually reducing government subsidies that favor private transportation, even if this raises its cost." Majorities in all countries polled support "preserving or expanding forested areas, even if this means less land for agriculture or construction."

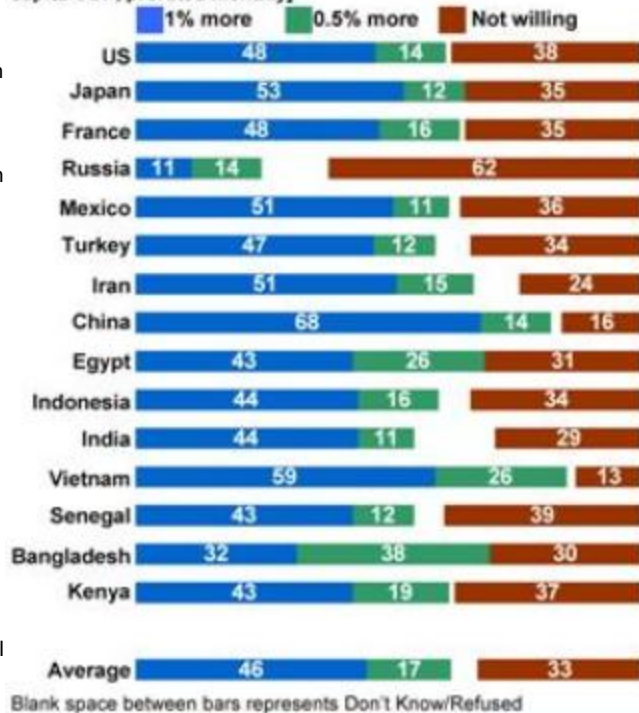
The poll also asked about helping poor countries adapt to the effects of climate change. Fourteen majorities and one plurality say their countries "should contribute to international efforts to help poor countries deal with climate-induced changes." Many developing countries (such as Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya, and Senegal) express more than 90% support for acting in solidarity with other countries facing problems like their own.

WorldPublicOpinion.org operates as a collaborative project involving research centers from around the world that is managed by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. The margins of error for each country range from +/-3 to 4 percentage points. The surveys were conducted across the different nations in September and October 2009.

The World Development Report can be downloaded by visiting: <http://www.worldbank.org/wdr2010>

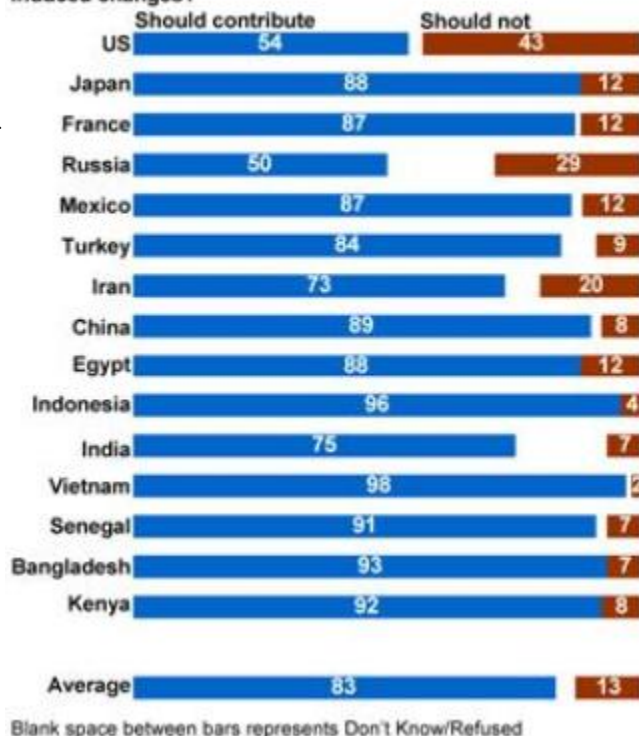
Paying More to Take Steps

Would you be willing to pay [fixed amount in local currency equal to 1% per capita GDP, prorated per month] more for energy and other products as part of taking steps against climate change? [Those not willing then asked if willing to pay a fixed amount equal to 0.5% per capita GDP, prorated monthly]



Assistance to Affected Countries

Do you think [country] should or should not contribute to international efforts to help poor countries deal with climate-induced changes?



The World Bank's climate change blog is at: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/climatechange>

Alternative WPO link for: [Full Report, including questionnaire with full findings \(PDF\)](#)