

Climate Change in the American Mind: Beliefs & Attitudes, Spring 2025

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Executive Summary

Drawing on a nationally representative survey ($n = 1,040$) conducted from May 1–12, 2025, this report describes Americans' beliefs and attitudes about global warming. Among the key findings in this report:

Global Warming Beliefs

- Americans who think global warming is happening outnumber those who think it is not by a ratio of more than 4 to 1 (69% versus 15%).
- 60% of Americans understand that global warming is mostly human-caused. By contrast, 28% think it is caused mostly by natural changes in the environment.
- 58% of Americans understand that most scientists think global warming is happening. By contrast, 21% think there is a lot of disagreement among scientists about whether it is happening.

Emotional Responses to Global Warming

- 65% of Americans say they are at least “somewhat worried” about global warming. This includes 29% who say they are “very worried.”
- Many Americans say they feel the following emotions about global warming: interested (58%), sad (44%), disgusted (44%), afraid (39%), anxious (39%), angry (39%), hopeful (38%), outraged (36%), hopeless (34%), or depressed (28%).

Perceived Risks and Impacts of Global Warming

- 48% of Americans think people in the United States are being harmed by global warming “right now,” and 46% say they have personally experienced the effects of global warming.

- Half or more Americans think global warming will harm plant and animal species (71%), future generations of people (69%), the world's poor (66%), people in developing countries (65%), people in the United States (62%), and people in their community (50%). Many also think their family (49%) and they themselves (46%) will be harmed.
- 12% of Americans have considered moving to avoid the impacts of global warming.
- 64% of Americans think global warming is affecting weather in the United States, including 34% who think weather is being affected "a lot."
- Majorities of Americans think global warming is affecting many extreme weather events or related impacts in the United States, including extreme heat (75%), wildfires (72%), droughts (72%), flooding (71%), air pollution (69%), rising sea levels (69%), hurricanes (68%), water shortages (67%), tornados (67%), reduced snowpack (64%), water pollution (62%), agricultural pests and diseases (60%), electricity power outages (59%), and diseases carried by mosquitoes and ticks, such as Lyme disease and West Nile Virus (58%).
- 58% of Americans think extreme weather poses a "high" (18%) or "moderate" (40%) risk to their community over the next 10 years.

Harm from Local Environmental Problems

- Majorities of Americans say they are worried their local area might be harmed by extreme weather events or related impacts including air pollution (78%), water pollution (77%), diseases carried by mosquitoes and ticks, such as Lyme disease and West Nile Virus (76%), extreme heat (73%), droughts (73%), agricultural pests and diseases (71%), electricity power outages (71%), wildfires (67%), water shortages (67%), flooding (61%), tornados (60%), rising sea levels (55%), hurricanes (50%), and reduced snowpack (49%).

Personal and Social Engagement with Global Warming

- 52% of Americans say they have thought about global warming at least "some."
- 65% of Americans say they "rarely" or "never" discuss global warming with family and friends, while 35% say they do so "occasionally" or "often."
- 39% of Americans think it is at least "moderately" important to their family and friends that *they* take action to reduce global warming (an injunctive norm), and 35% say their family and friends make at least "a moderate amount of effort" to reduce global warming (a descriptive norm).
- 37% of Americans say they hear about global warming in the media about once a month or more frequently. Fewer say they hear about global warming on social media once a

month or more often (23%) or that they hear people they know talk about global warming once a month or more frequently (17%).

- 64% of Americans say the issue of global warming is “extremely,” “very,” or “somewhat” important to them personally, while 36% say it is “not too” or “not at all” personally important.
- 61% of Americans feel a personal sense of responsibility to help reduce global warming.
- 29% of Americans say they have rewarded companies that are taking steps to reduce global warming by buying their products at least “once” in the past 12 months; 25% say they have punished companies that are opposing steps to reduce global warming by not buying their products at least “once” in the past 12 months.

Global Warming and Personal Agency

- 60% of Americans *disagree* that it’s already too late to do anything about global warming and 55% *disagree* that the actions of a single individual won’t make any difference in global warming.
- 53% of Americans *disagree* that new technologies can solve global warming without individuals having to make big changes in their lives.

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