The Public’s Views on Global Warming
Trends from the Past Year

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- Pew Environment Group
- Pew Center on Global Climate Change
- Pew Economic Policy Group
- Pew Center on the States
- Pew Health Group
- Stimulating Civic Life
Data Sources

Telephone surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press using random samples of landline and cell phone numbers

February 3-9, 2010 (N=1,383)
January 6-10, 2010 (N=1,504)
September 30 – October 4, 2009 (N=1,500)
April 28 – May 12, 2009 (N=2,001)
The Public’s Policy Priorities for 2010

% who say top priority

- Economy: 83
- Jobs: 81
- Terrorism: 80
- Social Security: 66
- Education: 65
- Medicare: 63
- Deficit reduction: 60
- Health care costs: 57
- Helping the poor: 53
- Military: 49
- Energy: 49
- Health insur.: 49
- Crime: 49
- Moral decline: 45
- Finance reg.: 45
- Environment: 44
- Tax cuts: 42
- Immigration: 40
- Lobbyists: 36
- Trade policy: 32
- Global warming: 28

Jan 10

The Pew Research Center
For The People & The Press
a Pew Research Center project
Top Policy Priorities by Party

Republicans
- Terrorism: 89
- Economy: 81
- Jobs: 80
- Military: 64
- Social Security: 62
- Deficit reduction: 61
- Education: 54
- Medicare: 54
- Moral decline: 52
- Immigration: 49
- Health care costs: 48
- Crime: 46
- Lobbyists: 45
- Tax cuts: 45
- Energy: 43
- Helping poor: 40
- Finance reg.: 40
- Environment: 34
- Trade policy: 32
- Health insur.: 26
- Global warming: 11

Independents
- Economy: 82
- Jobs: 77
- Terrorism: 76
- Social Security: 66
- Education: 64
- Medicare: 61
- Deficit reduction: 60
- Health care costs: 52
- Helping the poor: 48
- Military: 47
- Crime: 46
- Energy: 45
- Immigration: 42
- Moral decline: 42
- Health insur.: 41
- Finance reg.: 40
- Lobbyists: 40
- Tax cuts: 39
- Environment: 38
- Trade policy: 29
- Global warming: 25

Democrats
- Jobs: 90
- Economy: 87
- Terrorism: 80
- Health insur.: 75
- Education: 75
- Medicare: 72
- Health care costs: 71
- Social Security: 68
- Helping the poor: 67
- Deficit reduction: 60
- Environment: 60
- Finance reg.: 56
- Energy: 56
- Crime: 55
- Moral decline: 45
- Tax cuts: 45
- Military: 44
- Global warming: 43
- Trade policy: 37
- Immigration: 30
- Lobbyists: 27

Jan 10
How Serious of a Problem is Global Warming?

![Graph showing changes in perceptions of global warming from 2006 to 2009. The graph indicates an increase in the number of people who consider global warming to be very serious or somewhat serious, while the number of people who consider it not too serious or not a problem decreases over the same period.]

Oct 09
Strong Partisan and Ideological Differences on the Seriousness of Global Warming

% who say global warming is a very serious problem

- Cons Rep: 10
- Mod/Lib Rep: 20
- Ind-Lean Rep: 19
- Ind-Lean Dem: 48
- Cons/Mod Dem: 39
- Liberal Dem: 70

Oct 09
Is There Solid Evidence that the Average Temperature on Earth Has Been Getting Warmer over the Past Few Decades?

Yes, solid evidence of warming 57
  Mostly because of human activity 36
  Mostly because of natural patterns 16
  Yes, but don’t know why 6
No solid evidence of warming 33
Mixed/Don’t know (Vol.) 10

Oct 09
Fewer Now Say There Is Solid Evidence that the Average Temperature on Earth Has Been Getting Warmer
And Fewer Who Believe the Earth is Warming Say it is Mostly Because of Human Activity

- Human activity, such as burning fossil fuels
- Natural patterns in the earth's environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Human activity</th>
<th>Natural patterns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oct 09
Declines Across Partisan Lines
But Especially Among Republicans and Republican-Leaning Independents

% who say average temperature is warming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Rep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oct 09
Partisan and Ideological Differences on Whether Earth is Warming

% who say average temperature is warming

- Cons Rep: 32
- Mod/Lib Rep: 41
- Ind-Ln Rep: 31
- Ind-Ln Dem: 77
- Con/Mod Dem: 72
- Lib Dem: 83

Oct 09
Age Differences in Views About Evidence of Warming and Its Causes

- Average temperature is warming
- Mostly because of human activity

- 18-29: 64%
- 30-49: 55%
- 50-64: 50%
- 65+: 47%

Oct 09
Little Differences by Education in Views About Evidence of Warming and Its Causes

- College grad +: 58% average temperature is warming, 40% mostly because of human activity
- Some college: 57% average temperature is warming, 38% mostly because of human activity
- HS or less: 56% average temperature is warming, 31% mostly because of human activity

Oct 09
From What You’ve Heard or Read, Do Scientists Generally Agree That the Earth is Getting Warmer Because of Human Activity or Do They Not Generally Agree About This?
Partisan Differences on Whether Scientists Agree That the Earth is Warming Because of Human Activity

% who say scientists generally agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May 09
Do You Think that Most Scientists Agree With One Another About Whether or Not Global Warming is Happening, or Do You Think There is a lot of Disagreement Among Scientists on This Issue?

ABC/WA Post Dec 09
How Much, if Anything, Have You Heard About The Disclosure of Private Emails Between Prominent Climate Scientists?
More Republicans Heard A Lot About Emails

% who heard a lot

- Republican: 23%
- Independent: 11%
- Democrat: 17%

Nov 09
Thinking About What is Said in the News, In Your View is the Seriousness of Global Warming Generally Exaggerated, Generally Correct, or is it Generally Underestimated?

Gallup March 09

Exaggerated: 41
Correct: 29
Underestimated: 28
Partisan Differences on Whether Global Warming is Generally Exaggerated in the News

% who say seriousness of global warming is generally exaggerated in the news

- Republican: 66%
- Independent: 44%
- Democrat: 22%

Gallup March 09
How Much, if Anything, Have You Heard About a Policy Called “Cap and Trade” That Would Set Limits on Carbon Dioxide Emissions?

- A lot: 14
- A little: 30
- Nothing at all: 55

Oct 09
What Does the “Cap and Trade” Legislation Being Discussed in Congress Deal With?

Oct 09

Energy and environment: 23
Health care: 11
Banking reform: 13
Unemployment: 5
Don't know: 48

Oct 09
Do You Favor or Oppose Setting Limits on Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Making Companies Pay for Their Emissions, Even if it May Mean Higher Energy Prices?
Views of Other Energy Policies

% who favor

- More federal funding for wind, solar, etc.: 82%
- Spending more on mass transit: 70%
- Allowing more offshore oil drilling: 68%
- Promoting increased use of nuclear power: 45%

April 09
Summary

- Global warming has remained a low priority for the public, especially as economic concerns have come to dominate their attention.
- Many are not engaged with the issue and have given it little thought.
- The issue of global warming has become increasingly polarized across partisan lines.
- Even though there has been a decline in those believing there is solid evidence of warming, large majorities still support many energy policies that may help to reduce carbon emissions.
For More Information …

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http://people-press.org

Fewer Americans See Solid Evidence of Global Warming
Modest Support for “Cap and Trade” Policy

Public’s Priorities for 2010: Economy, Jobs, Terrorism
Energy Concerns Fall, Deficit Concerns Rise

Public Praises Science; Scientists Fault Media, Public
Scientific Achievements Less Prominent Than a Decade Ago