

CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN MIND

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YALE PROGRAM ON
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Communication



GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
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Introduction

This report is based on findings from a nationally representative survey – *Climate Change in the American Mind* – conducted by the [Yale Program on Climate Change Communication \(climatecommunication.yale.edu\)](http://climatecommunication.yale.edu) and the [George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication \(climatechangecommunication.org\)](http://climatechangecommunication.org). Interview dates: November 18-December 1, 2016. Interviews: 1,226 Adults (18+). Average margin of error +/- 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The research was funded by the 11th Hour Project, the Energy Foundation, the Grantham Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation.

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Key Findings

- Seven in ten Americans (70%) think global warming is happening, which nearly matches the highest level (71%), recorded in 2008. By contrast, only about one in eight Americans (13%) think global warming is not happening.
- Americans are also more certain global warming is happening – the proportion who are “extremely” or “very” sure it is happening (45%) is at its highest level since 2008. By contrast, far fewer – 7% – are “extremely” or “very sure” global warming is not happening.
- Over half of Americans (55%) understand that global warming is mostly human caused, which is the highest level since November 2008. By contrast, three in ten (30%) say it is due mostly to natural changes in the environment – the lowest level recorded since 2008.
- Only about one in seven Americans (15%) understand that nearly all climate scientists (more than 90%) are convinced that human-caused global warming is happening. However, this is an increase of 4 percentage points (from 11%) since March 2016.
- Six in ten Americans (61%) say they are at least “somewhat worried” about global warming. Further, the percentage of Americans who are “very worried” about global warming, 19%, is the highest recorded since our surveys began in 2008.
- Two in three Americans (66%) say they are “interested” in global warming and about half say they feel “hopeful” (48%) about it. Large minorities also feel “helpless” (46%), “disgusted” (42%), and/or “afraid” (42%) when they think about global warming.
- Six in ten Americans (60%) think global warming is affecting weather in the United States, and half think weather is either being affected “a lot” (24%) or “some” (26%). However, even though the majority of Americans think global warming is affecting weather in the U.S., only about one in three Americans (36%) think people in the U.S. are being harmed by it “right now.”
- Most Americans think global warming is a relatively distant threat – they are most likely to think that it will harm future generations of people (71%), plant and animal species (70%), people living in developing countries (65%), or the world’s poor (65%). They are less likely to think it will harm people in the U.S. (59%), people in their community (49%), their family (46%), or themselves (41%).
- About one in three Americans (36%) say they have personally experienced the effects of global warming, two in three (64%) say they have not.
- Only one in three Americans (33%) discuss global warming with family and friends “often” or “occasionally,” while most say they rarely or never discuss it (67%).

- Six in ten Americans (61%) say the issue of global warming is either “extremely” (10%), “very” (17%), or “somewhat” (34%) important to them personally. Four in ten (39%) say it is either “not too” (22%) or “not at all” (16%) important personally.
- About half of Americans (47%) say they have thought “a lot” (20%) or “some” (27%) about global warming. The other half (53%) say they have thought about global warming just “a little” (37%) or “not at all” (16%).
- By a three-to-one margin, Americans say that schools should teach children about the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to global warming (76% agree vs. 24% who disagree).
- Fewer than four in ten Americans (36%) think the American people can “definitely” or “probably” convince the U.S. Congress to pass legislation to reduce global warming. Only one in four (26%) say it is “definitely” or “probably” not possible.
- Few Americans are optimistic that humans will reduce global warming. Nearly half (48%) say humans could reduce global warming, but it’s unclear at this point whether we will do what is necessary, and nearly one in four (23%) say we won’t because people are unwilling to change their behavior. Only 5% say humans can and will successfully reduce global warming.
- Americans are most likely to think of global warming as an environmental (76%) or scientific (70%) issue. Majorities also say global warming is an agricultural (65%), health (62%), severe weather (61%), economic (60%), and/or political (56%) issue. Fewer consider global warming to be a moral (37%), national security (27%), poverty (25%), social justice (24%), or religious issue (8%).
- In the months following Pope Francis’s encyclical about climate change and visit to the U.S. in 2015, more Americans said that global warming is a “moral,” “social justice,” or “poverty” issue. Since then, however, these beliefs have returned to their pre-encyclical levels.

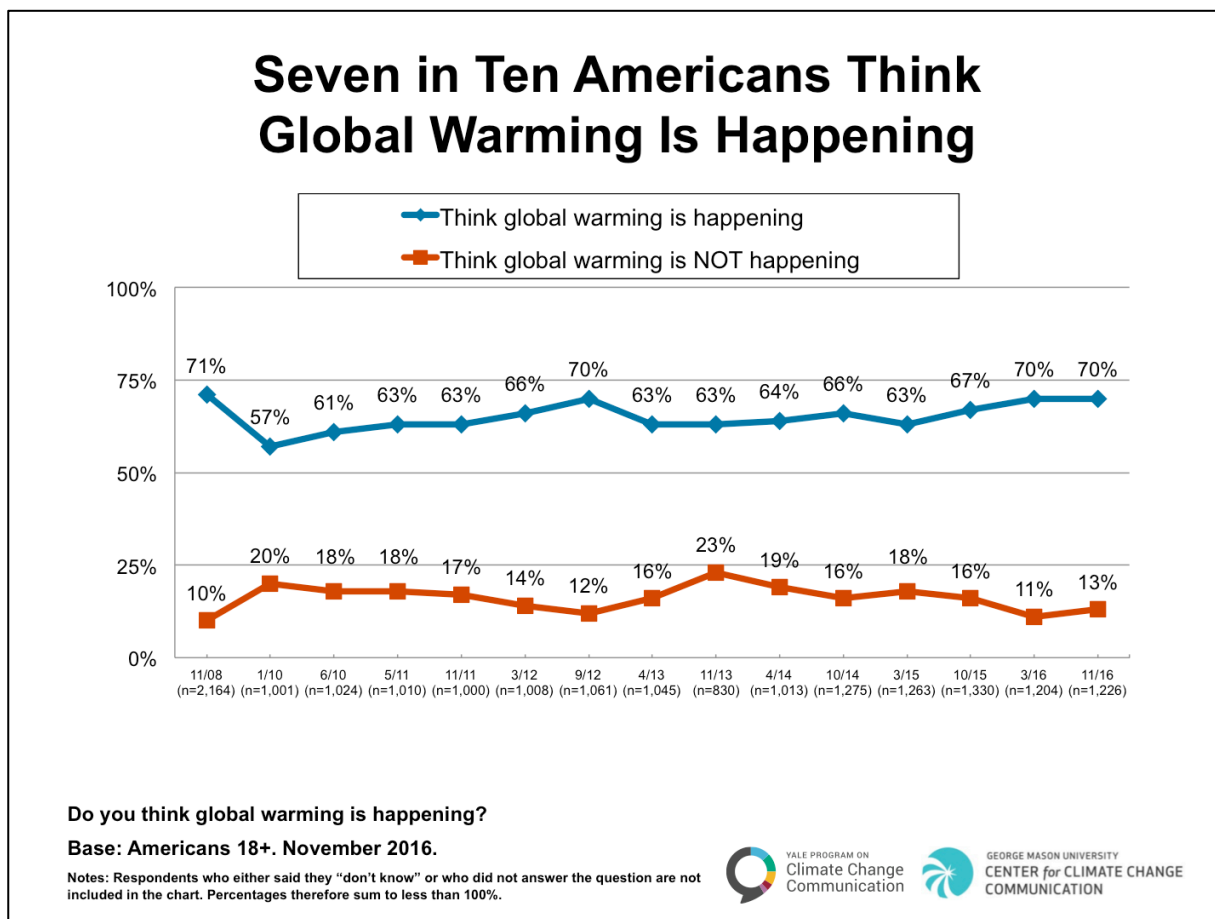
1. Global Warming Beliefs

1.1. Seven in ten Americans think global warming is happening.

Americans who think global warming is happening outnumber those who think it is not by more than 5 to 1.

Seven in ten Americans (70%) think global warming is happening. By contrast, only about one in eight Americans (13%) think global warming is not happening.

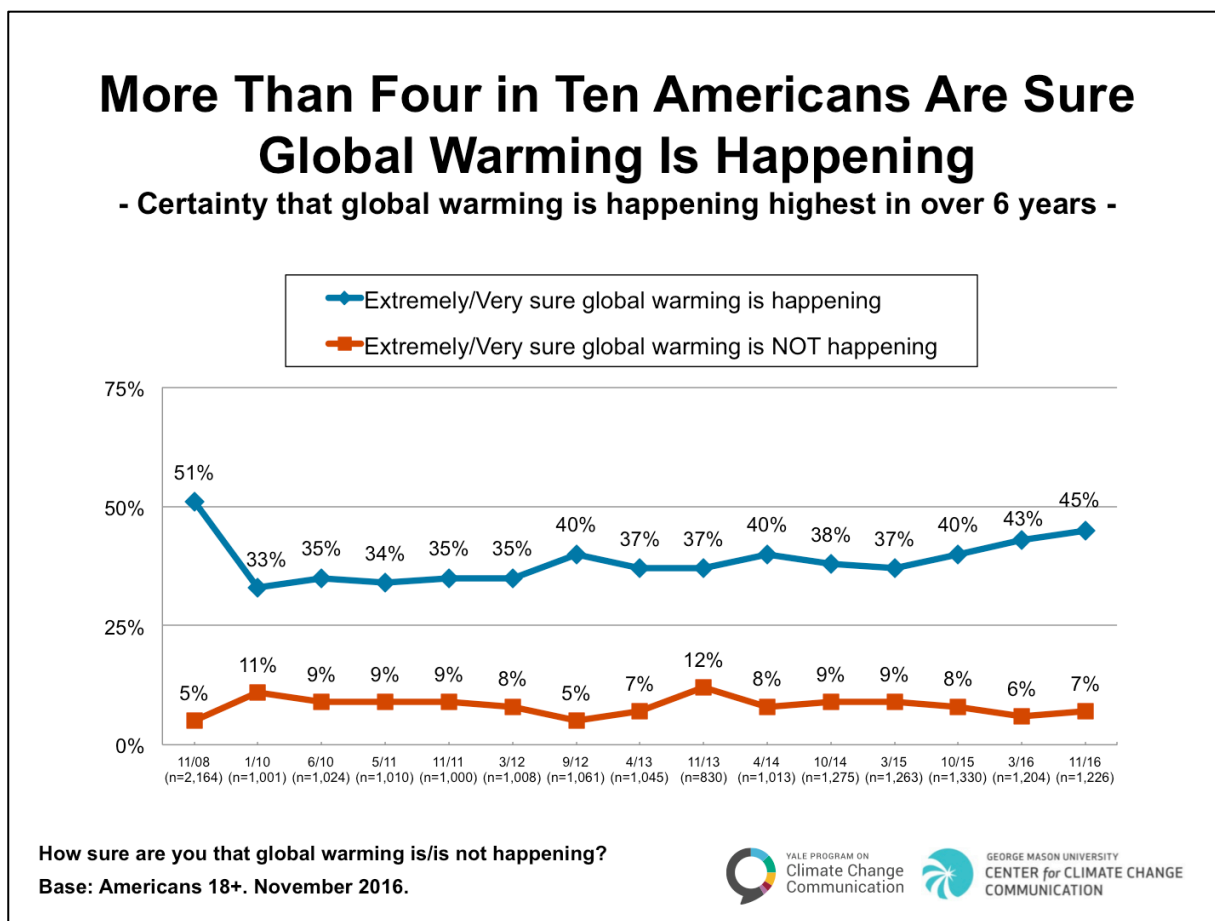
The percentage of Americans who think global warming is happening has remained steady since March 2016, and nearly matches its highest level (71%) since our surveys began in November 2008.



1.2. More than four in ten Americans are sure global warming is happening. Fewer than one in ten are sure it is not happening.

Forty-five percent of Americans are either “extremely” or “very” sure global warming is happening. Far fewer – 7% – are “extremely” or “very sure” global warming is not happening.

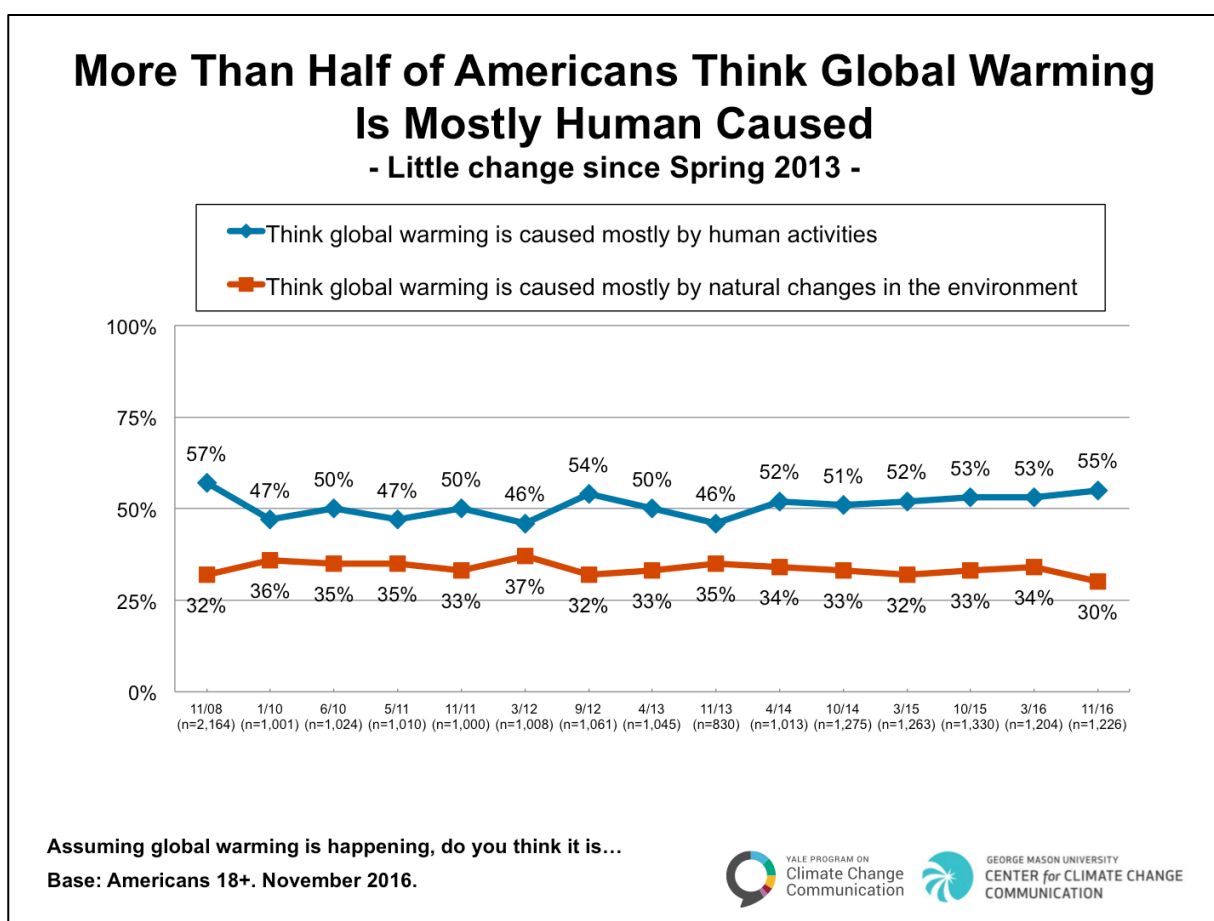
The percentage who are sure global warming is happening has risen steadily over the past two years, and is now at its highest level since November 2008.



1.3. More than half of Americans think global warming is mostly human caused.

The 2014 U.S. National Climate Assessment (written and reviewed by hundreds of climate experts over the course of four years) states: “The global warming of the past 50 years is primarily due to human activities, predominantly the burning of fossil fuels. Many independent lines of evidence confirm that human activities are affecting climate in unprecedented ways” (p. 15).¹

Public understanding of climate change, however, is very different from the conclusions of the nation’s climate experts. Currently, just over half of Americans (55%) understand that global warming is mostly human caused, the highest percentage who have said that since November 2008. By contrast, three in ten (30%) say it is due mostly to natural changes in the environment – the lowest percentage to say that since our surveys began in 2008.

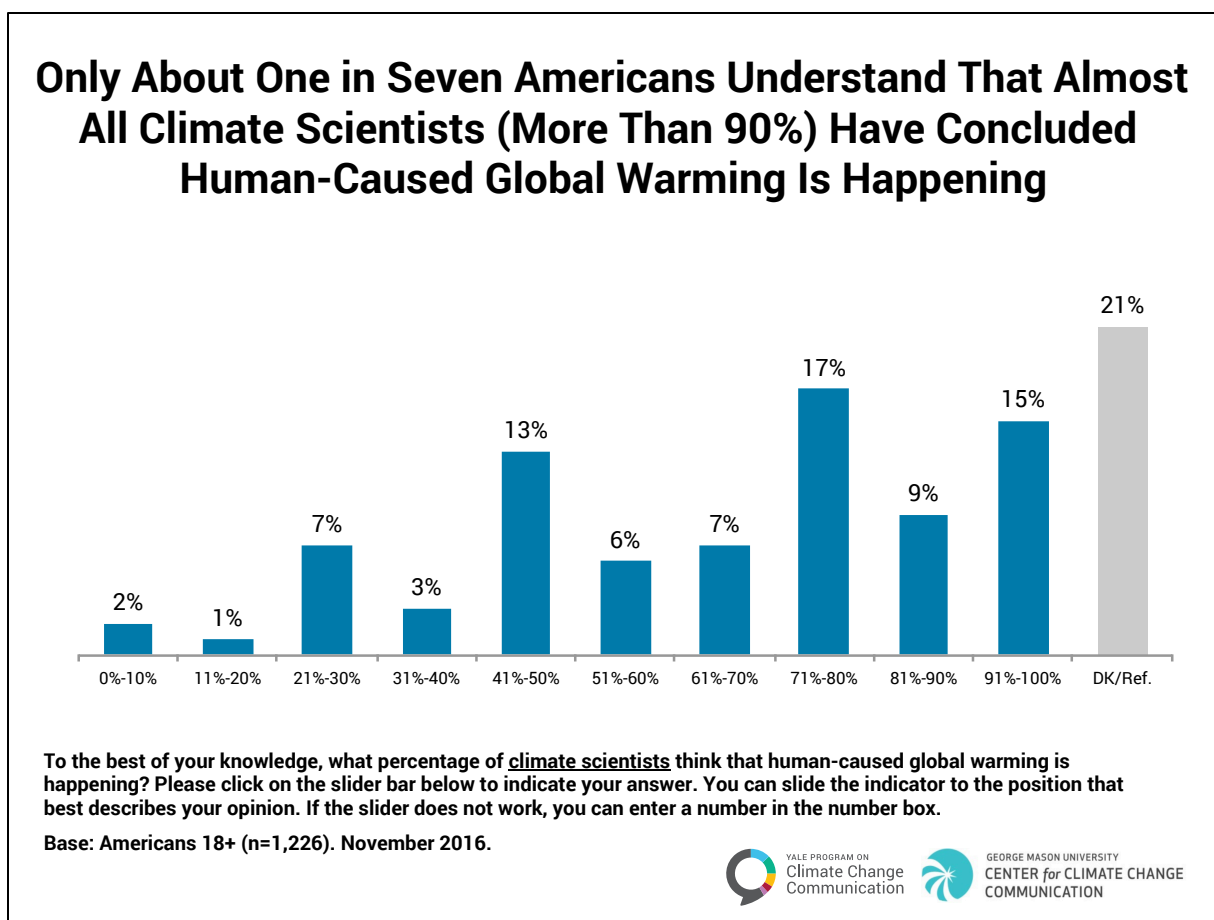


¹ <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report>

1.4. Only about one in seven Americans understand that almost all climate scientists (more than 90%) have concluded human-caused global warming is happening.

A recent review study by John Cook and colleagues² found that all peer-reviewed studies about the extent of the scientific consensus about global warming have reached similar conclusions: between 90% and 100% of climate scientists are convinced that human-caused climate change is happening. The most rigorous of these studies found that 97% of climate scientists are convinced that human-caused climate change is happening.

Only about one in seven Americans (15%) understand that nearly all climate scientists (more than 90%) are convinced that human-caused global warming is happening. However, this reflects an increase of 4 percentage points (up from 11%) since March 2016. About half (53%) of the American public believes that more than half of climate scientists think human-caused global warming is happening, an increase of 5 percentage points (up from 48%) since March.³



² Cook, J., Oreskes, N., Doran, P. T., Anderegg, W. R. I., Verheggen, B., Maibach, E. W., Carlton, J. S., Lewendowsky, S., Skuce, A. G., Green, S. A., Nuccitelli, D., Jacobs, P., Richardson, M., Winkler, B., Painting, R., & Rice, K. (2016). Consensus on consensus: A synthesis of consensus estimates on human-caused global warming. *Environmental Research Letters* 11(4). doi: 10.1088/1748-9326/11/4/048002

³ Respondents were asked to estimate the percentage of climate scientists who have concluded that human-caused global warming is happening by moving a simulated “slider bar” which appeared on the screen of their computer. This slider allowed respondents to move the marker from “0%” on the left to “100%” on the right, or to any whole number between the two.

Public misunderstanding of the scientific consensus – which has been found in each of our surveys since 2008 – has significant consequences. Other research has identified public understanding of the scientific consensus as an important “gateway belief” that influences other important beliefs (i.e., global warming is happening, human caused, a serious problem, and solvable) and support for action.

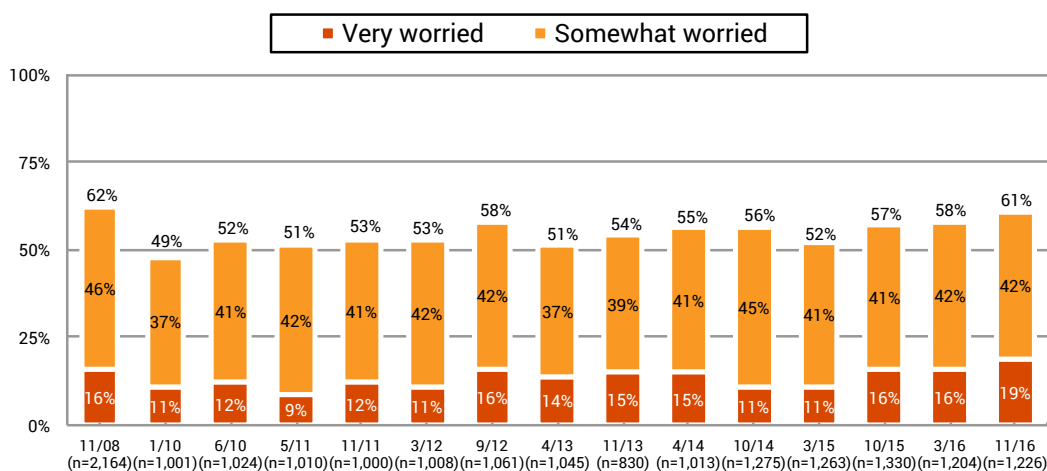
For more information, see: van der Linden, S. L., Leiserowitz, A. A., Feinberg, G. D., & Maibach, E. W. (2015). The Scientific Consensus on Climate Change as a Gateway Belief: Experimental Evidence. *PLoS ONE*, 10(2). doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0118489](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0118489)

2. Global Warming Emotions

2.1. Six in ten Americans are worried about global warming, about one in five are “very” worried.

Six in ten Americans (61%) say they are at least “somewhat worried” about global warming. Further, a larger percentage of Americans are now “very worried” about global warming (19%) than at any time since our surveys began in 2008. Worry about global warming has increased 9 percentage points since spring 2015, an increase that is driven mostly by people who now say they are “very worried” (+8 points since spring 2015).

Six in Ten Americans Are Worried About Global Warming; About One in Five Are “Very” Worried - Highest levels of worry since November 2008 -



How worried are you about global warming?

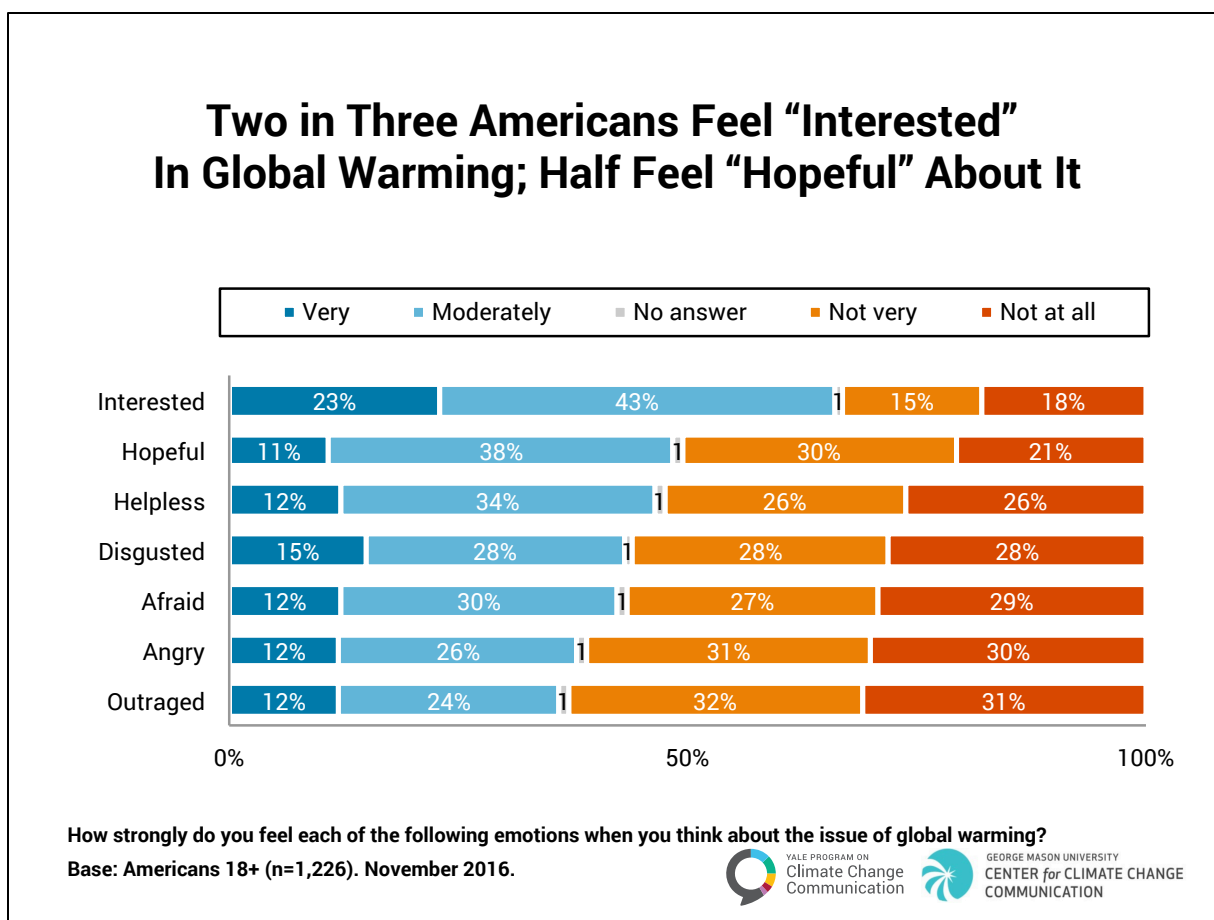
Base: Americans 18+. November 2016.



2.2. Two in three Americans feel “interested” in global warming. Half feel “hopeful” about it.

When asked how strongly they feel several emotions when they think about global warming, two in three Americans (66%) say they feel very or moderately “interested” in it, followed by about half who say they feel “hopeful” (48%).

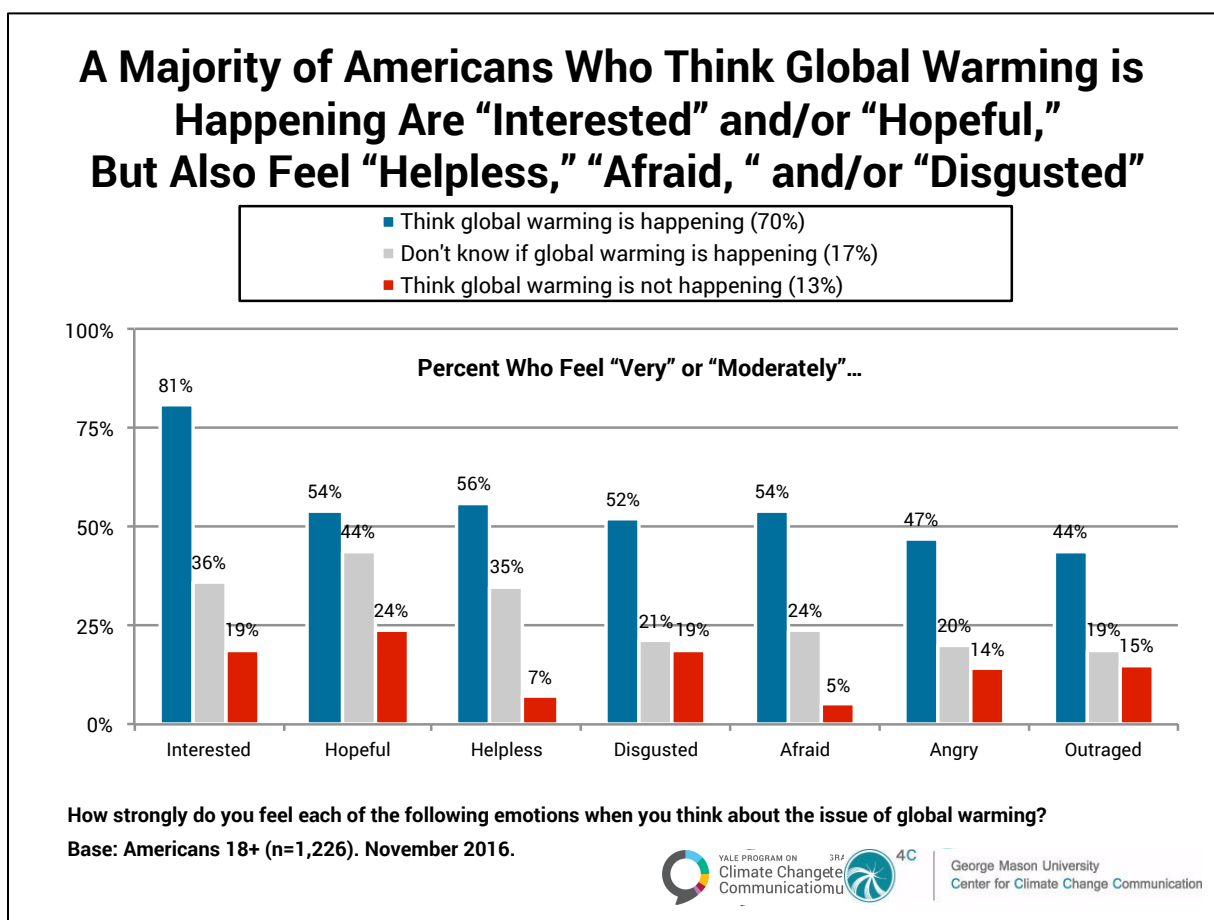
Large minorities also feel very or moderately “helpless” (46%), “disgusted” (42%), and/or “afraid” (42%) when they think about global warming.



Emotional reactions to global warming may be felt for different reasons, and signify different meanings depending on an individual's beliefs about global warming. For instance, someone who thinks global warming is happening may feel "disgusted" about it for different reasons than someone who thinks global warming is *not* happening. For that reason, we looked separately at people's emotions about global warming depending on whether they think it *is* happening, don't know whether or not it's happening, or think it is *not* happening.

Eight in ten (81%) Americans who think global warming is happening say they are very or moderately "interested" in it. Half or more feel negative emotions, including "helpless" (56%), "afraid" (54%), and/or "disgusted" (52%). However, a majority who think global warming is happening also feel "hopeful" (54%).

More than one in three Americans who don't know if global warming is happening still feel "hopeful" (44%), "interested" (36%), and "helpless" (35%). Some Americans who think global warming is *not* happening are also "hopeful" (24%), "interested" (19%), and "disgusted" (19%).



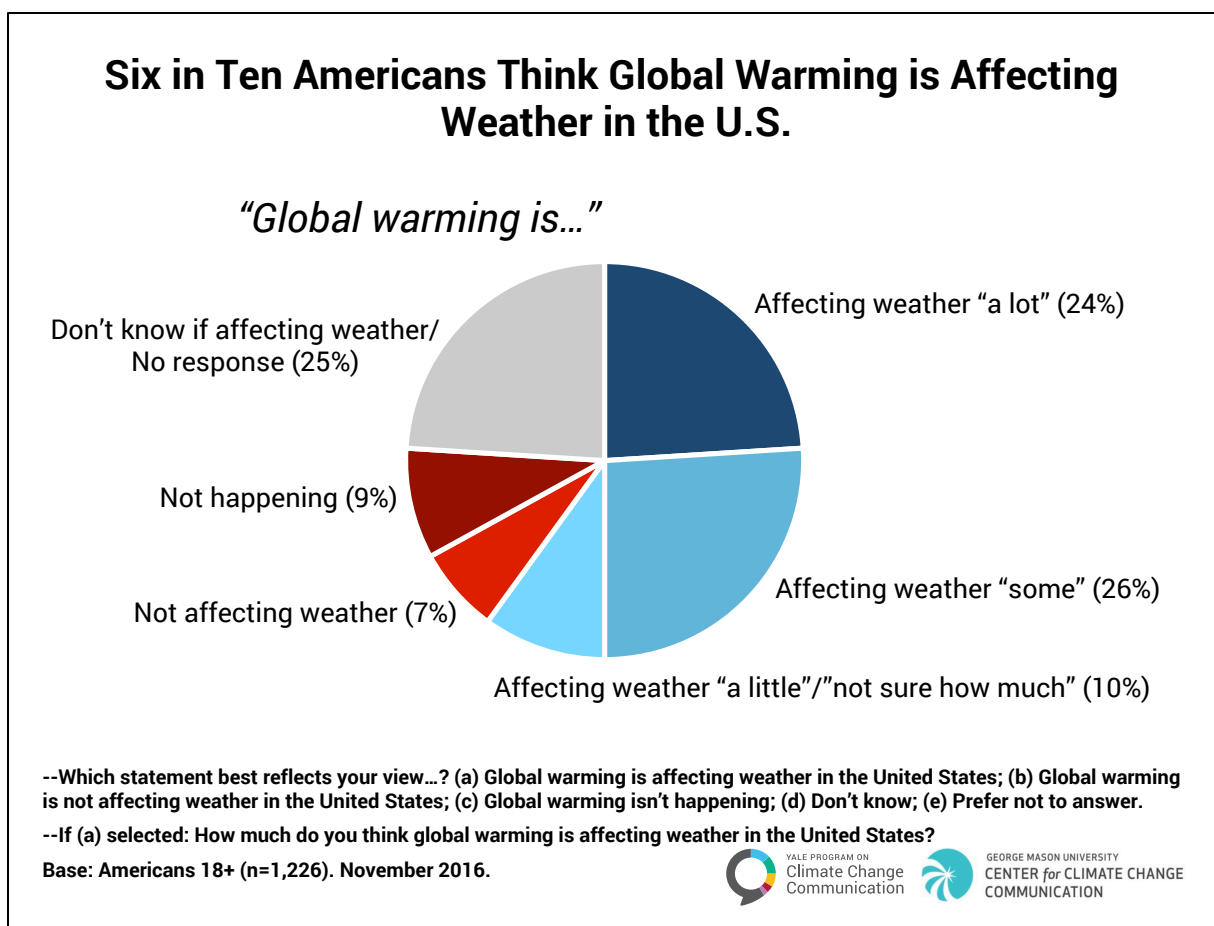
3. Perceived Risks of Global Warming

3.1. Six in ten Americans think global warming is affecting weather in the United States.

The impacts of global warming are starting to be felt in the United States. According to the 2014 U.S. National Climate Assessment:⁴

“Residents of some coastal cities see their streets flood more regularly during storms and high tides. Inland cities near large rivers also experience more flooding, especially in the Midwest and Northeast. Insurance rates are rising in some vulnerable locations, and insurance is no longer available in others. Hotter and drier weather and earlier snow melt mean that wildfires in the West start earlier in the spring, last later into the fall, and burn more acreage. In Arctic Alaska, the summer sea ice that once protected the coasts has receded, and autumn storms now cause more erosion, threatening many communities with relocation.”

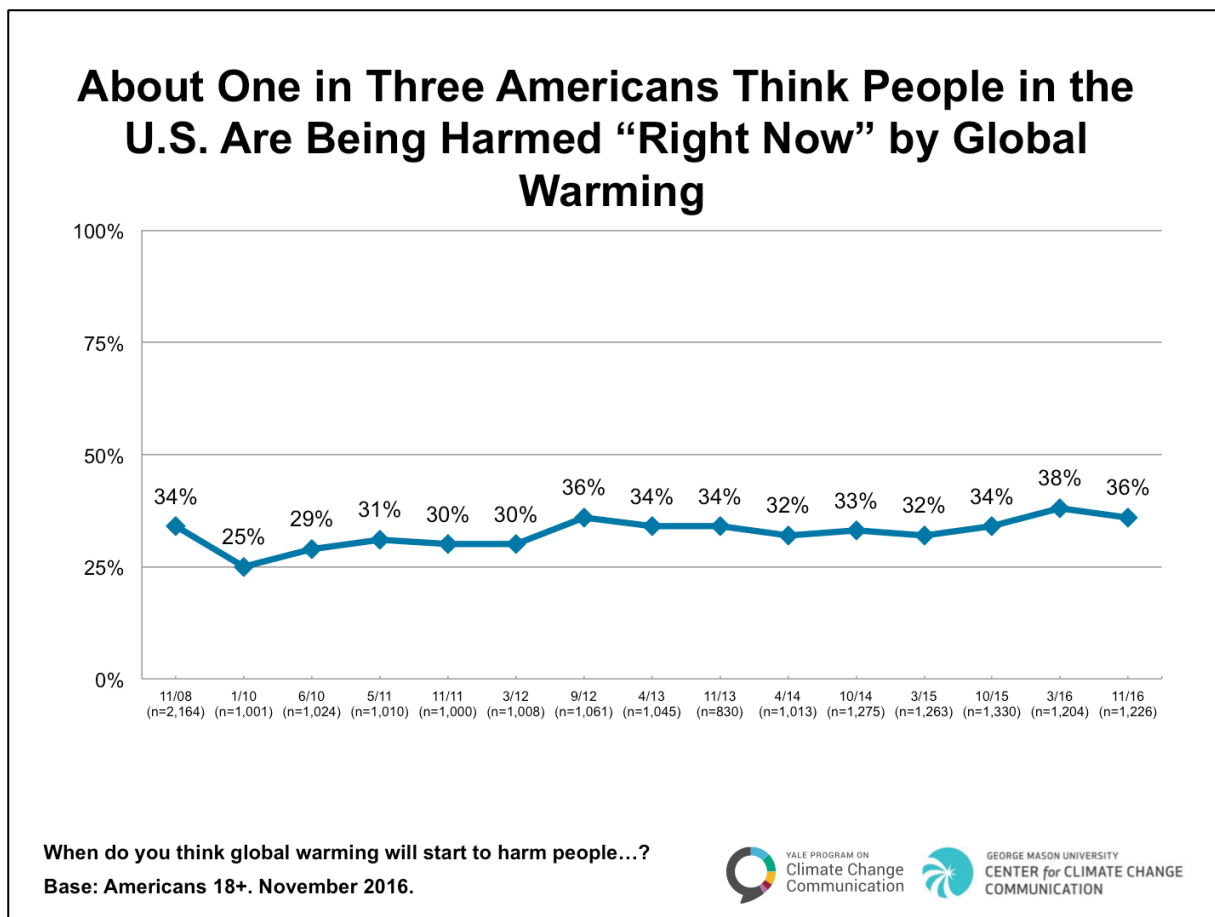
In line with this assessment, six in ten Americans (60%) think global warming is affecting weather in the United States, and half think weather is either being affected “a lot” (24%) or “some” (26%). Only 7% think global warming is *not* affecting weather in the U.S., along with 9% who responded that global warming is not happening. One in four (25%) said they did not know or did not provide a response.



⁴ <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/highlights/overview/overview>

3.2. About one in three Americans think people in the U.S. are being harmed “right now” by global warming.

Even though the majority of Americans think global warming is affecting weather in the United States,, only about one in three Americans (36%) think people in the U.S. are being harmed by it “right now.”



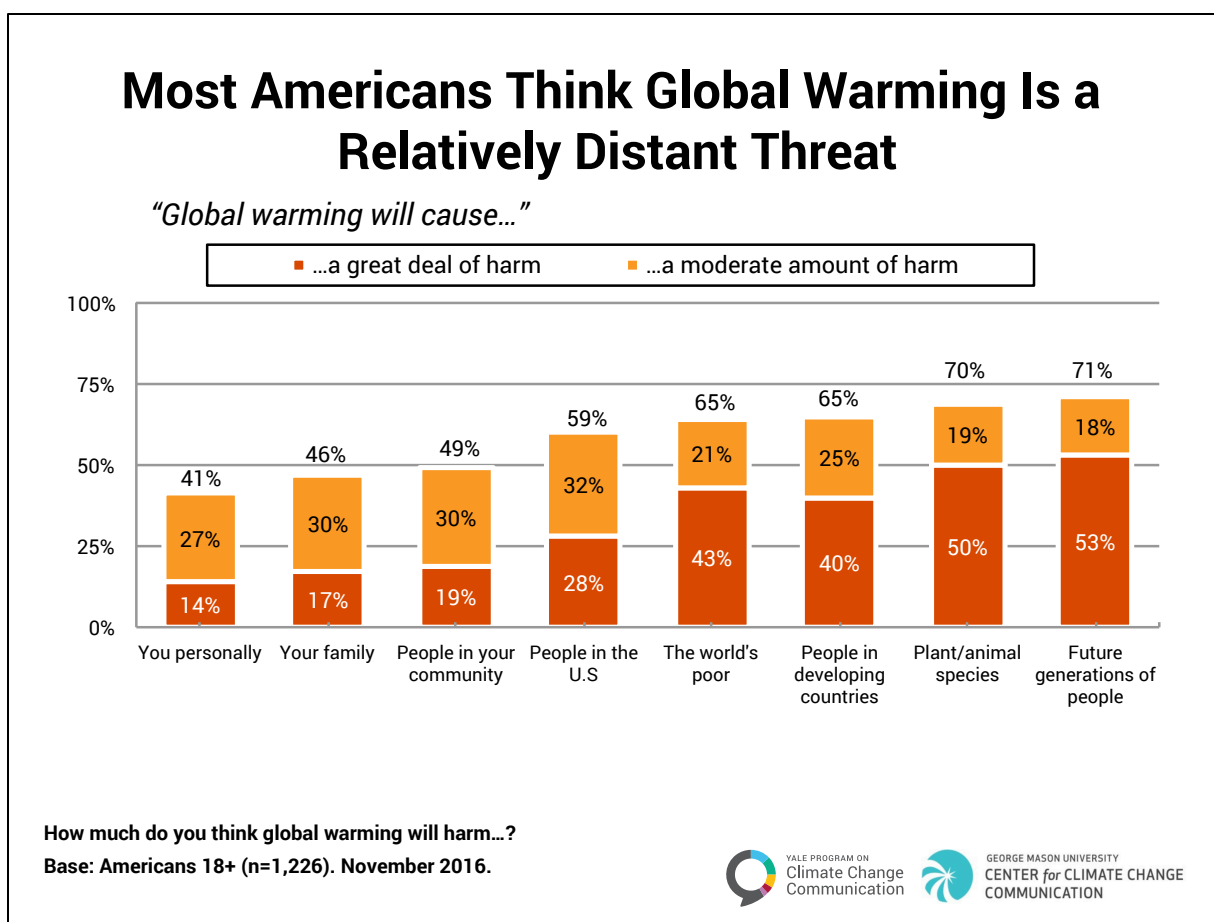
3.3. Most Americans think global warming is a relatively distant threat, although a growing percentage are coming to understand it harms people.

Americans are most likely to think that future generations of people (71%) and plant and animal species (70%) will be harmed a “great deal” or a “moderate amount” by global warming. A majority also think people living in developing countries (65%), the world’s poor (65%), and people in the U.S. (59%) will face such harm.

They are less likely to think that those closest to them – people in their community (49%), their family (46%), and they themselves (41%) will be harmed.

Although Americans perceive global warming as a relatively distant threat, over the past two years (since our March 2015 survey), the number of Americans who think climate change will cause harm to humans has increased substantially. More Americans now think global warming will harm:

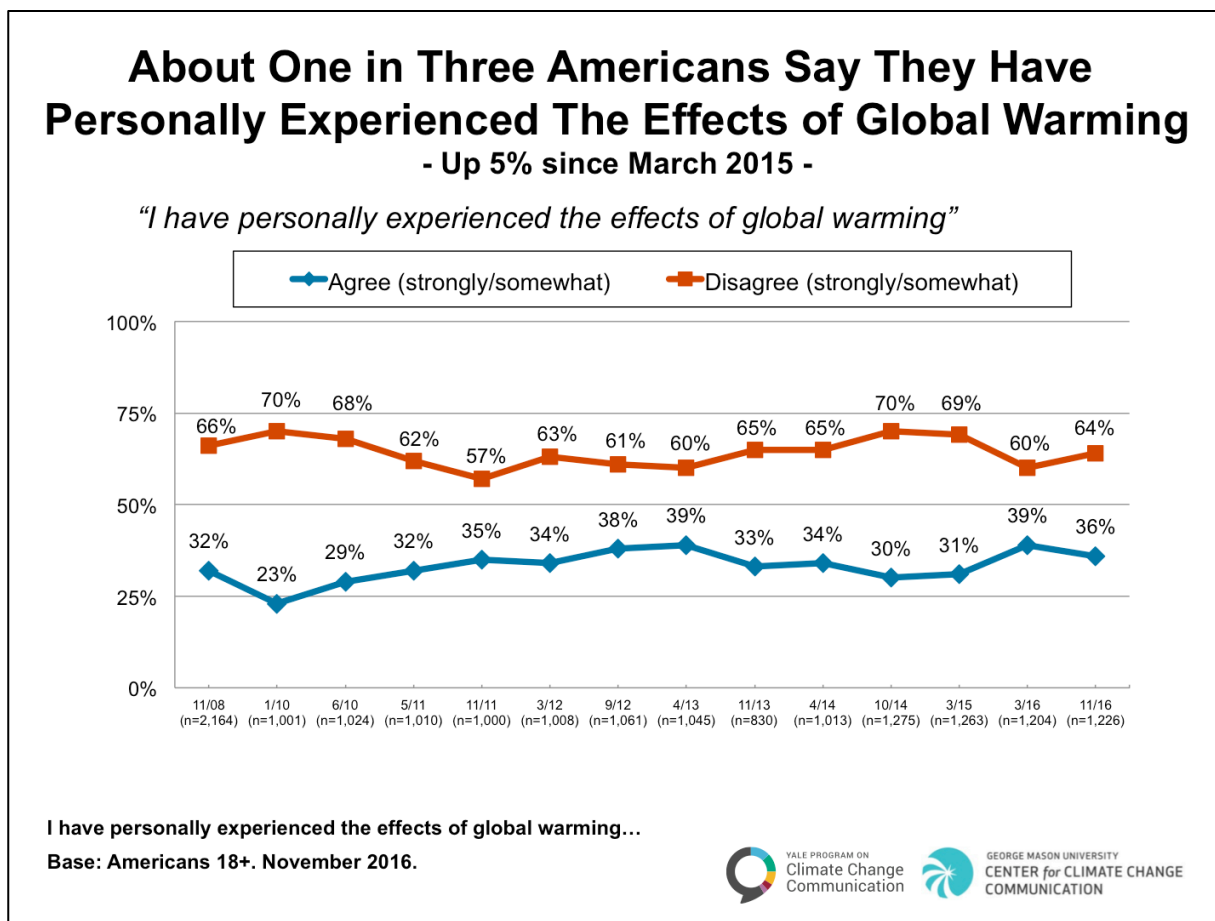
- People in developing countries (+12 percentage points since March 2015; see Tables, pp. 33-36)
- People in the U.S. (+10 points)
- Future generations (+8 points)
- Their family (+5 points)
- Them personally (+5 points)



3.4. About one in three Americans say they have personally experienced the effects of global warming, two in three say they have not.

About one in three Americans (36%) say they have personally experienced the effects of global warming. About two in three (64%) say they have not.

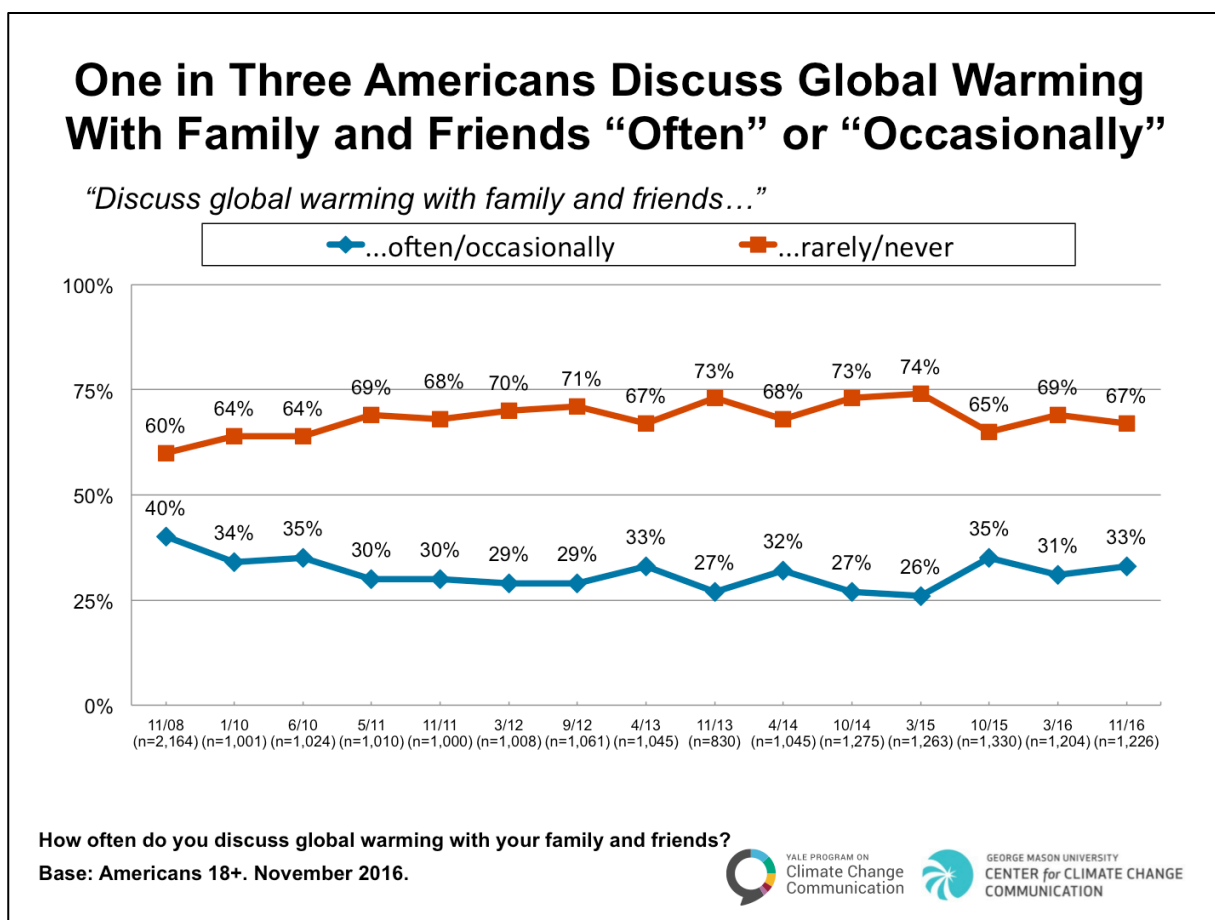
The number of Americans who say they have personally experienced the effects of global warming is higher than it was in March 2015 by five percentage points.



4. Personal and Public Engagement with Global Warming

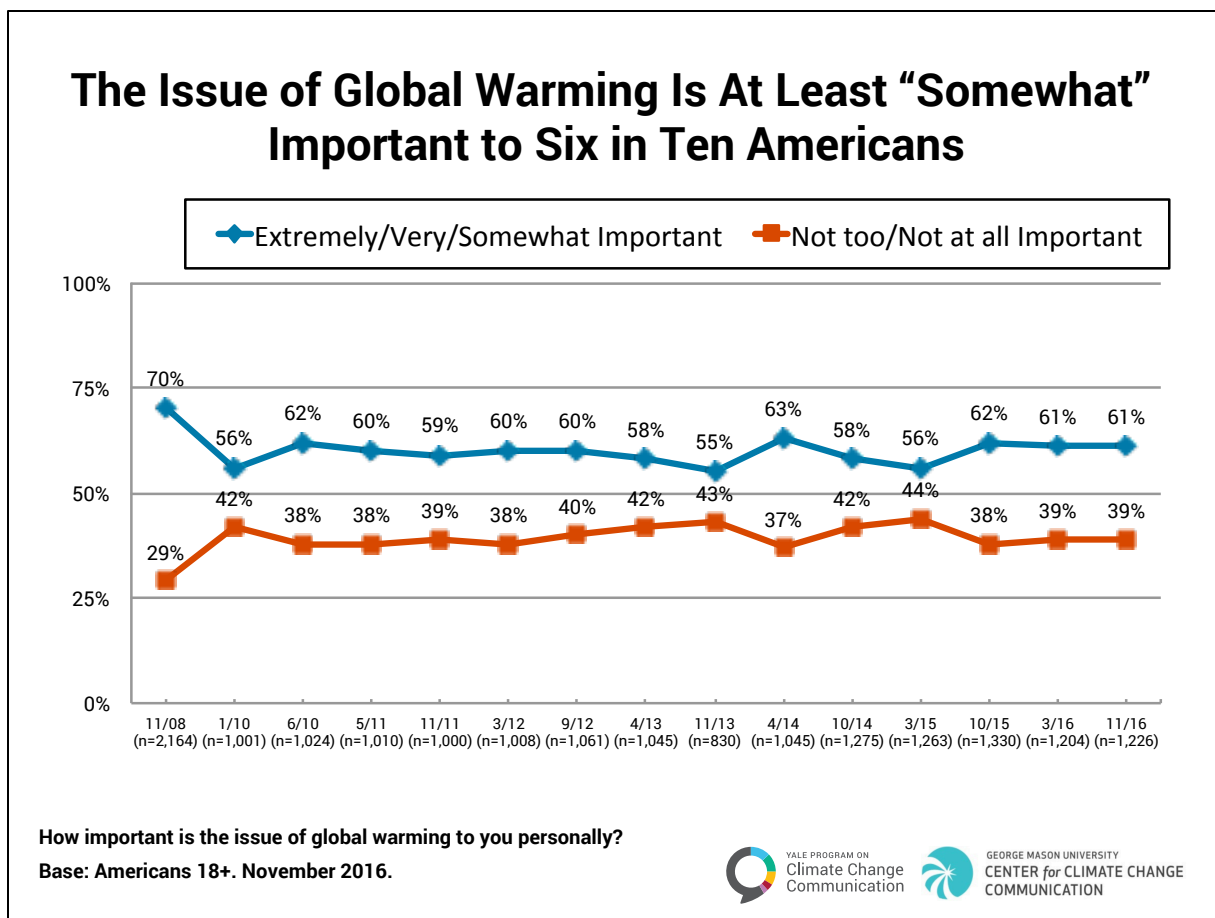
4.1. Only one in three Americans discuss global warming with family and friends “often” or “occasionally.”

Thirty-three percent of Americans say they discuss global warming with family and friends at least occasionally, while most say they rarely or never discuss it (67%). The proportion of Americans who say they discuss global warming with family or friends is higher than it was in March 2015 by seven percentage points.



4.2. The issue of global warming is at least “somewhat” important to six in ten Americans.

A total of six in ten Americans (61%) say the issue of global warming is either “extremely” (10%), “very” (17%), or “somewhat” (34%) important to them personally. A total of four in ten (39%) say it is either “not too” (22%) or “not at all” (16%) important personally.

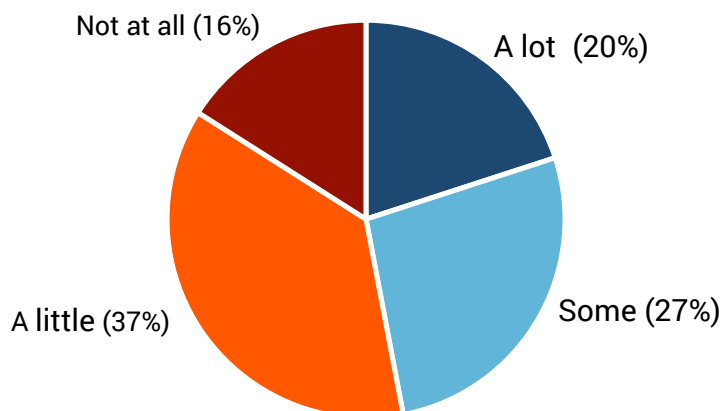


4.3. Only one in five Americans have thought about global warming “a lot.”

About half of Americans (47%) say they have thought about global warming before today either “a lot” (20%) or “some” (27%). More (53%) say they have thought about global warming just “a little” (37%) or “not at all” (16%). These numbers have remained relatively stable since we first conducted this survey in 2008 (see Table, p. 38).

One in Five Americans Have Thought About Global Warming “A Lot”

How much had you thought about global warming before today?



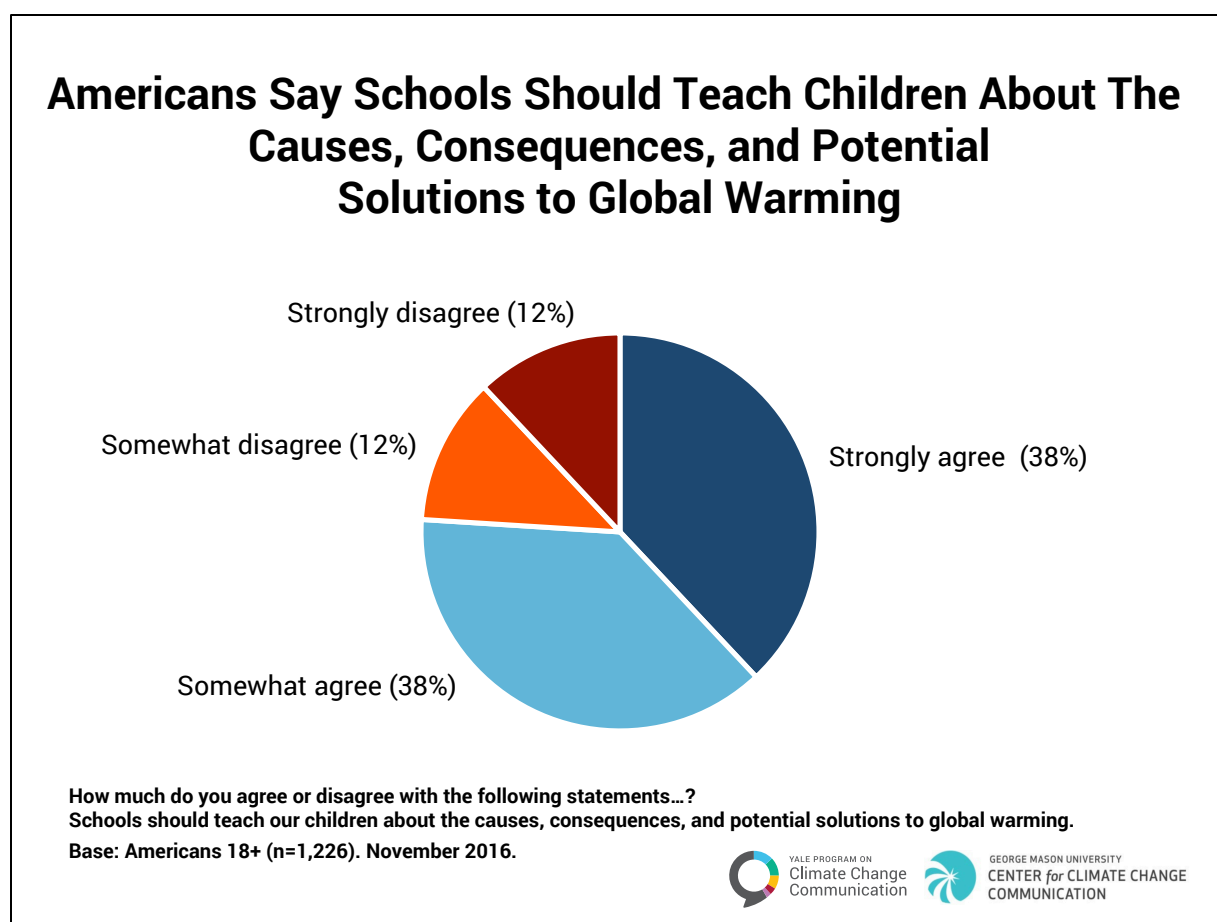
How much had you thought about global warming before today?

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,226). November 2016.



4.4. Americans say schools should teach children about the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to global warming.

The Next Generation Science Standards⁵ for K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education in the U.S. require that climate change be included in the curriculum, a mandate that is controversial in some parts of the country. Overall, however, a large majority of Americans support teaching about global warming in schools: By a three-to-one margin, Americans say that schools should teach children about the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to global warming (76% agree “strongly” or “somewhat” versus 24% who disagree “strongly” or “somewhat”).



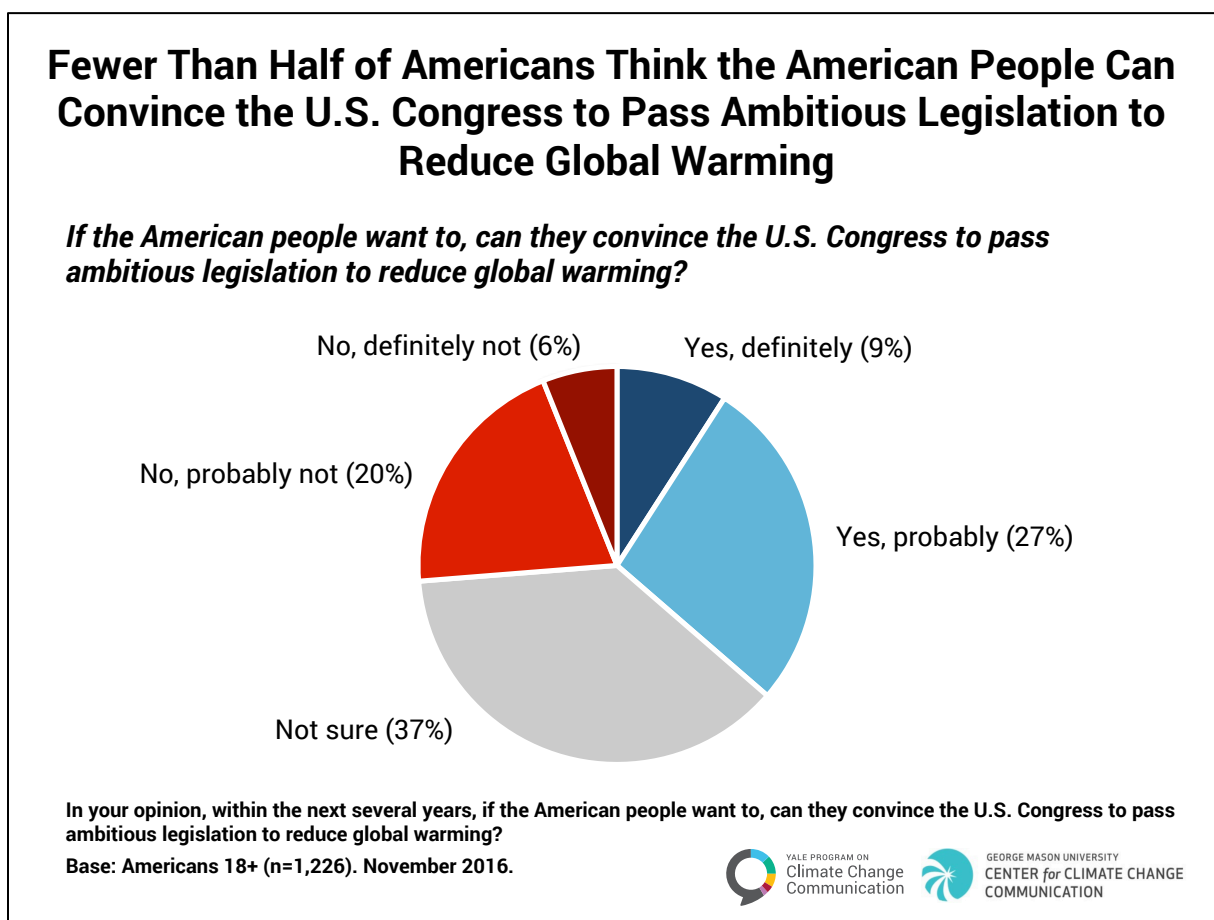
⁵ The Next Generation Science Standards were developed by a collaboration of scientists and educators at the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences; the American Academy for the Advancement of Science; the National Teacher's Association; 26 states; and Achieve (a non-profit organization). Released in 2013, the standards represent the most current, research-based method of educating K-12 students in STEM and preparing them for STEM careers. See: <http://www.nextgenscience.org/>

5. Perceived Likelihood of Societal Response

5.1. Fewer than half of Americans think the American people can convince the U.S. Congress to pass ambitious legislation to reduce global warming.

Fewer than four in ten Americans (36%) think the American people can “definitely” or “probably” convince the U.S. Congress to pass legislation needed to reduce global warming. A similar number – 37% – say they are not sure.

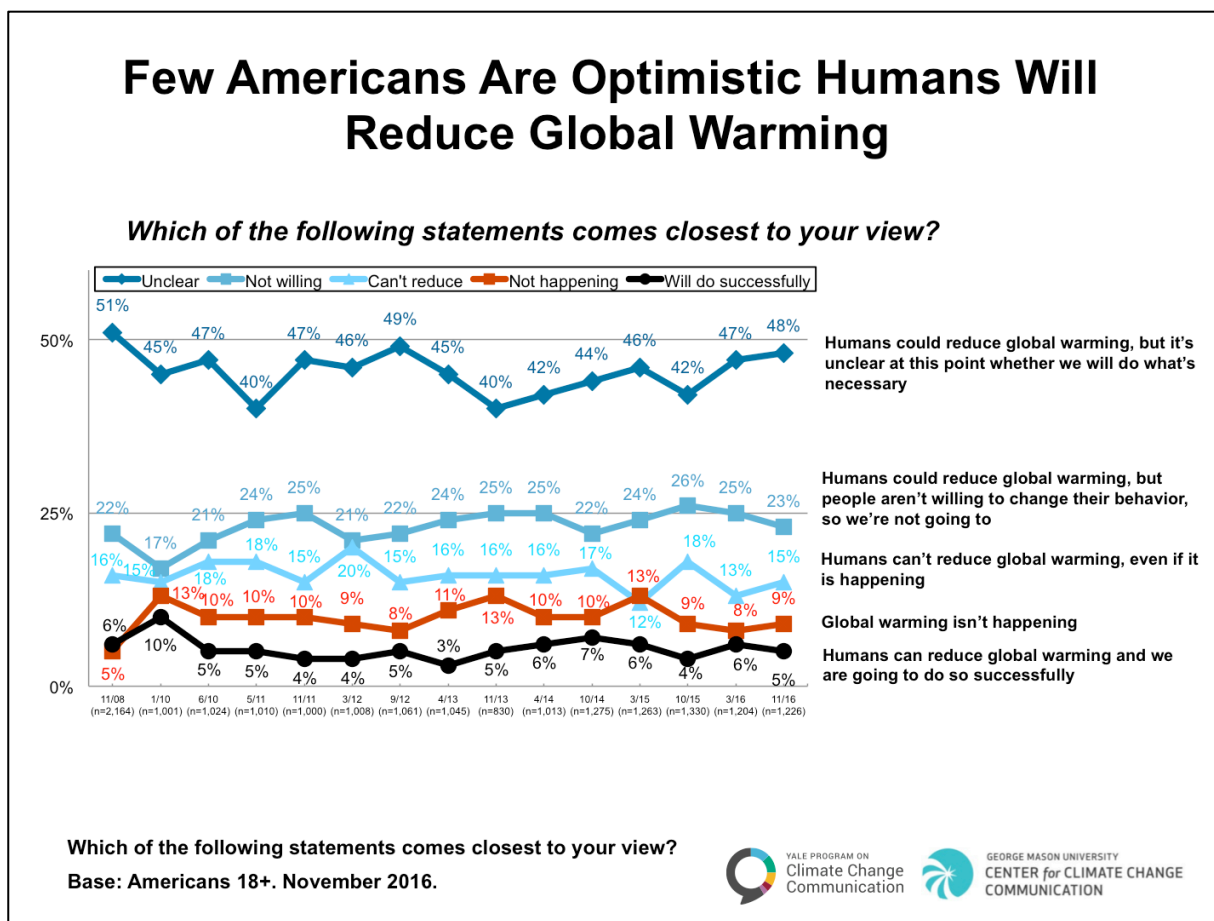
Only one in four (26%) say it is “definitely” or “probably” *not* possible.



5.2. Few Americans are optimistic humans will reduce global warming.

Nearly half of Americans (48%) say humans could reduce global warming, but it's unclear at this point whether we will do what is necessary.

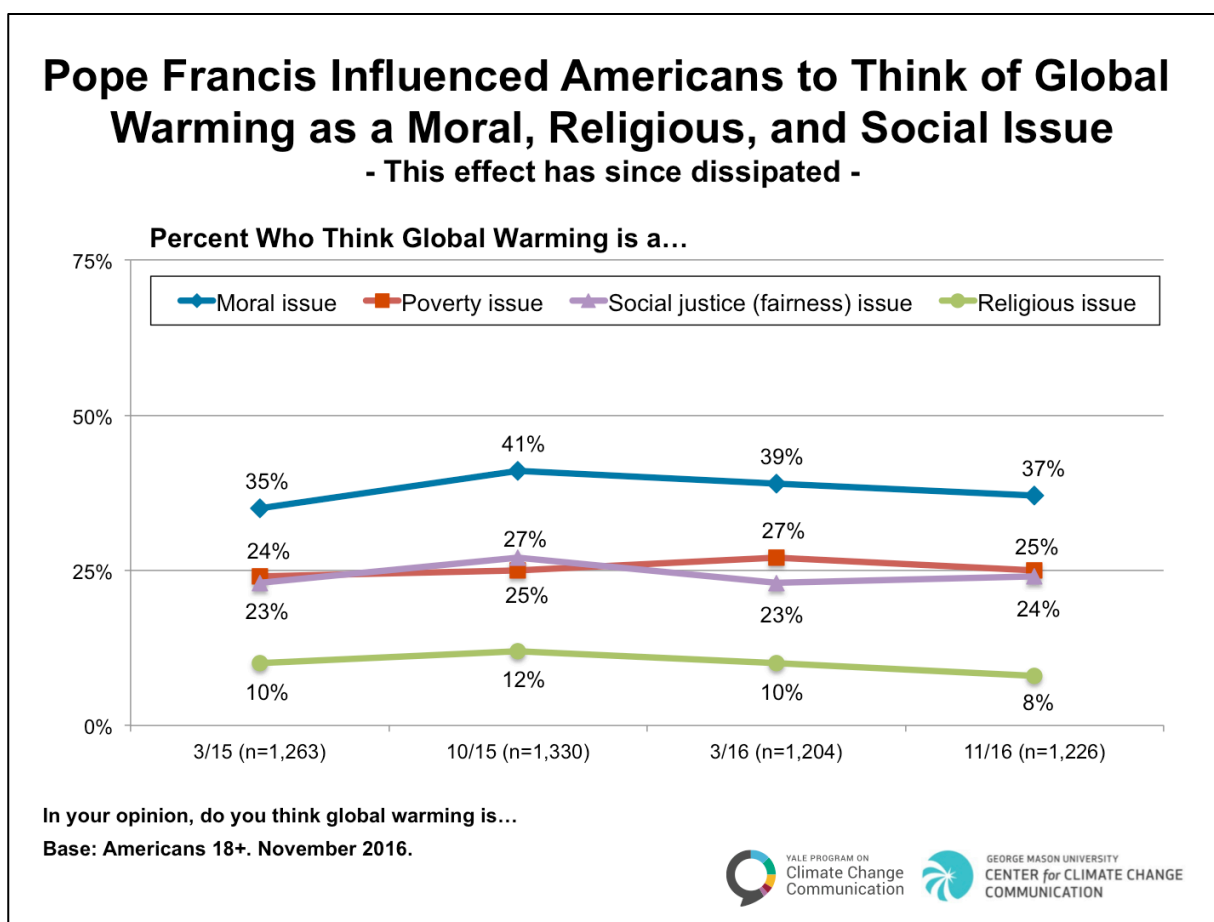
Whereas only 5% say humans can and will successfully reduce global warming, nearly one in four (23%) say we won't because people are unwilling to change their behavior, and 15% say humans can't reduce global warming even if it is happening.



In June of 2015, Pope Francis issued an encyclical titled *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, in which he presented a strong moral call to action to protect the world's poorest and most vulnerable people from climate change. His views about the moral, religious, and social dimensions of climate change were also covered broadly in American news media during his September 2015 U.S. visit.

In the months following the release of the encyclical and the papal visit, we found small but significant increases in the proportions of Americans who said that global warming is a moral, social justice, or religious issue.⁶ Since then, however, the proportions of the public who view global warming as a moral, social justice, or religious issue have returned to their pre-encyclical levels.

This suggests that – consistent with the findings of other research on the effectiveness of public service messages⁷ – messages about global warming need to be repeated and reinforced to maintain and increase their effect.



⁶ Maibach, E., Leiserowitz, A., Roser-Renouf, C., Myers, T., Rosenthal, S., & Feinberg, G. (2015). *The Francis Effect: How Pope Francis changed the conversation about global warming*. George Mason and Yale University. Fairfax, VA: George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication.

⁷ Palmgreen, P., Donohue, L., Lorch, E., Hoyle, R & Stevenson, M. (2001). Television campaigns and adolescent marijuana use: Tests of sensation seeking targeting. *American Journal of Public Health*, 91, 292-296.

Appendix I: Data Tables

(Base: Americans 18+)

Recently, you may have noticed that *global warming* has been getting some attention in the news. Global warming refers to the idea that the world's average temperature has been increasing over the past 150 years, may be increasing more in the future, and that the world's climate may change as a result.

What do you think: Do you think that global warming is happening?

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	70	70	67	63	66	64	63	63	70	66	63	63	61	57	71
No	13	11	16	18	16	19	23	16	12	14	17	18	18	20	10
Don't know	17	18	18	19	18	17	14	20	18	20	20	18	21	23	19

(Base: Americans 18+ who say global warming is happening)

How sure are you that global warming is happening?

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(859)	(855)	(899)	(793)	(815)	(649)	(521)	(674)	(722)	(658)	(619)	(614)	(622)	(558)	(1,745)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely sure	35	30	28	27	24	30	27	27	27	19	22	21	20	24	35
Very sure	30	31	32	32	35	32	31	33	30	34	35	33	37	35	37
Somewhat sure	32	34	37	38	38	33	39	37	40	42	39	40	40	37	24
Not at all sure	4	4	3	3	4	5	3	4	3	5	5	6	3	5	4

(Base: Americans 18+ who say global warming is not happening)
How sure are you that global warming is not happening?

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(155)	(144)	(215)	(251)	(228)	(196)	(179)	(164)	(160)	(156)	(175)	(188)	(199)	(227)	(301)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely sure	24	20	21	21	23	15	20	18	15	15	21	21	20	28	26
Very sure	29	37	32	31	30	26	36	28	27	41	37	30	31	31	28
Somewhat sure	39	34	36	37	35	47	36	42	45	35	37	38	44	34	38
Not at all sure	8	9	12	11	11	12	9	12	13	8	5	11	4	7	8

(Base: Americans 18+)
Assuming global warming is happening, do you think it is...

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Caused mostly by human activities	55	53	53	52	51	52	46	50	54	46	50	47	50	47	57
Caused mostly by natural changes in the environment	30	34	33	32	33	34	35	33	32	37	33	35	35	36	32
Neither because global warming isn't happening	8	7	8	10	9	8	8	8	7	5	8	8	6	9	4
Other (please specify), caused by human activities and natural changes	5	5	5	5	6	5	9	7	5	9	6	7	7	6	5
Other (please specify), unclassified	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1

(Base: Americans 18+)

To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of climate scientists think that human-caused global warming is happening? Please click on the slider bar below to indicate your answer. You can slide the indicator to the position that best describes your opinion. If the indicator does not work, you can enter a number in the number box.

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)
	%	%	%	%	%
0% - 10%	2	1	2	1	1
11% - 20%	1	1	2	1	1
21% - 30%	7	4	4	4	4
31% - 40%	3	2	2	2	2
41% - 50%	13	13	12	14	15
51% - 60%	6	6	5	6	7
61% - 70%	7	8	6	8	7
71% - 80%	17	15	18	15	17
81% - 90%	9	8	10	8	7
91% - 100%	15	11	12	9	9
Don't know enough to say	21	32	27	31	30
Of those who provided an estimate:					
Mean	66	67	67	64	65
Median	74	71	74	68	67

(Base: Americans 18+)**How worried are you about global warming?**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very worried	19	16	16	11	11	15	15	14	16	11	12	9	12	11	16
Somewhat worried	42	42	41	41	45	41	39	37	42	42	41	42	41	37	46
Not very worried	24	25	27	29	25	27	25	30	25	30	30	28	30	27	24
Not at all worried	15	18	16	19	18	18	20	19	17	16	15	20	18	22	13

(Base: Americans 18+)**How strongly do you feel each of the following emotions when you think about the issue of global warming?****Interested**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015		Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)		(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%	%		%	%	%
Very	23	22	23		31	6	3
Moderately	43	45	43		51	31	16
Not very	15	16	19		11	31	17
Not at all	18	16	14		6	30	63

(Base: Americans 18+)**How strongly do you feel each of the following emotions when you think about the issue of global warming? (Cont'd)****Helpless**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015		Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)		(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%	%		%	%	%
Very	12	13	14		15	11	2
Moderately	34	36	39		42	24	5
Not very	26	23	25		28	26	20
Not at all	26	27	21		15	36	71

Disgusted

	Nov 2016	March 2016		Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)		(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%		%	%	%
Very	15	14		18	4	10
Moderately	28	34		34	17	10
Not very	28	25		28	34	17
Not at all	28	26		19	42	63

(Base: Americans 18+)**How strongly do you feel each of the following emotions when you think about the issue of global warming? (Cont'd)****Hopeful**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015		Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)		(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%	%		%	%	%
Very	11	10	11		13	7	6
Moderately	38	38	39		42	36	18
Not very	30	30	32		34	25	15
Not at all	21	20	17		12	29	60

Afraid

	Nov 2016	March 2016		Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)		(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%		%	%	%
Very	12	11		16	4	1
Moderately	30	31		38	20	4
Not very	27	26		28	32	16
Not at all	29	30		17	42	77

(Base: Americans 18+)**How strongly do you feel each of the following emotions when you think about the issue of global warming? (Cont'd)****Angry**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%	%	%	%
Very	12	12	16	4	6
Moderately	26	29	31	16	8
Not very	31	29	33	29	18
Not at all	30	29	19	48	66

Outraged

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Don't Know if Global Warming is Happening, Nov 2016	Global Warming is <i>Not</i> Happening, Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(863)	(194)	(169)
	%	%	%	%	%
Very	12	12	15	3	5
Moderately	24	29	29	16	10
Not very	32	28	34	34	16
Not at all	31	30	20	45	67

(Base: Americans 18+)**Which statement below best reflects your view?****(If “Global warming is affecting the weather in the United States”) How much do you think global warming is affecting weather in the United States?**

	Nov 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)
	%
Global warming is affecting the weather in the United States (Total)	60
<i>A lot</i>	24
<i>Some</i>	26
<i>A little</i>	8
<i>Don't know</i>	2
Global warming is not affecting weather in the United States	7
Global warming isn't happening	9
Don't know	21
No answer	4

(Base: Americans 18+)**When do you think global warming will start to harm people in the United States?**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
They are being harmed right now	36	38	34	32	33	32	34	34	36	30	30	31	29	25	34
In 10 years	14	12	13	11	10	9	10	11	13	12	10	11	12	12	13
In 25 years	15	13	14	13	14	14	14	12	11	14	13	13	12	14	13
In 50 years	10	12	11	11	12	15	11	12	12	14	15	12	13	13	13
In 100 years	9	10	11	13	13	14	12	13	13	15	15	11	15	13	12
Never	16	14	18	20	18	16	18	17	15	16	16	19	19	23	15

(Base: Americans 18+)**How much do you think global warming will harm...?****You personally**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	14	12	14	10	12	13	13	15	16	11	9	11	10	14	10
A moderate amount	27	28	27	26	24	25	25	25	26	18	21	18	21	23	22
Only a little	25	24	26	26	26	26	27	26	25	30	28	27	27	22	24
Not at all	25	23	20	25	27	25	26	23	20	29	25	25	24	31	22
Don't know	8	12	12	13	11	11	8	11	13	11	17	17	18	11	23

Your family

	Nov 2016	March 2016	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	17	15	13	15	16	17	17	18	12	10	12	11	15	11
A moderate amount	30	30	28	28	27	25	27	28	21	24	21	25	25	24
Only a little	24	22	23	23	24	25	23	23	29	27	25	24	21	23
Not at all	21	21	22	23	21	24	20	17	26	21	23	21	28	19
Don't know	8	12	13	11	11	9	12	14	12	18	17	19	11	23

(Base: Americans 18+)**How much do you think global warming will harm...? (Cont'd.)****People in your community**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	19	15	14	16	17	14	17	19	12	11	12	11	15	13
A moderate amount	30	31	29	27	28	29	28	29	22	24	21	25	27	26
Only a little	22	23	24	23	24	24	23	23	29	27	25	24	22	20
Not at all	20	19	20	22	20	23	18	15	24	21	21	21	24	17
Don't know	9	12	14	11	11	10	13	13	13	18	18	19	12	23

People in the United States

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	28	24	23	19	23	23	23	22	26	18	15	16	16	22	21
A moderate amount	32	35	34	30	30	30	30	30	31	28	29	26	28	29	28
Only a little	17	16	18	20	20	18	19	19	17	24	23	22	22	16	15
Not at all	15	15	14	17	17	18	20	16	12	18	17	17	17	22	14
Don't know	8	10	12	14	11	11	8	12	13	12	16	18	18	12	22

(Base: Americans 18+)**How much do you think global warming will harm...? (Cont'd.)****The world's poor**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
A great deal	43	40	36	30
A moderate amount	21	22	26	23
Only a little	11	12	12	16
Not at all	13	13	13	16
Don't know	12	14	13	15

People in developing countries

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	40	36	34	27	29	31	32	30	35	26	22	23	22	29	31
A moderate amount	25	27	27	26	26	24	24	25	29	26	28	21	28	25	22
Only a little	12	12	13	17	16	17	17	18	10	19	17	19	17	14	11
Not at all	13	13	13	15	17	16	19	13	11	16	15	16	15	19	13
Don't know	11	12	13	15	12	12	9	13	15	14	18	18	18	13	24

(Base: Americans 18+)**How much do you think global warming will harm...? (Cont'd.)****Future generations of people**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	53	48	51	42	46	49	46	42	47	43	40	36	39	42	44
A moderate amount	18	22	19	21	18	18	19	21	21	22	22	22	22	22	17
Only a little	9	8	8	10	11	10	11	12	9	12	13	10	11	9	7
Not at all	10	10	11	12	13	12	15	12	8	11	10	11	12	15	10
Don't know	10	11	11	15	13	11	9	12	14	13	16	18	16	12	22

Plant and animal species

	Nov 2016	March 2016	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	50	48	42	44	47	46	39	43	43	41	38	40	43	45
A moderate amount	19	23	21	20	19	19	24	25	21	19	18	21	19	17
Only a little	10	9	12	10	12	11	13	11	13	16	12	12	11	8
Not at all	11	11	12	13	12	15	13	8	10	10	12	13	15	9
Don't know	9	10	13	12	11	8	10	13	12	15	17	15	12	20

(Base: Americans 18+)**How much do you agree with the following statements?****I have personally experienced the effects of global warming.**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly/ Somewhat Agree	36	39	31	30	34	33	39	38	34	35	32	29	23	32
Strongly Agree	7	7	4	4	5	6	6	4	5	7	5	5	4	4
Somewhat Agree	29	33	27	26	29	27	33	34	30	28	27	24	19	28
Strongly/ Somewhat Disagree	64	60	69	70	65	65	60	61	63	57	62	68	70	66
Somewhat Disagree	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	30	30	34	32	34	32	42
Strongly Disagree	35	31	40	41	35	36	31	31	33	23	30	34	37	24

(Base: Americans 18+)**How often do you discuss global warming with your family and friends?**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Often	6	4	5	3	3	4	3	4	3	5	4	4	5	5	5
Occasionally	27	27	30	23	24	28	23	28	26	24	26	26	30	29	35
Rarely	36	36	33	38	36	39	39	39	38	40	39	41	39	34	33
Never	31	32	32	36	37	29	34	28	34	30	29	28	25	30	26

(Base: Americans 18+)**How important is the issue of global warming to you personally?**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Extremely important	10	9	7	6	5	8	8	8	6	6	6	7	6	5	10
Very important	17	17	18	15	16	17	14	13	17	14	13	15	18	14	20
Somewhat important	34	35	37	35	37	38	33	36	36	40	40	37	38	37	39
Not too important	22	22	21	24	24	21	25	24	24	23	24	24	24	23	18
Not at all important	16	17	17	20	18	16	18	18	17	15	15	14	14	19	11

(Base: Americans 18+)**How much had you thought about global warming before today?**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A lot/Some	47	51	50	44	45	51	45	47	49	44	44	45	55	45	55
A lot	20	16	17	15	14	16	14	16	17	15	14	12	17	14	20
Some	27	35	34	29	31	35	31	30	32	30	30	33	37	30	35
A little/Not at all	53	49	50	56	55	49	54	53	51	55	54	53	45	53	45
A little	37	33	33	35	35	34	37	37	34	39	38	37	32	35	32
Not at all	16	16	17	21	20	15	17	16	17	16	16	16	13	18	12

(Base: Americans 18+)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement(s)? “Schools should teach our children about the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to global warming.”

	Nov 2016	March 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)
	%	%
Strongly agree	38	36
Somewhat agree	38	41
Somewhat disagree	12	11
Strongly disagree	12	12

(Base: Americans 18+)

In your opinion, within the next several years, if the American people want to, can they convince the U.S. Congress to pass ambitious legislation to reduce global warming?

	Nov 2016	March 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)
	%	%
Yes, definitely	9	11
Yes, probably	27	26
No, probably not	20	19
No, definitely not	6	6
Not sure	37	38

(Base: Americans 18+)**Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?**

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015	Oct 2014	April 2014	Nov 2013	April 2013	Sept 2012	March 2012	Nov 2011	May 2011	June 2010	Jan 2010	Nov 2008
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)	(1,275)	(1,013)	(830)	(1,045)	(1,061)	(1,008)	(1,000)	(1,010)	(1,024)	(1,001)	(2,164)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Humans can reduce global warming, and we are going to do so successfully	5	6	4	6	7	6	5	3	5	4	4	5	5	10	6
Humans could reduce global warming, but it's unclear at this point whether we will do what's needed	48	47	42	46	44	42	40	45	49	46	47	40	47	45	51
Humans could reduce global warming, but people aren't willing to change their behavior, so we're not going to	23	25	26	24	22	25	25	24	22	21	25	24	21	17	22
Humans can't reduce global warming, even if it is happening	15	13	18	12	17	16	16	16	15	20	15	18	18	15	16
Global warming isn't happening	9	8	9	13	10	10	13	11	8	9	10	10	10	13	5

(Base: Americans 18+)

In your opinion, do you think global warming is...

(If “yes”) Do you think global warming is a *major* or *minor*...

An environmental issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	76	78	78	76
No	11	10	11	11
Not sure	11	12	11	12
No answer	1	1	1	1

A scientific issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	70	71	73	71
No	15	14	13	13
Not sure	14	14	14	15
No answer	1	1	1	2

An agricultural (farming, food) issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	65	62	65	64
No	20	22	17	19
Not sure	15	15	16	16
No answer	1	1	1	2

A severe weather issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)
	%	%
Yes	61	63
No	23	19
Not sure	15	17
No answer	1	1

(Base: Americans 18+)

In your opinion, do you think global warming is... (Cont'd).

(If “yes”) Do you think global warming is a *major* or *minor*... (Cont'd).

A health issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	62	61	62	58
No	22	22	21	24
Not sure	15	16	16	17
No answer	1	1	1	2

An economic issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	60	61	63	60
No	23	23	19	22
Not sure	16	15	17	16
No answer	1	1	1	2

A political issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	56	56	56	54
No	28	27	26	27
Not sure	15	16	17	17
No answer	1	1	1	2

A moral issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	37	39	41	35
No	45	41	39	44
Not sure	17	19	19	19
No answer	1	1	1	2

(Base: Americans 18+)

In your opinion, do you think global warming is... (Cont'd).

(If “yes”) Do you think global warming is a *major* or *minor*... (Cont'd).

A national security issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	27	26	23	26
No	53	51	50	53
Not sure	19	21	26	20
No answer	1	1	1	1

A poverty issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	25	27	25	24
No	54	51	50	53
Not sure	20	22	24	21
No answer	1	1	1	2

A social justice (fairness issue)

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	24	23	27	23
No	52	51	46	53
Not sure	22	25	25	22
No answer	1	1	1	2

A religious issue

	Nov 2016	March 2016	Oct 2015	March 2015
(Unweighted base)	(1,226)	(1,204)	(1,330)	(1,263)
	%	%	%	%
Yes	8	10	12	10
No	73	71	67	71
Not sure	17	17	20	18
No answer	1	1	1	2

Appendix II: Survey Method

The data in this report are based on a nationally representative survey of 1,226 American adults, aged 18 and older. The survey was conducted November 18 – December 1, 2016. All questionnaires were self-administered by respondents in a web-based environment. The survey took, on average, about 26 minutes to complete.

The sample was drawn from GfK's KnowledgePanel®, an online panel of members drawn using probability sampling methods. Prospective members are recruited using a combination of random digit dial and address-based sampling techniques that cover virtually all (non-institutional) resident phone numbers and addresses in the United States. Those contacted who would choose to join the panel but do not have access to the Internet are loaned computers and given Internet access so they may participate.

The sample therefore includes a representative cross-section of American adults – irrespective of whether they have Internet access, use only a cell phone, etc. Key demographic variables were weighted, post survey, to match US Census Bureau norms.

The survey instrument was designed by Anthony Leiserowitz, Seth Rosenthal, and Matthew Cutler of Yale University, and Edward Maibach and Connie Roser-Renouf of George Mason University.

Sample details and margins of error

All samples are subject to some degree of sampling error – that is, statistical results obtained from a sample can be expected to differ somewhat from results that would be obtained if every member of the target population were interviewed. Average margins of error each wave, at the 95% confidence level, are plus or minus 3 percentage points except where noted.

- November 2016: Fielded November 18–December 1 (n=1,226).
- March 2016: Fielded March 18–31 (n=1,204).
- October 2015: Fielded September 30–October 19 (n=1,330).
- March 2015: Fielded February 27–March 10 (n=1,263).
- October 2014: Fielded October 17–28 (n=1,275).
- April 2014: Fielded April 15–22 (n=1,013).
- November 2013: Fielded November 23–December 9 (n=830).
- April 2013: Fielded April 10–15 (n=1,045).
- September 2012: Fielded August 31–September 12 (n=1,061).
- March 2012: Fielded March 12–March 30 (n=1,008).
- November 2011: Fielded October 20–November 16 (n=1,000).
- May 2011: Fielded April 23–May 12 (n=1,010).
- June 2010: Fielded May 14–June 1 (n=1,024).
- January 2010: Fielded December 24, 2009–January 3, 2010 (n=1,001).
- November 2008: Fielded October 7–November 12 (n=2,164).
 - Data were collected over two periods: from October 7–October 20 and from October 24–November 12. Margin of error plus or minus 2 percentage points.

Rounding error

For tabulation purposes, percentage points are rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given chart may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. Summed response categories (e.g., “strongly agree” + “somewhat agree”) are rounded after sums are calculated (e.g., $1.3\% + 1.3\% = 2.6\%$, which, after rounding = 3%).

Appendix III: Sample Demographics

	N (unweighted) 1,226	% (weighted) 100
Total		
Men	625	48
Women	601	52
Millennial (18-34)	268	30
Generation X (35-50)	237	23
Baby Boomer (51-69)	528	36
WWII (70+)	193	11
Less than high school	90	12
High school graduate	326	29
Some college/Associate degree/Technical degree	351	29
College graduate	247	16
Post graduate	212	15
<\$25K	166	16
\$25K - <\$50K	246	21
\$50K - <\$75K	236	17
\$75K - <\$100K	190	14
\$100K - <\$125K	140	12
\$125K+	248	21
Hispanic	145	16
White, non-Hispanic	909	64
Black, African-American non-Hispanic	92	12
Other non-Hispanic	80	8
Northeast	212	18
Midwest	283	21
South	449	37
West	282	24

