What advocates can take away from 10 years of surveying “Climate Change in the American Mind”

February 12, 2020
About the Climate Advocacy Lab

Helping the climate community build grassroots power and win through evidence-based advocacy.

Our (awesome!) members

Workshops & Webinars

Research & experimentation

Online platform & alerts

Contact: info@climateadvocacylab.org
Roadmap

- Welcome & Overview
- Introductions
- Background
- 10 Actionable Insights!
- Powerful Tools
- Q&A
- Close
What advocates can take away from the last decade of surveying "Climate Change in the American Mind"

John Kotcher, George Mason Center for Climate Change Communication
Joshua Low, Yale Program on Climate Change Communication
What is CCAM?
Ten Actionable Insights
Insight: Trend toward belief in global warming

About seven in ten Americans think global warming is happening

Do you think global warming is happening?
November 2019
Insight: Trend toward belief in global warming

About half of Americans are sure global warming is happening

How sure are you that global warming is/is not happening?

November 2019
Insight: Increasingly worried, but there’s hope.
Insight: Increasingly worried, but there’s hope.
Insight: Many Americans see global warming as a distant problem.
Action: Reduce psychological distance
SEASONAL SNOW TRENDS

FALL | WINTER | SPRING

0" | -2" | -4"

1970 | NASHVILLE | 2019

Change in total seasonal (fall, winter, spring) snowfall from Dec 1969 to Nov 2019.
Source: RCC-ACIS.org, Produced 2/3/2020
Insight: Partisan polarization on global warming.

Most Democrats Think Global Warming Should Be A High Priority For the President and Congress
- % “high” or “very high” priority -

Do you think the following should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the president and Congress? [Global warming]

### Most Democrats Say Global Warming Will Be a Very Important Issue When Deciding Who They Will Vote For In the 2020 Presidential Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank by “very important”</th>
<th>All Registered Voters</th>
<th>Liberal Democrats</th>
<th>Moderate/Conservative Democrats</th>
<th>Liberal/Moderate Republicans</th>
<th>Conservative Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>Border security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>The economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Border security</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Tax reform</td>
<td>Abortion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tax reform</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Improving roads, etc.</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>Energy independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Improving roads, etc.</td>
<td>Social security</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>Energy independence</td>
<td>International trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Tax reform</td>
<td>Improving roads, etc.</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
<td>Energy independence</td>
<td>Improving roads, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>Tax reform</td>
<td>Opioid crisis</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Border security</td>
<td>Campaign finance reform</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>International trade</td>
<td>Opioid crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>Energy independence</td>
<td>Criminal justice reform</td>
<td>Criminal justice reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>Energy independence</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>War in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Energy independence</td>
<td>Criminal justice reform</td>
<td>Criminal justice reform</td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>International trade</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Opioid crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Criminal justice reform</td>
<td>Wall Street reform</td>
<td>Campaign finance reform</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Legalizing marijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>International trade</td>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>Opioid crisis</td>
<td>Legalizing marijuana</td>
<td>Campaign finance reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Opioid crisis</td>
<td>Opioid crisis</td>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Campaign finance reform</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
<td>War in Afghanistan</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Legalizing marijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>War in Afghanistan</td>
<td>International trade</td>
<td>Border security</td>
<td>Wall Street reform</td>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>Legalizing marijuana</td>
<td>Wall Street reform</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Wall Street reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Wall Street reform</td>
<td>War in Afghanistan</td>
<td>Legalizing marijuana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Legalizing marijuana</td>
<td>Border security</td>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2020, there will be an election to choose the U.S. president. As of today, how important will the following issues be to you when you decide who you will vote for in the 2020 Presidential election?

Action: Capitalize on this moment by working with the Liberal Democrats to raise the issue with candidates and elected leaders.
Action: Engage the 1 of 5 Republicans that do think it should be a high priority.
Insight: Partisan agreement on clean energy

Most Registered Voters Think Developing Sources of Clean Energy Should Be A High Priority For the President and Congress
- % “high” or “very high” priority -

Do you think the following should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the president and Congress?
[Developing sources of clean energy]
Insight: Partisan agreement on clean energy

### Most Registered Voters, Including Republicans, Support Climate-Friendly Energy Policies

- **% “strongly” or “somewhat” support -**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Description</th>
<th>Democrats All Reg Voters</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Lib</th>
<th>Mod/Con</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Lib/Mod</th>
<th>Con</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fund more research into renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generate renewable energy (solar and wind) on public land in the U.S.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide tax rebates for people who purchase energy-efficient vehicles or solar panels</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulate carbon dioxide (the primary greenhouse gas) as a pollutant</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require electric utilities to produce at least 20% of their electricity from...renewables, even if it costs the average household an extra $100/year</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How much do you support or oppose the following policies?

Action: Start the conversation with clean energy and other solutions with certain audiences
Global Warming’s “Six Americas”

- **Alarmed**: 31%
- **Concerned**: 26%
- **Cautious**: 16%
- **Disengaged**: 7%
- **Doubtful**: 10%
- **Dismissive**: 10%

Highest Belief in Global Warming
Most Concerned
Most Motivated

Lowest Belief in Global Warming
Least Concerned
Least Motivated

Nov. 2019
N = 1,303

Illustrations by Michael Sloan

Yale Program on Climate Change Communication
George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication
Primary differences between the six groups

- Willing to process information
- Predisposed to accept information
- Less willing to process information
- Less certain that GW is occurring
- More likely to engage in counter-arguing

Beliefs & Concern

Issue Involvement

Alarmed Concerned Cautious Disengaged Doubtful Dismissive
Data from 11 national surveys (N = 13,854) from Oct. 2014 to Nov. 2019. Difference scores are calculated before rounding (example: 12.3% - 9.7% = 2.6% which, after rounding, would appear in the figure as 12% - 10% = 3%).
What can the world (and I) do to reduce global warming?

What harm will it cause? Why should I care?

How do you know that global warming is happening or human-caused?

Action: Use a different strategy with each of the 6 Americas.

Leiserowitz et al., (2011)
Are you silent about climate change?

#ClimateSilence

@YaleClimateComm
Insight: Spiral of silence

Most Americans "rarely" or "never" discuss global warming with family and friends

How often do you discuss global warming with your family and friends?
November 2019
Insight: Spiral of silence.
41% of Americans say they discuss global warming with family and friends.

Action: Organize conversations.
33% of registered voters say they would volunteer their time to an organization working on global warming.

Insight: 1 out of 3 would join a climate campaign.
Only 12% of voters say that they've urged an elected official to take action to reduce global warming within the past year.
More Than Three In Four Registered Voters Have Never Been Asked to Contact Elected Officials About Global Warming
- % who “strongly” or “somewhat” agree -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Unweighted base)</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reg</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Mod/Con</td>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Lib/Mod</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voters</td>
<td>(1,070)</td>
<td>(459)</td>
<td>(240)</td>
<td>(120)</td>
<td>(442)</td>
<td>(127)</td>
<td>(313)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody has ever asked me to</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It wouldn’t make any difference</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not an activist</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know which elected officials to contact</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wouldn’t know what to say</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m too busy</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s too much effort</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would feel uncomfortable</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t think it’s important</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t need to because I’m already taking other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actions</td>
<td>People will criticize or make fun of me</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might attract unwanted attention from</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding contacting elected officials about global warming?
Insight: The Power of Social Norms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Norm</th>
<th>% of Americans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global warming is happening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global warming will harm future generations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support regulating carbon dioxide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support setting strict emission limits on coal-fired power plants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried about global warming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most scientists agree global warming is happening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global warming will harm the U.S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global warming is human-caused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear about global warming in the media at least once a month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss global warming with friends and family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join a campaign to act on global warming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of adults in the United States (18 years or older) think that global warming is happening? 0 – 100% with a "Don't know" option.

April, 2019. Base: U.S. adults who said 0-50% (n=510) or 51-100% (n=545). Estimates are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.
Action: Leverage Social Norms.

THAT’S NEARLY 8 IN 10 ADULTS WHO SAY STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AT SCHOOL.
Insight: More Latinos are worried, and more are willing to join a campaign.
Insight: More Latinos are worried.

Three in Four Latinos Are Worried About Global Warming; One in Three Are “Very Worried”
- Eight in ten Spanish-language Latinos are worried about global warming -

How worried are you about global warming?
May-June 2017. Base: Non-Latinos 18+ (n=1,140), Latinos 18+ (n=2,054), English (n=1,256), Spanish (n=738)
Action: Invest in organizing with Latino communities.

51% of Latinos would participate in a campaign to convince elected officials to take action to reduce global warming.
Ten Insights

• Trend toward belief in global warming
• Increasingly worried, but there’s hope.
• Distant problem
• Partisan polarization
• Agreement on clean energy

• Six Americas
• Spiral of silence
• 1 out of 3 would join a climate campaign
• Power of social norms
• More Latinos are worried
Insights contributed by

- Anthony Leiserowitz
- Jennifer Marlon
- Lisa Fernandez
- Seth Rosenthal
- Edward Maibach
- Eric Fine
- John Kotcher
- Parrish Bergquist
- Tony Sirna
Tools
Yale Climate Opinion Maps

Estimated % of adults who think global warming is mostly caused by human activities (53%), 2019

Select Question: Global warming is caused mostly by human activities

Click on map to select geography, or:

Select a State

Select a County

United States

Human activities

Natural changes

53%
33%
0%
Yale Climate Opinion Factsheets Tool
Six Americas Super Short Survey (SASSY!)

1. How important is the issue of global warming to you personally?
2. How worried are you about global warming?
3. How much do you think global warming will harm you personally?
4. How much do you think global warming will harm future generations of people?
Thank you!

Feedback
https://forms.gle/cn22MpUUNf3sYCML9

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