



Views of Climate Change

NORTH AMERICA BACKGROUNDER

Canada

Canadians share the view that human activity is a significant cause of climate change and that immediate steps are needed to address the problem. A large majority also supports providing aid to developing countries under an agreement requiring them to limit their emissions. More than three-quarters (77%) say they believe “human activity, including industry and transportation, [is] a significant cause of climate change.” Similar numbers (72%) support taking “major steps starting very soon” to address climate change, while another 20 percent support taking more modest measures over time. Sixty-eight percent agree with the argument that because the emissions of less wealthy countries “are substantial and growing” they should be expected to impose limits. Only 27 percent think instead that because these countries produce “relatively low emissions per person,” they should not be required to do so. Furthermore, Canada has one of the largest majorities (84%) supporting a deal that would require wealthy countries to provide financial assistance and technology to developing countries that agree to impose emissions caps. Most Canadians (89%) have heard or read about climate change.

United States

Americans agree with most other world publics that human activity contributes significantly to climate change and that major steps should be taken immediately to address the problem. A majority also supports a deal that would provide financial assistance and technology to developing countries that limit their greenhouse gas emissions. Seven in 10 Americans (71%) say that human activity is “a significant cause of climate change.” By a margin of 59 percent to 33 percent, Americans say it is necessary to take “major steps starting very soon” rather than “modest steps over the coming years.” Only 6 percent say “it is not necessary to take any steps.” Three-quarters (75%) agree that “because total emissions from less wealthy countries are substantial and growing, these countries should limit their emissions of climate-changing gases along with wealthy countries.” Similar numbers (70%) support a deal that would provide developing countries with financial assistance and technology in return for an agreement to limit their emissions. Nearly nine in 10 (89%) Americans say they have heard a great deal (59%) or some (30%) about climate change.

For more information on this poll, please see the Questionnaire/Methodology:
http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/sep07/BCCClimate_Sep07_quaire.pdf