



# AMERICAN CLIMATE VALUES 2014

*psychographic and demographic insights*

MARCH 2014

A blue-tinted photograph of a diverse group of people, including a man with glasses and a woman in the foreground, smiling and interacting. The image is partially obscured by a large blue curved shape that sweeps across the bottom left of the page.

ecoAmerica  
*start with people*

## PARTNERS

*The American Climate Values Survey 2014 assesses climate and other values to provide information and insights for people who want to increase the effectiveness of their efforts to build public support for climate solutions. It is an ecoAmerica project in collaboration with Strategic Business Insights, supported by the Energy Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Natural Resources Defense Council and the Skoll Global Threats fund.*

*ecoAmerica thanks the following partners for their support of and participation in the 2014 survey:*



**Natural Resources Defense Council** is the nation's most effective environmental action group, combining the grassroots power of 1.4 million members and online activists with the courtroom clout and expertise of more than 350 lawyers, scientists and other professionals.



**Skoll Global Threats Fund's** mission is to confront global threats imperiling humanity by seeking solutions, strengthening alliances, and spurring actions needed to safeguard the future.



The **Energy Foundation's** mission is to promote the transition to a sustainable energy future by advancing energy efficiency and renewable energy.



**The Nature Conservancy** is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people.



**Strategic Business Insights (SBI)** works with clients to identify and map new opportunities based on emerging technology and market insights. With SBI's help, leading organizations identify coming changes faster, separate hype from reality, and create strategy with a greater awareness of what the future may bring.



**ecoAmerica** grows the base of popular support for climate solutions in America with research-driven marketing, partnerships, and national programs that connect with Americans' core values to shift personal and civic choices and behaviors.



**MomentUs** is a strategic organizing initiative designed to build a critical mass of institutional leadership, public support, political will and collective action for climate solutions in the United States. MomentUs is working to develop and support a network of trusted leaders and institutions who will lead by example and engage their stakeholders to do the same, leading to a shift in society that will put America on an irrefutable path to a clean energy, ultimately leading toward a more sustainable and just future.

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## American Climate Values 2014 Research Methodology

The American Climate Values Survey 2014 was co-created by ecoAmerica and Strategic Business Insights (SBI). GfK Knowledge Networks fielded the survey. The survey employs SBI's proprietary VALS methodology to identify psychological motivations that drive attitudes and behaviors in order to guide organizations in identifying, understanding and connecting with people.

**Sample Population:** The target population consists of non-institutionalized adults aged 18 and over residing in the United States. To sample the population, Knowledge Networks recruited individuals from it's KnowledgePanel, a probability-based random selection protocol designed to accurately represent all US adults. The survey included an oversampling of Asian, African, and Hispanic American populations.

**Survey Completion and Sample Sizes:** The sample included 2,946 respondents. Of those, 1,027 from the general population completed the survey for a 61.4% completion rate. In addition, 293 Asian American, 201 African American, and 216 Hispanic American respondents completed the survey for a total of 1,737 completed surveys.

Table values are reported as percentages and index values (category\_percent / total\_percent \* 100). Some values may not sum to total due to rounding. Question response categories are indicated by the following key:

- 1 Numbers represent sum of "somewhat more than today" and "much more than today" response choices
- 2 Numbers represent sum of "somewhat convinced" and "very convinced" response choices
- 3 Numbers represent sum of "somewhat more extreme" and "much more extreme" response choices
- 4 Numbers represent sum of "somewhat agree" and "agree" response choices
- 5 Numbers represent "yes" response choices
- 6 Numbers represent sum of "probably" and "definitely" response choices
- 7 Numbers represent sum of "somewhat support" and "definitely support" response choices
- 8 Numbers represent sum of "somewhat more likely" and "much more likely" response choices
- 9 Numbers represent sum of "yes, some" and "yes, a lot" response choices
- 10 Numbers represent sum of "sometimes" and "always" response choices

**Citation:** Perkowitz, Speiser, Harp, Hodge, Krygsman, ecoAmerica and Strategic Business Insights. (2014). American Climate Values 2014: Psychographic and Demographic Insights. Washington, DC.

*Greetings,*

*Your values are relatively consistent. If you were conservative five years ago, you still are conservative. But your attitudes and behaviors change with the world around you. You might support the president if he's from your party, but not if s/he's from the other party. Such is it with nature, the environment and climate change. If you were concerned about climate change five years ago, you still are. But rather than an interesting topic of discussion, it has become a divisive political issue. You don't talk about it anymore.*

*Most Americans want to do what's best for their family, their community and the nation. Given the same set of information, they come to the same conclusions. The problem we face is that we are getting conflicting information. In this situation, we choose the reality of the people around us... our family, church, and co-workers. To break out of the mold is to invite social ostracism.*

*And your family is always your top priority. You want the best for your children, and a secure future for your own retirement. You want a comfortable home, and maybe a car that will show that you have been able to achieve a modicum of success and social status.*

*Climate change is not for you. No one around you talks about it. Those that do are wealthy, liberal, elitist folk who care more about polar bears than they do about people. They actually want the price of gasoline to go up. They don't care about practical concerns.*

*Those are Americans' priorities, and we, as a climate movement, have a choice. We can pretend that we will move them with marketing or extreme weather and get them to support climate solutions. Or we can ignore them and do what we think is best - impressive things that don't involve the support of the American public. Stay in our enclaves in San Francisco, Washington, and New York and use the might of big state politics to save the planet while running roughshod over their beliefs and priorities.*

*If we really want to make a difference in the trajectory of climate change quickly, our other choice is to get real - to come up with climate solutions that benefit ordinary Americans here and now. Solutions with public support will always be more powerful than those without. We have those solutions at hand, but like our opposition, we're wedded to some iconoclastic beliefs that keep us from success. Our biggest challenge might not be the Koch brothers; it might be ourselves.*



Bob Perkowitz  
ecoAmerica



Meighen Speiser  
Chief Engagement Officer

## OVERVIEW

**Between 2006 and 2011, American perspectives and values on climate change shifted considerably.**

It was possible, even in 2008, to find Republicans that were leading on climate change. Over the past three years though, America has calcified. We are locked into a partisan battle that goes well beyond climate change... but at the same time climate change has become the singular most divisive issue in the nation.

**With American Climate Values 2014 we're trying to go deeper into this calcification.** We have oversampled African Americans, Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans to develop independent full perspectives on their values. We have chosen a number of 'themes' and 'sectors' to explore more fully. As such, we'll be releasing ACV2014 in three phases.

**This first release contains basic demographic findings on climate change as well as the general 2014 values findings.** Release II, in May, will contain analysis on the connection of climate change with various themes, such as solutions, preparedness, and benefits, as well as with various sectors of society, including health, business, faith communities, higher education and communities. Release III, in June, will provide values-based insights for Hispanic Americans, African Americans and Asian Americans.

**The demographic findings, on pages 7-20, are dominated by political findings.** Republicans are quite divided on the reality, causes and consequences of climate change, while Democrats have a more uniform perspective. In fact, in some cases the differences among self-identified Republicans are even greater than the differences between the parties.

**On pages 19-20 we summarize core American values on climate change.** These themes keep coming back over and over again on our surveys. Anyone seeking success on connecting with Americans on climate change needs to keep them in mind.

**Then, on pages 21-28 we review the new values findings of American Climate Values 2014.** It's disappointing to learn that belief or concern about climate change does not correlate to personal or public policy behaviors, or that most Americans perceive climate change as an elitist issue. But it is empowering to know that if we can correlate climate solutions to benefits for America and Americans, we can probably earn their support.

**All this learning points in certain directions for building public support and political will for climate solutions.** There are some basics here, like "family first" and "afraid to stray" that work well with all Americans. Others though, like "no shared common sense on climate" or "tribal engagement," imply that we need a more diverse approach.

The battle on climate change will heat up heading into COP 21 in Paris and the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. We need everyone's best efforts to build public support and political will for solutions. We hope the results of ACV2014 are helpful to you in these endeavors.

## CONSENSUS FINDINGS

We classify consensus findings as those with which a large majority of Americans, 75% or more, agree or disagree. These findings are useful in finding common ground when communicating with a diverse audience. Consensus findings from ACV 2014 include:

**There is not a lot of consensus on climate change, except** that few Americans think it's a good thing (17%) and that polluters (81%), the Environmental Protection Agency (78%), and people themselves (75%) are responsible for doing something about it. In terms of the benefits of addressing climate change, the one that reached consensus status is that "doing something now could improve the quality of the air we breathe and clean the skies."

**Americans remain confident and optimistic about their role in solving problems.** They believe we can take small steps to make the world a better place (94%) and that humans can solve many problems – even if they are not the sole cause (90%). Americans are optimistic that they can solve anything they put their minds to (84%), while 75% of Americans feel that it is their own personal responsibility to do something about climate change. With only a small fraction of Americans maintaining that climate change will be good for people, these findings reveal good news for citizen engagement—which can lead to climate action.

**More than 75% of all Americans view clean air, clean water, unpolluted, toxin-free neighborhoods, and access to parks and natural spaces as personal rights that should be available to all people.** They also think that doing something about climate change now can improve the quality of the air we breathe and clean the skies.

**Nature is important to Americans.** Activities in nature play an important role in the lives of over 80% of Americans, while 82% think that children aren't spending enough time in nature. Americans are also concerned for the protection and wellbeing of animals.

**Americans support clean energy solutions.** 4 in 5 Americans widely support a U.S. energy transition away from coal and oil and towards more clean energy sources like wind and solar. On the topic of who shares the responsibility for bringing forth solutions, over 75% of Americans see companies that pollute, the Environmental Protection Agency, and themselves as the actors most responsible for doing something about climate change. 73% of Americans think that state governments also share the responsibility.

The percentages on the Consensus table – indicating safe things to talk about - are "Net Agree" numbers combining agree and somewhat agree answers. We dive deeper into the significant differences between "agree" and "somewhat agree" in Psychographic Finding #1: "Saying isn't doing." Concern about climate change doesn't always mean you act.

Consensus Findings –% Net Agree	Total
Believe we can all take small steps to make the world better. <sup>4</sup>	94
Humans may not be the sole cause of many problems, but they can be the solution. <sup>4</sup>	90
Compassion for those who are suffering is the most important virtue. <sup>4</sup>	86
Believe if we put our minds to it, Americans can solve anything. <sup>4</sup>	84
Clean drinking water is a personal right that should be available to all people. <sup>5</sup>	84
One of the worst things a person could do is hurt a defenseless animal. <sup>4</sup>	83
Clean air is a personal right that should be available to all people. <sup>5</sup>	83
Children these days are not spending enough time in nature. <sup>4</sup>	82
The rising cost of food is affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	82
Like to have activities in my life that bring me close to nature. <sup>4</sup>	81
It's companies-that-pollute's responsibility to do something about climate change. <sup>9</sup>	81
The U.S. should use more clean energy sources (like solar and wind power) than we do today. <sup>1</sup>	80
A safe neighborhood free from toxic chemicals and pollutants is a personal right that should be available to all people. <sup>5</sup>	79
It's the Environmental Protection Agency's responsibility to do something about climate change. <sup>9</sup>	78
Higher energy bills are affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	77
Animals have a moral right to be protected. <sup>4</sup>	76
Doing something now on climate change could improve the quality of the air we breathe and clean the skies. <sup>4</sup>	75
Oil companies have too much power in America today. <sup>4</sup>	75
It's my personal responsibility to do something about climate change. <sup>9</sup>	75
Access to natural spaces like parks and forests is a personal right that should be available to all people. <sup>5</sup>	75
Doing something now about climate change could harm poor people more than it helps them. <sup>4</sup>	24
Bike, instead of using a car. <sup>10</sup>	23
It is God's will that we use up whatever resources nature provides. <sup>4</sup>	21
The United States should use more coal and oil sources than we do today. <sup>1</sup>	19
Believe climate change will be good for people. <sup>4</sup>	17



# DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS



## EDUCATION

**Education plays a notable role in Americans' attitudes and beliefs about climate and environmental issues.** More educated Americans are more likely to believe that increasing the use of renewable energy, updating the electricity grid, regulating coal power plants, and using natural solutions to reduce carbon pollution will help stop climate change. Belief in the effectiveness of solutions increases by between 10 and 14 points for each level of education (less than college, college degree, graduate degree). For example, 48% of Americans who have not completed college say that modernizing the grid will be effective, while 61% Americans with a college degree and 71% of those with a graduate degree say so.

**Americans with higher education say they are more likely to speak out on political issues** and take a different perspective from their political parties, friends, or family members. 63% of Americans who have completed graduate school are willing to admit that their views on climate differ from their friends and family, whereas 54% of Americans with a college degree and 42% Americans who have not completed college are willing to do so.

**Americans of all education levels support initiatives that either start with, or benefit communities.** These initiatives include: community-wide energy savings programs, requiring local utility companies to use more energy from renewable sources, improving emergency response services, and legislation that requires oil and coal companies to pay for pollution, and then pays those funds back to homeowners who reduce their energy use.

EDUCATION – Index to Total Net Agree	Total	<College	College Grad	>College
Support a community-wide energy savings program in the local community. <sup>7</sup>	71%	99	104	108
Support an initiative requiring the local utility company to use more energy from renewable sources. <sup>7</sup>	68%	96	106	109
Support an initiative in the community to plan for the loss of medical services in the event of damage from extreme weather. <sup>7</sup>	67%	99	106	109
Increasing the use of renewable energy will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	63%	90	122	125
Support legislation to make big oil and coal companies pay for pollution, if the money was used to provide homeowners incentives to reduce energy use. <sup>8</sup>	63%	95	100	114
Regulating and limiting carbon pollution that comes from coal-fired power plants will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	58%	88	110	133
Modernizing the electrical grid to make it more efficient will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	54%	89	113	131
Raising energy efficiency standards for appliances will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	53%	89	119	128
Have admitted my views on climate change are different from those of my friends or family. <sup>5</sup>	47%	89	115	134
Threats to the environment are among the least important issues among the many issues we face. <sup>4</sup>	34%	103	112	53
Have publicly spoken out against something my political party is doing or saying. <sup>5</sup>	29%	86	110	166

## POLITICS

**Political affiliation, more so than any demographic factor, continues to produce the largest differences in Americans' opinions about climate and environmental issues.** For instance, 83% of Democrats are somewhat or very convinced that climate change is happening, versus 56% of Republicans. And while 79% of Democrats think that we should do something about climate change even if what we do isn't perfect, only 54% of Republicans think so.

**Climate change has become a manufactured wedge issue.** The shift in Republican perspectives on climate change over the past two presidential election cycles can be traced to specific initiatives to undermine or discredit efforts for climate solutions such as the undermining of science or the "Solyndra scandal."

**Even though they experience the same physical world, Democrats are more likely than Republicans to report recognizing the effects of climate impacts – like droughts, flooding and heat waves.** Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to say that climate change is causing record heat waves, increased flooding, more extreme weather damage, and other similar changes. Related questions produce point differences of 20 or more between moderate Republicans and moderate Democrats, and even larger gaps between strong Republicans and strong Democrats.

**In addition, more Democrats than Republicans report being affected by climate impacts.** For instance, 61% of Democrats say they or someone they know is being affected by more frequent and severe droughts, whereas just 45% of Republicans say so.

**These gaps are much smaller for economic impacts that may be linked to climate change:** 84% of Democrats and 81% of Republicans say they or someone they know is being affected by rising food prices. 81% of Democrats and 74% of Republicans say that higher energy bills are affecting them. This provides some direction insights for speaking about the impacts of climate change.

**While Democrats align on climate and environmental issues, Republicans do not.** In fact, in some cases, gaps between self-identified strong Republicans and moderate Republicans rival or even dwarf those between Republicans and Democrats. For example, the gap in support for future clean energy use between strong Republicans and moderate Republicans of 21 points outweighs the 10 point gap between Republicans and Democrats.

**Independents now tend to align more closely with average Republicans' values than they do with Democrats' on climate issues.** For instance, 46% of Independents and 41% of Republicans say the potential consequences of climate change are so serious that we should do something about it even if we're not sure it's happening, versus 72% of Democrats. 42% of Independents and 39% of Republicans say climate change is causing more frequent and severe wildfires, versus 65% of Democrats.

**These results stand in contrast to previous polling results, which tend to place Independents more squarely between Democrats and Republicans in their perspectives on climate change.** There are at least two possible reasons why this could be the case: either more Republicans identify as Independents in ACV14 than in prior years, or Republicans are winning over Independents in their propagation of climate skepticism and denial.

**Despite these differences, both Democrats and Republicans show strong support for clean energy:** 75% of Republicans and 85% of Democrats say we should use more clean energy than we do now. Democrats and Republicans also share confidence that increasing use of renewable energy will be an effective way of stopping climate change. Of all the climate solutions presented in the survey, increasing the use of renewable energy garnered the highest support among both Democrats and Republicans.

**Americans across both parties (71% of Republicans, 70% of Democrats) agree that doing something about climate change will lead to more government regulation.** This is unsurprising given advocates of climate solutions' focus on government regulation and the opposition's framing of climate action as something that would restrict the economy.

**Ironically, at the same time, neither Democrats nor Republicans believe that free market incentives to reduce carbon pollution will be effective to stop climate change.**

Democrats and moderate Republicans support for certain community-level climate change mitigation and preparedness measures, including annual disaster preparedness training, community-wide energy savings programs, and initiatives to create alternatives to driving or plan for the loss of medical services in the event of an emergency. At least 60% of moderate Republicans support these measures, as do at least 69% of Democrats. These results suggest that moderates may be an effective group to help promote these locally-based measures.

**Republicans and Democrats disagree about the role of the oil and coal industries.** The vast majority of Democrats (84%) think that oil companies have too much power in America today, whereas only 63% of Republicans think so. This is a shift from prior ecoAmerica values surveys, which registered higher levels of concern among Republicans. In addition, 82% of Democrats think that it's not fair that oil and coal companies get big tax breaks, compared with just 61% of Republicans. Furthermore, neither Republicans nor Democrats say they would support legislation that would make big oil and coal companies pay for pollution if the money went to provide tax breaks for other businesses. This is ironic given that Republicans introduced and lobbied for this type of tax several years ago.

**Democrats are more likely than Republicans to believe that doing something about climate change will carry other benefits for society.** For example, 71% Democrats think that doing something about climate change will help prevent new diseases, while only 44% of Republicans concur. The same pattern holds for helping to prevent new diseases connected to climate change, and making America more competitive against other countries (60% of Democrats; 38% of Republicans).

POLITICS – Percentage Net Agree	Total	Strong Reps	Mod Reps	All Reps	Ind	All Dems	Mod Dems	Strong Dems	Point Diff Strong	Point Diff Strong V.Mod.R
Convinced that climate change is happening. <sup>2</sup>	71%	42	62	56	60	83	82	84	42	20
The potential consequences of climate change are so serious that we ought to do something even if we are not sure it's happening. <sup>4</sup>	58	30	46	41	46	72	73	71	41	16
Increased flooding is caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	57	35	45	42	47	70	66	76	41	10
We should do something about climate change even if what we do isn't perfect. <sup>4</sup>	68	41	60	54	46	79	78	81	40	19
Damage from extreme weather is caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	60	37	46	43	44	73	71	77	40	9
Doing something now about climate change could help prevent new diseases connected to climate change. <sup>4</sup>	58	33	50	44	46	71	69	73	40	17
Doing something now about climate change could protect the world's poorest people from environmental harm. <sup>4</sup>	58	33	52	46	36	69	68	71	38	19
Record heat waves during summer are caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	60	40	47	45	46	72	69	77	37	7
In recent years, would you say that weather conditions have become more extreme? <sup>3</sup>	67	46	57	53	66	78	75	82	36	11
More frequent and severe droughts are caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	59	40	49	46	37	71	68	76	36	9
Oil companies have too much power in America today. <sup>4</sup>	75	50	69	63	67	84	83	85	35	19
It's not fair that oil and coal companies get big tax breaks. <sup>4</sup>	73	48	67	61	65	82	81	83	35	19
Increased rates of breathing problems are caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	46	29	38	35	27	55	51	63	34	9
More frequent and severe droughts are affecting me (or someone I know). <sup>6</sup>	54	37	49	45	43	61	58	68	31	12
The rising cost of food is caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	53	36	42	40	32	65	65	66	30	6
Investing in natural solutions to reduce carbon pollution will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	59	41	54	50	39	66	65	70	29	13

POLITICS – Percentage Net Agree	Total	Strong Reps	Mod Reps	All Reps	Ind	All Dems	Mod Dems	Strong Dems	Point Diff Strong	Point Diff Strong V.Mod.R
Record heat waves during summer are affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	57	38	48	45	53	65	65	66	28	10
Higher energy bills are caused by climate change. <sup>5</sup>	51	35	39	38	39	61	60	63	28	4
Increased rates of breathing problems, such as asthma, summer are affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	49	33	41	38	44	58	57	59	26	8
Increasing the use of renewable energy will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	63	48	56	54	36	73	73	73	25	8
Increased flooding is affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	41	24	36	32	29	50	51	48	24	12
The U.S. should use more clean energy sources (like solar and wind power) then we do today. <sup>1</sup>	80	61	82	75	66	85	86	84	23	21
Support an initiative in your local community to create alternatives to driving. <sup>7</sup>	63	49	60	57	51	69	68	71	22	11
Support a community-wide energy savings program in your local community. <sup>7</sup>	71	61	66	65	57	78	76	81	20	5
Support an annual disaster preparedness training program in your local community. <sup>7</sup>	69	58	71	67	47	74	71	78	20	13
Support an initiative in your local community to plan for the loss of medical services in the event of damage from extreme weather. <sup>7</sup>	67	58	67	64	51	72	71	73	15	9
Higher energy bills are affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	77	71	75	74	76	81	80	82	11	4
Doing something now about climate change could lead to more government regulation. <sup>4</sup>	69	72	70	71	53	70	74	63	9	2
The rising cost of food is affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	82	77	81	81	83	84	84	85	8	4
Letting the free market unrestrained by government interference create incentives to reduce carbon pollution will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	30	33	31	32	21	30	33	25	8	2
The United States should use more natural gas in the future. <sup>1</sup>	50	55	55	56	36	48	46	51	4	0
Likely to support legislation to make big oil and coal companies pay for pollution if the money provided tax breaks for businesses. <sup>8</sup>	30	29	32	31	2	29	28	30	1	3

## INCOME

As in our 2011 values survey, perspectives on climate change roughly correlated with income and education. For example, sharing a different perspective on climate change from one's friends or family increases proportionally with income, as it does with education.

Some of the largest differences in American opinion lie at each end of the income distribution spectrum. Americans making more than \$100,000 understand the benefits from taking action on climate. They express higher levels of confidence in the effectiveness of economic and technological solutions like investments in emerging technologies or moving away from coal and oil.

Meanwhile, the benefits of action on climate change are not as apparent for Americans who make \$75,000 to \$100,000. They are less inclined to think that we should do something about climate change even if what we do is not perfect (60% vs. the average of 70%), and they are more likely to think that threats to the environment are less important compared to other issues (41% vs the average of 34%).

INCOME - Index to Total Net Agree	Total	< \$10k	\$10k-\$40k	\$40k-\$75k	\$75k-\$100k	\$100k-\$200k	\$200k+
We should do something about climate change even if what we do isn't perfect. <sup>4</sup>	68%	89	101	96	86	114	99
Solving climate change now will cost less money than if we wait until later. <sup>4</sup>	62%	77	102	100	89	113	113
Using less coal and oil will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>5</sup>	57%	76	89	93	107	115	112
Doing something now on climate change will make America more competitive against other countries. <sup>4</sup>	50%	73	100	94	94	121	106
Investing in technology to capture and store carbon pollution will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	45%	88	91	90	102	115	113
Have admitted their views on climate change are different from those of their friends or family. <sup>5</sup>	47%	40	90	104	91	115	162
Doing something now on climate change will improve our national security. <sup>4</sup>	34%	83	110	92	89	111	106
Threats to the environment are among the least important issues among the many issues we face. <sup>4</sup>	34%	79	108	106	121	76	94
Doing something now on climate change distracts Americans from more important issues. <sup>4</sup>	33%	145	112	100	109	73	127
Most environmental disasters are just bad luck. <sup>4</sup>	29%	117	90	97	121	100	100
Believe climate change will be good for people. <sup>4</sup>	17%	163	119	88	113	81	25

## AGE

**Adult Americans of all age groups acknowledge climate change is happening to the same extent (71%).** However, priorities about climate topics vary by age group.

**The gap of climate change concern is often the greatest between age extremes.** The oldest Americans are the most likely to think that climate change will not affect them in their lifetime. They also believe that it's less risky to talk about how their views on climate change differ from their friends or family. Not surprisingly, younger Americans are more likely than others to use climate-friendly transportation options like biking (35%) or public transit (42%).

**18 to-24-year-olds are more likely to have confidence in specific technological and economic policies** like raising energy efficiency standards, placing a price on carbon, and technology investments as solutions to climate change. They are also the least likely age group to think that climate change is a hoax.

**As in 2011, Americans aged 55 to 64 compose a distinct group that may be a sweet spot for climate concern and action.** Threats to the environment rank higher among their competing priorities, and they are less likely (21%) than most (31%) to think we should learn to live with climate change, not try to stop it.

AGE - Index to Total Net Agree	Total	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55 to 64	65+
Convinced that climate change is happening. <sup>2</sup>	71%	94	103	101	100	97
Admitting that your views on climate change are different from those of your friends or family is not at all risky.	64%	94	73	100	111	116
Raising energy efficiency standards for appliances will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	53%	121	104	89	108	89
Requiring companies that produce or import fossil fuels to pay a price for carbon released will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	45%	122	91	96	104	91
Investing in technology to capture and store carbon pollution will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	45%	120	98	100	104	80
Threats to the environment are among the least important issues among the many issues we face. <sup>4</sup>	34%	109	118	100	71	100
Use public transportation. <sup>10</sup>	33%	127	133	82	106	82
We should learn to live with climate change, not try to stop it. <sup>4</sup>	31%	97	87	113	68	123
Climate change will not affect me in my lifetime. <sup>4</sup>	28%	89	104	96	79	150
To me, the claim that the climate is changing because of people's actions is a hoax perpetrated. <sup>4</sup>	27%	70	104	115	81	107
Bike, instead of using a car. <sup>10</sup>	23%	152	130	91	100	48



## GENDER

**Gender plays a role in shaping Americans' confidence and support for climate change solutions.** Men are more likely than women to show confidence in the effectiveness of a variety of economic and technology-based solutions – from increasing the use of renewable energy to modernizing the electrical grid – for stopping climate change. Though less popular overall, men are also more likely than women to think the US should use more nuclear (43% vs 29%) and natural gas (56% vs 45%) energy in the future.

However, men and women both agree (80%) in addition, that the US should move away from coal and oil towards cleaner energy sources like wind and solar. 74% of men and 67% of women believe we can achieve environmental protection and economic growth at the same time..

**Women are slightly more likely than men to perceive worsening weather (69% vs 63%) and other effects of climate change** like flooding, power shortages, and breathing problems. However, women are less likely to admit they have a different opinion on climate change with their friends and family or speak out publically against their political party.

**Meanwhile, men display mixed feelings about climate action.** They are more likely to think that doing something about climate change will cost jobs and harm our national economy (37% vs 27%). At the same time, they feel it will improve our national security (39% vs 29%) and make America more competitive (53% vs 47%).

Gender – Index to Total Net Agree	Total	Male	Female
The US should use more nuclear energy in the future. <sup>1</sup>	36%	119	81
Using less coal and oil will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	57%	111	86
The US should use more natural gas in the future. <sup>1</sup>	50%	112	90
Modernizing the electrical grid to make it more energy efficient will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	54%	109	91
Increasing the use of natural gas will be effective at stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	40%	113	88
Doing something now on climate change will improve our national security. <sup>4</sup>	34%	115	85
Doing something now on climate change will cost jobs and harm our economy. <sup>4</sup>	32%	116	84
Investing in technology to capture and store carbon pollution will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	45%	111	91
Regulating and limiting carbon pollution that comes from coal-fired power plants will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	58%	105	93
Requiring companies that produce or import fossil fuels to pay a price for carbon released will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	45%	107	91
We can achieve environmental protection and economic growth at the same time. <sup>4</sup>	71%	104	94
Increasing the use of renewable energy will be effective in stopping climate change. <sup>6</sup>	63%	105	95
Doing something now on climate change will make America more competitive against other countries. <sup>4</sup>	50%	106	94
Increased rates of breathing problems, such as asthma, are affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	49%	94	106
Increased flooding is affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	41%	93	110
More frequent power outages are affecting me (or someone I know personally). <sup>6</sup>	46%	91	107

# CLASSIC CLIMATE QUESTIONS

## CLASSIC CLIMATE QUESTIONS

The American Climate Values Survey focuses on climate change more than any past ecoAmerica surveys. Our goal is not only to understand how Americans are resonating (or not) with the spectrum of classic climate questions, shown below, but also to dive deeper into who believes what, why, and how

Classic Climate Questions - Total Percentage Agree	Total
Climate change will not affect me in my lifetime.	28
Climate change is an opinion, not a fact.	29
The potential consequences of climate change are so serious that we ought to do something even if we are not sure it's happening.	58
Nothing can solve climate change.	30
To me, the claim that the climate is changing because of people's actions is a hoax perpetrated .	27
We should learn to live with climate change, not try to stop it.	31
Americans have overcome big challenges in the past and will overcome the challenge of climate change.	58
If we work hard enough, we can prevent most damage from climate change.	54
I believe climate change will be good for people.	17
How convinced are you that climate change is happening?	
I'm not convinced at all.	11
I'm mostly not convinced.	8
I'm somewhat convinced.	31
I'm very convinced.	40
Don't know.	10
Which of the following best describes your beliefs about climate change?	
Climate change isn't happening.	9
Humans can't reduce climate change even if it's happening.	16
Humans may or may not be able to reduce climate change.	36
Humans can definitely make a difference in slowing or reducing climate change.	40
What causes climate change?	
I believe climate change is mostly natural.	16
I believe climate change is mostly caused by human activities (such as driving cars, burning coal, oil, and gas).	23
I believe climate change is caused by both natural causes and human activities.	47
Other/Neither.	1
I don't believe climate change is happening.	4
Don't know.	9
Please select option that describes you best	
I don't believe climate change is a problem, and I don't think much about it.	14
I don't think climate change is a problem, and I tell people that.	6
I take a wait-and-see approach on climate.	19
I worry about climate change, but I'm unsure what to do about it.	24
I'm taking steps in my life to keep climate change from getting worse (such as using less energy).	25
I'm actively preparing for the negative effects of climate change (such as preparing for weather disasters;).	5
I'm taking steps to keep climate change from getting worse AND I'm actively preparing for negative effects.	6

to move the Americans who are ready to support and/or activate on climate solutions. These classic climate questions can be seen as a scoreboard on climate values and attitudes across demographic groupings. The psychographic findings on the pages that follow reveal groups of Americans that can be activated, others who are ready to engage, and one specific group that is holding us back (it isn't necessarily who you think!).

Strong R	Not Strong R	Lean R	"Indep Undec" Lean D	Lean D	Not Strong D	Strong D	Male	Female	< than College	College	> than College	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55 to 64	65 +	< \$10 K	\$10K to \$40K	\$40K to \$75K	\$75K to \$100K	> \$100 K
49	35	31	35	19	24	19	35	23	29	28	24	25	29	27	22	42	31	30	30	30	24
54	38	35	29	16	20	18	30	27	31	25	19	24	28	31	24	31	30	27	28	29	27
30	50	44	46	71	75	71	59	57	56	56	72	60	59	56	63	54	53	64	62	51	62
48	34	33	36	24	26	18	31	29	33	23	17	27	31	30	25	36	37	32	30	25	25
50	29	36	30	14	23	15	28	25	29	22	16	19	28	31	22	29	37	30	27	25	18
48	35	27	38	23	28	23	33	29	33	26	21	30	27	35	21	38	36	32	29	25	29
58	56	53	44	60	67	65	63	55	58	60	62	59	55	56	63	62	58	59	59	55	64
34	38	40	44	63	69	71	57	51	54	52	56	61	52	53	59	47	52	57	56	53	57
19	19	13	9	13	16	18	19	14	18	12	10	20	22	15	13	13	26	19	14	18	12
37	16	15	16	4	2	2	14	9	12	13	7	9	9	13	10	14	7	10	11	16	10
16	7	13	5	4	7	3	6	9	8	6	6	4	7	7	10	11	9	6	12	8	5
28	41	36	37	28	38	20	31	31	33	37	16	33	40	33	22	29	21	34	34	27	31
14	26	23	23	55	43	64	39	40	35	39	67	34	33	39	49	40	40	40	37	40	49
6	10	12	20	9	10	10	10	10	12	5	4	20	12	8	8	6	24	11	7	9	4
24	12	11	4	4	6	3	9	8	9	9	5	5	13	11	7	5	11	8	10	8	8
22	20	19	28	11	10	13	13	18	18	14	5	12	16	15	14	21	23	19	17	15	5
35	43	46	42	30	41	25	36	36	37	35	27	43	35	37	32	33	38	40	32	36	37
19	25	25	26	56	43	59	41	39	35	42	62	40	36	37	47	40	28	34	41	41	49
32	21	21	20	9	10	8	17	14	17	17	8	13	13	17	16	17	24	18	19	15	8
9	12	17	13	34	27	32	25	21	22	18	36	24	21	21	27	22	14	23	21	27	27
40	51	44	49	47	56	44	44	49	45	57	47	43	49	48	46	48	31	45	51	47	53
2	0	2	4	1	< 1	< 1	1	1	1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	1	1	2	4	2	1	0	1
14	8	6	3	< 1	< 1	3	4	5	5	5	2	6	4	5	3	4	2	4	5	7	5
4	9	11	10	9	7	13	9	9	11	3	7	13	13	8	7	7	24	10	3	4	6
28	21	15	23	7	9	10	14	15	16	14	7	19	18	15	11	10	33	14	14	14	10
19	7	10	7	2	2	2	8	4	7	6	4	2	5	7	6	9	4	6	5	9	5
21	26	26	22	18	17	12	23	16	21	18	12	16	22	21	13	23	18	23	17	14	19
13	18	22	16	25	37	28	21	28	26	16	25	29	17	22	34	20	21	25	26	19	22
11	22	20	19	34	28	30	24	26	21	33	37	24	25	25	23	28	14	22	27	30	31
6	4	5	7	6	3	6	4	6	5	5	3	3	5	7	3	6	4	5	4	6	5
3	2	2	5	9	4	11	6	6	4	7	12	7	7	3	10	4	6	5	6	7	8

## TREND

ecoAmerica's longitudinal survey results indicate that there has not been much change in Americans' climate and environmental values over the past two years. Americans are still somewhat inclined towards action on climate change, but it is not a priority.

Meanwhile, traditional environmental values are trending very slightly downward in 2013 from prior years. Americans are less inclined to believe in economic and technological benefits of solving environmental problems. The association between environmental protection and economic growth also dropped from 82% in 2011 to 71% in 2013. This may be a result of an active campaign by climate deniers to undermine support for climate solutions.

Climate Trend Questions <sup>4</sup>	2011	2013
We should do something about climate change even if what we do isn't perfect.	66%	68%
Solving climate change now will cost less money than if we wait until later.	64%	62%
The potential consequences of climate change are so serious that we ought to do something even if we are not sure it's happening.	55%	58%
An effort to stop climate change now is like buying insurance against a disaster that could come later.	59%	57%
If we don't do something about climate change now, we could end up having our farmlands turn to desert.	57%	52%
Climate change will not affect me in my lifetime.	27%	28%
Climate change is an opinion, not a fact.	33%	29%
Nothing can solve climate change.	32%	30%

Environmental Trends Questions <sup>4</sup>	2011	2013
Oil companies have too much power in America today.	81%	75%
Our children's lives will be worse off because of our generation's wasteful habits.	78%	73%
It's not fair that oil and coal companies get big tax breaks.	79%	73%
We can achieve environmental protection and economic growth at the same time.	82%	71%
I worry about the effects of environmental pollution on my family's health.	73%	66%
We tax vices like alcohol and cigarettes, so we should tax pollution.	66%	64%
Promoting a green economy with new environmental technology could be the 'gold rush' of the 21st century.	69%	58%
Trying to be environmentally friendly is a difficult chore.	61%	56%
I support pollution standards even if it means shutting down factories.	49%	46%
Our country is in more danger from environmental hazards (such as air pollution and climate change) than it is from terrorists.	45%	42%
Environmental regulations infringe too much on individual property rights.	39%	35%
Threats to the environment are among the least important issues among the many issues we face.	34%	34%
There is no way to use less oil and keep our standard of living.	33%	30%
It is God's will that we use up whatever resources nature provides.	25%	21%

# PSYCHOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

## PSYCHOGRAPHIC FINDINGS FROM PRIOR SURVEYS

American Climate Values 2014 is the fourth in ecoAmerica's VALS™-based climate and environmental values research series. The ACV 2014 findings combine with prior surveys to form a more comprehensive perspective on American climate and environmental values. Reports from the 2006, 2008, and 2011 surveys are available for download on [ecoAmerica.org](http://ecoAmerica.org). The following is a synthesis of the most important findings from prior research. They remain relevant and valuable when considering connecting to Americans on climate change.

### 1. AMERICANS FOLLOW THEIR TRIBES *(from 2006, 2008, 2011)*

Many Americans see environmentalists as out in touch with everyday realities, and overly focused on abstract science issues. When environmentalists focus on science to support their views, many Americans tune out - it does not persuade them to engage. Instead, they rely on the news and views from their trusted tribes - their political party leaders, pastors, favorite TV channels, neighbors, and other community groups.

### 2. NOT READY TO ABANDON THE AMERICAN DREAM *(from 2006, 2011)*

Environmental messages are often about reducing, sacrificing, and doing more with less. This is in direct conflict with "the American Dream" – a set of stable cultural norms and values that promise a better life for those that work hard and try to get ahead. Greater progress will be achieved on climate solutions by connecting to these norms, rather than expecting Americans to change their fundamental beliefs. There is a set of messages that connect success, jobs, national prosperity, and opportunity with new energy solutions. If we want to build public support and political will for climate solutions, we need to use those messages and not attack basic American values.

### 3. COMPETING PRIORITIES *(from 2006, 2011)*

Virtually no one in America, even the most fervent activists, lists climate change as their top priority. They value their families. They struggle with jobs, kids, aging parents, financial pressures and other facets of everyday life. They are much more concerned with these immediately valuable and pressing priorities than solving global crises like climate change. Climate solutions advocates need to start with people's personally relevant priorities and make sure that climate solutions fit with and support those priorities.

### 4. POLITICS & DENIAL *(from 2006, 2008, 2011)*

The American political divide is the biggest barrier to climate solutions in America. In addition to conflicting with basic values and ignoring relevant priorities, environmentalists often propose climate solutions that play into and even support this political divide. Regulations and taxes translate, for many Americans, into diminished freedom and economic opportunity. Deniers seize on these fears to not only discredit environmentalists and climate solutions, but to seed doubts about the reality, the causes and the consequences of climate change itself. Climate advocates and activists have highly effective and attractive solutions at hand that can bridge this divide – but often choose to ignore them.



### 5. ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL *(from 2006, 2011)*

We all know that America is not a homogenous nation. Our strength and our values are rooted in America's great diversity. This extends to nature, the environment and climate change. Different groups of Americans have different perspectives and values on nature or environmental protection. Some are persuaded by appeals to protect mountain scenes or animals. Others want to stop pollution in their communities. Many don't want to be seen as "green" at all. Hoped - for universal messages that assume common values on climate will not motivate most of us. They often demonstrate how environmentalists are out of touch.

### 6. TOUGH VS. TENDER *(from 2006, 2008, 2011)*

Climate solutions are often positioned, and viewed, as culturally feminine. Solutions are associated with themes of sacrifice and tenderness, instead of action and opportunity. Women tend to support climate and environmental solutions more than men, but even they respond to solutions that are seen as more "masculine." To garner public support, advocates need to show and promote the macho strength and efficacy of solutions on a scale commensurate with the size and scope of the problem.

### 7. THE CURSE OF TECHNO-OPTIMISM *(from 2008, 2011)*

Some Americans believe that solving climate change requires technological solutions. They view ingenuity, innovation and entrepreneurialism - lowering the cost of renewable energy versus fossil fuels - as the most important factors in solving the climate crisis. This focus on relative energy cost is critical, but by itself may be neither timely enough nor adequate to prevent the worst impacts of climate change from occurring. Techno-optimism can also lead to ignoring policy or other social changes that could both help address the climate challenge and support those self same technological solutions. We can't just wait for technology to solve our problems.

### 8. INDIFFERENCE *(from 2006, 2008, 2011)*

It is hard for some climate solutions advocates to accept, but many Americans pay scant attention to climate change and other social issues. They are busy providing the basics of life to their families. They have conflicting loyalties, dissonance, and confusion that lead to a "don't know, don't care" attitude about climate. This segment of Americans may never really engage on the issue, but they'll follow accepted social norms and modify their behavior if those norms change.

### 9. FATALISM & RESIGNATION *(from 2011)*

Is it too late to do anything meaningful about climate change? Must we just wait for catastrophe and hope that society will then rapidly make the changes necessary to prevent even worse? Growing fatalism and resignation is another challenge that climate solutions advocates face, amidst their own ranks.

### 10. EMERGING CONNECTIONS ON CLIMATE *(from 2008, 2011)*

There is a sense among some advocates that linking climate issues to health and weather could help get more constituencies on board. These connections are emerging unevenly, and climate advocates must be mindful about which Americans they make these connections with, and how. Most everyone is aware of volatile weather, but many are unconcerned and unwilling to address it. On health, most Americans do not currently understand the links between climate and health. More outreach is needed to help Americans make the climate-health connection.

## 2014 PSYCHOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

To diagnose opportunities for engagement on climate solutions, we analyzed American values on climate change and other issues using Strategic Business Insights' VALS™ framework. This framework, employed in all of our previous surveys, enables us to target receptive audiences, identify leverage points, obstacles and competing priorities, and frame climate solutions in effective ways that connect with Americans' values.

People's basic psychology typically does not change much past mature adulthood, but the realities around them do. Economic conditions, weather patterns, climate concerns, technological norms, and the political arena have shifted over the past few years. These profound changes have forced Americans to embrace new realities and reframe core challenges. Many of these emerging trends are reflected in the 2014 results.

In 2014, we uncovered eight new insights for climate engagement:

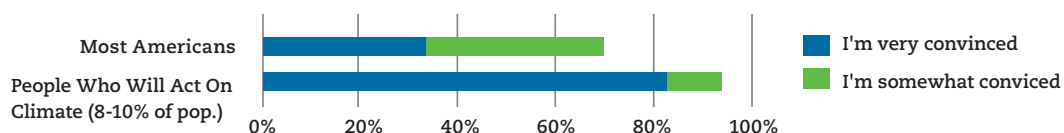
1. *Saying Isn't Doing: Concern About Climate Change Doesn't Mean You Act*
2. *Benefits Are Essential for Action on Climate Change*
3. *Afraid to Stray: Americans Need Local Leadership on Climate Solutions*
4. *My Family First*
5. *Climate Action is Elite and Alienating*
6. *There's No Such Thing as Shared Common Sense on Climate*
7. *Weather Isn't Enough: Climate Conviction is a Package Deal*
8. *Preparedness Can Motivate Climate Action for Some Americans who Hold Traditional Values*

America is a heterogeneous society, and not all of these findings are applicable for all evenly. These findings provide insights primarily for engaging mainstream Americans in climate solutions. In this 2014 summary report, we highlight the important themes and describe them on the pages that follow.

### 1. *Saying Isn't Doing: Concern About Climate Change Doesn't Mean You Act*

Polls, including the American Climate Values 2014 survey, regularly report that large pluralities of Americans say they are somewhat or very convinced that climate change is happening (71%) and that humans can definitely, or might be able to, reduce climate change (76%). These statistics seem encouraging for climate solutions advocates – but they obscure a more complicated reality.

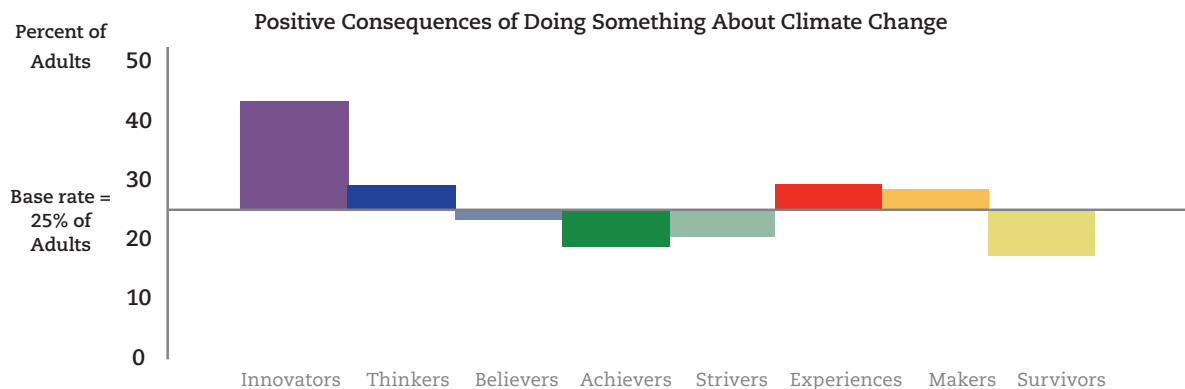
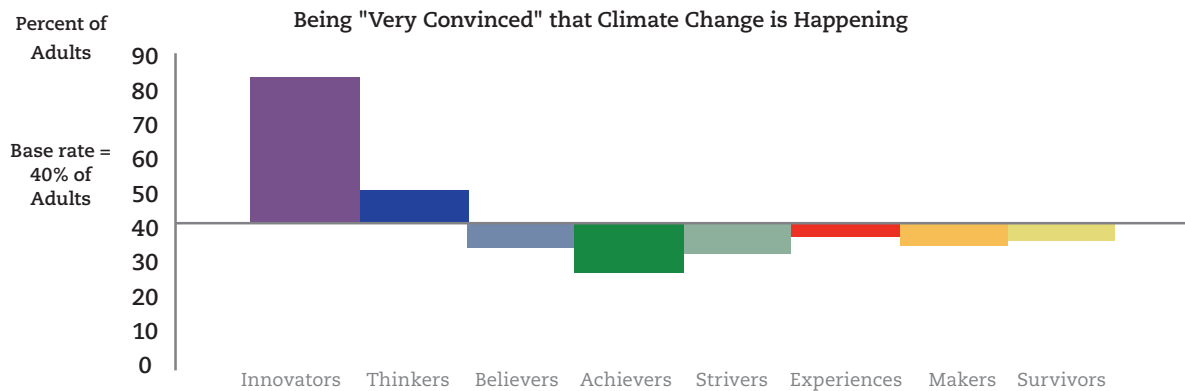
Amidst the Americans who are convinced that climate change is happening are two different groups of people with different attitudes and motivations. Most Americans are only “somewhat convinced.” They don't associate climate change with their other priorities and are not inclined to support action. Only the “very convinced” are willing to take action. This group tends to be made up of higher-resourced Americans with greater wealth, health, and education.



## 2. Benefits are Essential for Action on Climate Change

There is close correlation between people's belief in direct benefits of taking action on climate change and their support for such actions. High-resource Americans with a global scope of concern are confident that doing something about climate change will protect and preserve our quality of life, improve the quality of the air we breathe and the food we eat, and protect the world's poorest people from environmental harm.

Most Americans think otherwise. They don't see the relevant benefits of action or negative consequences of avoiding action on climate change. Whether advocates have not gotten the benefits message across, or deniers have been more effective at convincing Americans that there are negative consequences of addressing climate change, or both – there simply is not a strong connection in Americans' minds between action on climate change and relevant benefits.



### 3. *Afraid to Stray: Americans Need Local Leadership on Climate Solutions*

Approval is an inherently conservative dimension emphasizing the fear of being excluded. Most people rightfully think others will not cooperate with them if they fail to honor their groups' social conventions. If their “tribes” don’t support climate solutions, they won’t. Success in building support for climate solutions is therefore dependent upon shifting groups of people toward climate change.

The ACV 2014 findings also suggest that Americans feel social pressure to trust leaders who are involved in their everyday lives, in particular religious, medical, and local leaders. This same social pressure exists to trust co-workers, friends, and neighbors. People are eager to trust each other around common and familiar activities and social norms.

In order to build engagement on climate change, Americans need to see their trusted leaders and others around them addressing climate change in their words and actions.



#### 4. My Family First

One of the key groups in American society has a strong “me-and-and-family-first” orientation. These achievement-oriented Americans, the “keeping up with the Joneses” type ground their lives around sensibilities of responsibilities, goal attainment, and family-focus. They perceive owning a mini-van or SUV, reading family-themed magazines, attending a church meeting, or holding management positions as family-centered. They resist action on climate that conflicts with these values.

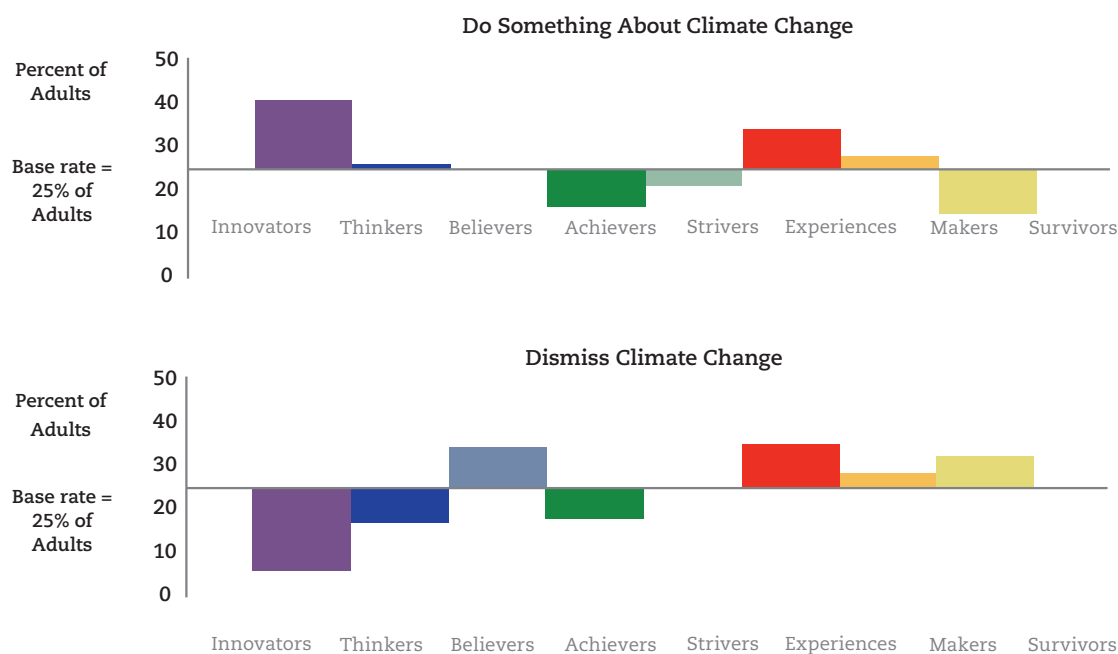
This is a key group for climate engagement strategies to reach. If these Americans don’t embrace climate action, they block the path for many more Americans who “follow the crowd.” But this high-level concept of valuing families appeals to all Americans. Appealing to connections with children and family can give Americans a sense of motivation and security necessary to engage on climate change. Given that these American are heavily influenced by what they see around them, and by peer pressure, it will be necessary to engage leaders in their daily lives who they can look up to and aspire to become.



## 5. Climate Action is Elite and Alienating

Many Americans perceive climate change as an elitist issue. People who support action are associated with educational, financial, and social networks of privilege and power. Rather than a “Johnny Appleseed” issue that we can all understand and engage in, climate change is not a practical real issue for ordinary Americans. They do not have the interest, nor the wherewithal, to engage in elite issues. It’s “not for them.” “Doing something” about climate appears to involve personal sacrifice, new routines, new technologies, and different political actions that aren’t a part of many Americans’ daily lives and social norms.

In order to broaden support for climate solutions, advocates need to stop preaching and teaching, and start showing how climate change affects people in their daily lives. Advocates must build bridges to include a diversity of Americans, and inspire mainstream leaders across the country, from multiple social groups, to speak on climate through familiar and personal narratives that connect with mainstream hearts and values.



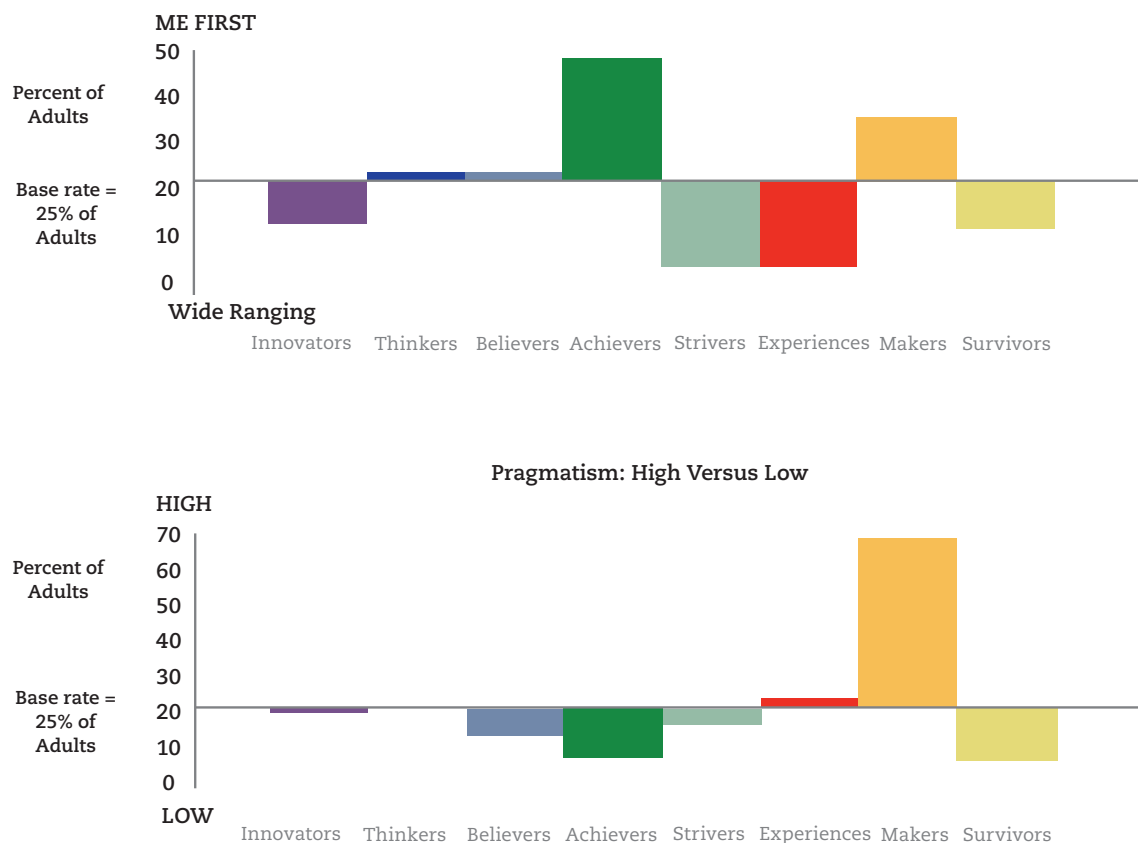
## 6. There’s No Such Thing as Shared Common Sense on Climate

America’s cultural diversity has important implications for American engagement with climate change. Different groups of people think about and respond to the environment, nature and climate change in different ways. Some think on of global concerns, while others think of outdoor family fun, hunting habitat, city playgrounds, or state parks.

The 2011 ACEVS research uncovered the need for common sense on climate solutions. Many Americans thought proposed solutions for climate change were impractical. In ACV 2014, we found that many climate-pragmatic attitudes and behaviors – those that are shared by climate advocates and high-resource American- are at odds with what’s important to achievement-oriented Americans who put family, success, and comfort first.

Climate advocates tend to have wide-ranging concerns that demonstrate the need for solidarity and care for the welfare of all. Solutions have included doing more with less (sacrifice), and what appears to others as pairing Wall Street immorality with big government control. Mainstream Americans have everyday concerns, and their definition of pragmatism is centered on what enhances their daily lives. In short, what's common sense for advocates does not at all equate to what's common sense for everyone else.

In order to reach a tipping point for climate solutions, advocates must embrace the different common sensibilities of mainstream Americans. Solutions messaging needs to change from a one-size-fits-all approach to incorporate specific framing that will resonate to various groups of Americans. What makes sense on climate change for a farmer in Iowa (ensuring livelihoods and legacies), a Hispanic family in Chicago (a focus on family), or a suburban family in Atlanta (high quality public schools and safe neighborhoods) are very different things. Knowing your audience, and connecting with their pragmatic concerns will help climate solutions move from a low toward a high priority.





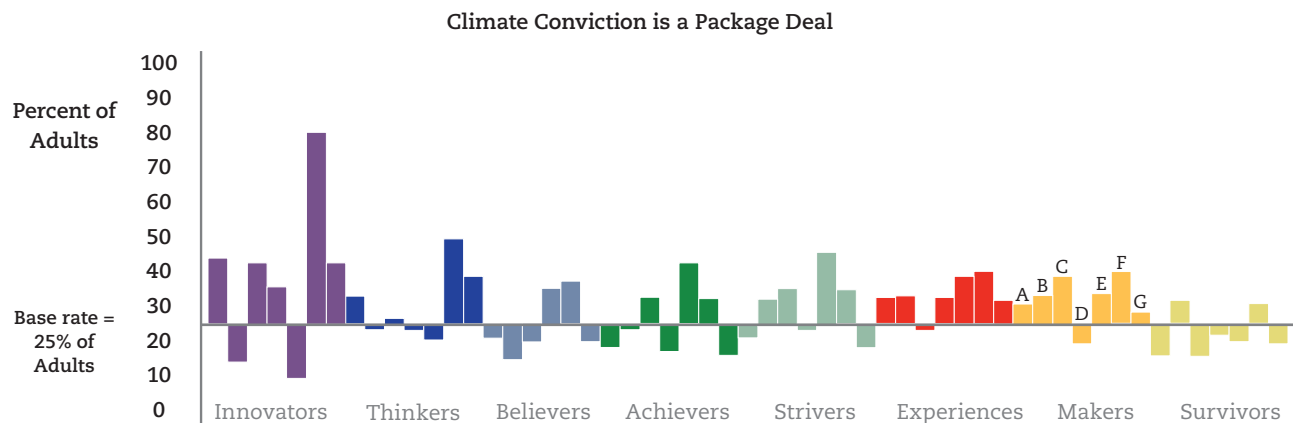
## 7. Weather Isn't Enough: Climate Conviction is a Package Deal

Many advocates of climate solutions seek to emphasize the links between climate and weather in hopes of getting new people on board. The thinking is that many Americans do not relate to ice caps and polar bears, but they certainly can relate to the floods, storms, and droughts that are impacting them directly. But we're going to need more than just weather.

The base of Americans who seek action on climate change do so as a package deal. The weather-climate connection is just one part of a larger set of sentiments on climate. Those who are very convinced that climate change is real say that extreme weather is caused by climate change, and that it is affecting them. They also believe in the economic benefits of climate solutions, think we should tax pollution, and support organizations that work to protect our environment.

Similarly those who oppose climate solutions shows a consistent set of beliefs: Climate change isn't real or predominately caused by humans. There's no way we can use less oil and keep our standard of living. Threats to the environment are among the least important issues that we face.

Climate conviction is a package deal. The weather argument or, for instance, a health argument might make some difference, but until they buy the threat as a package deal, most American's won't change their behaviors and beliefs overall.



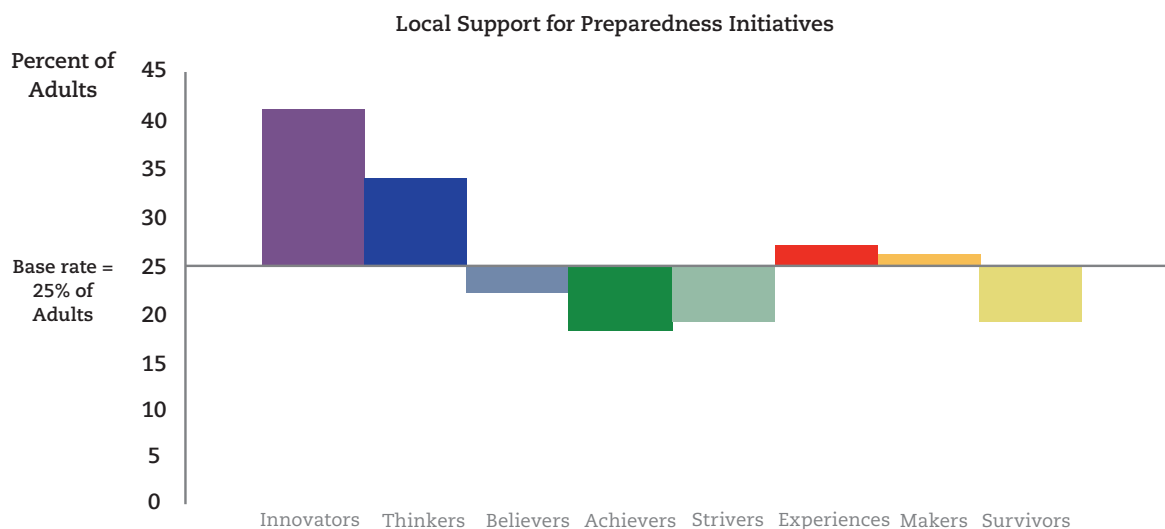
### KEY

- A. Positive Consequences of Doing Something About Climate Change
- B. Negative Consequences of Doing Something About Climate Change
- C. Whether Climate Change Causes Extreme Weather
- D. Affected By Big Weather Changes and Disasters
- E. "Somewhat Convinced" that Climate Change is Happening
- F. "Very Convinced" that Climate Change is Happening
- G. Local Support for Preparedness Initiatives

## 8. Preparedness Can Motivate Climate Action for Some Americans who Hold Traditional Values

Previous ecoAmerica research has suggested that talking about climate preparedness could be a useful tactic for getting more diverse constituencies on board with climate change. preparedness resonates strongly with high resource Americans who are generally already on board with climate action. Yet the ACV 2014 findings show that the preparedness theme resonates with another group of Americans that has been previously divided on climate change. Preparedness opens the door to Americans who can be characterized as having traditional sensibilities (“Thinkers”), and who tend to hold white-collar jobs, such as nurses, lawyers, public administrators, middle-managers in business, and a majority of higher education faculty.

Preparing for climate change offers a politically neutral and personally responsible, active theme and pathway for action for these two groups. It taps into sensible and practical action now, and paves the way toward support for mitigation efforts.





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ecoAmerica grows the base of popular support for climate solutions in America with research-driven marketing, partnerships, and national programs that connect with Americans' core values to bring about and support change in personal and civic choices and behaviors.

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