

## Demographics in Focus: Latinos and African Americans

Americans' concerns about climate have increased at a time when EPA staffers have been handed talking points playing down the human impact on our changing climate. As **ecoAmerica** and **Lake Research** have found in the 2017 **American Climate Perspectives Survey**, the strongest awareness and concern comes from those who are the most affected—Latinos and African Americans. They report the highest levels of personal and health effects from climate impacts.

Previous [reports by ecoAmerica](#), including [Mental Health and Our Changing Climate](#), outline the health, economic, and psychological outcomes of climate change, that often disproportionately impact Latinos and African Americans. The [NAACP](#) also found that one's race, more than class, is the primary indicator of vulnerability to environmentally-induced negative health outcomes.

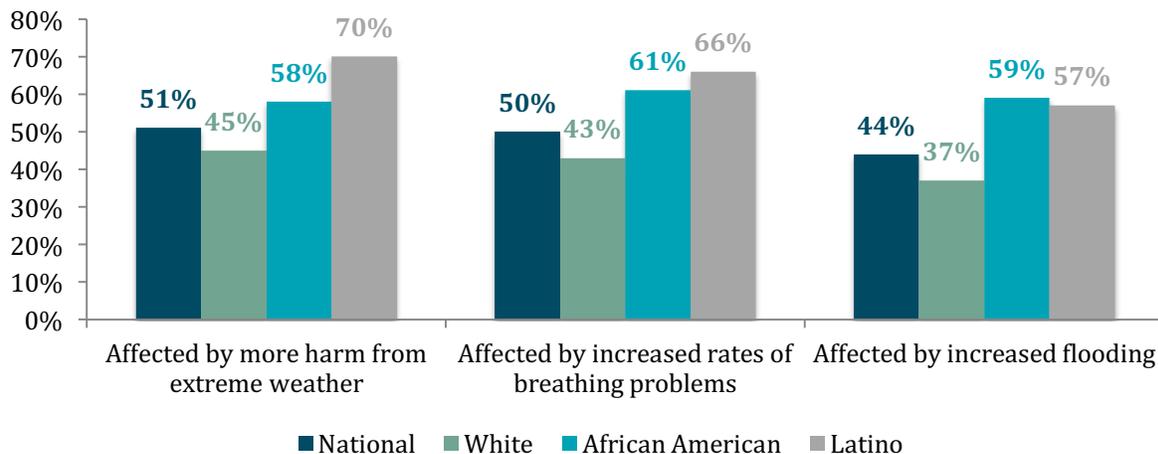
This may be why both Latinos and African Americans are noticing the climate preparedness and mitigation efforts of their communities more than others, and importantly, why they are more inclined to take action on climate, personally and politically. Latinos and African Americans are underrepresented yet necessary advocates in the movement toward solutions.

## Latinos and African Americans Report Higher Personal and Health Impacts from Climate Change

In the American Climate Perspectives April 2018 Survey, Latinos and African Americans reported a myriad of personal and health impacts, however, the highest differences from other constituencies involved damage and harm from extreme weather, in which 70% of Latinos and 58% of African Americans report being affected (vs. 51% nationally and 45% of White Americans), and increased breathing problems, in which 66% of Latinos and 61% of African Americans report being affected (vs. 50% nationally and 43% of White Americans).

**For each of the following issues, please indicate how much they are personally affecting you.**

802 respondent(s) total nationally, % total "A Lot / Some" by racial group



## Latinos and African Americans Lead in Climate Awareness and Concern

ecoAmerica and others have found increasing trends in climate awareness and concern across America over the past few years. Now, 94% of Latinos and 89% of African Americans understand that climate change is happening (vs. 80% nationally and 75% of white Americans). Concern has increased among African Americans, who report a 9-point rise in concern since 2015, and Latinos, who report a 5-point increase over the same period (up to 91% and 90%, respectively).

### Do you think climate change is happening or not? And, when it comes to climate change, which of the following is closer to your opinion? How personally concerned are you about climate change?

802 respondent(s) total nationally, % "agree" by racial group

	<u>National</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>African American</u>	<u>Latino</u>
Climate change is happening	80%	75%	89%	94%
Climate change is caused by human activity	27%	25%	32%	31%
Climate change is due to a combination of both human and natural causes	49%	49%	48%	52%
I am concerned about climate change	76%	69%	91%	90%

## African Americans and Latinos Most Likely to be Climate Voters, and African Americans Have the Highest Climate Behaviors

Across a promising spectrum of climate behaviors, from personal to civic, Latinos, and especially African Americans, have the highest overall participation. They support many solutions that help prepare for and mitigate climate change.

### Voting and Public Policy Support

- 85% of African Americans and 81% of Latinos favor a proposal to pass laws for more efficient buildings and cars (vs. 77% nationally and 75% of White Americans).
- 84% of African Americans and 79% of Latinos favor a proposal to expand public transit like buses and trains (vs. 76% nationally and 74% of White Americans).
- 45% of African Americans and 41% of Latinos have contacted or voted for an elected official about the impacts of climate change (vs. 35% nationally and 32% of White Americans).

### Climate Friendly Behaviors

- Since 2015, African Americans report a 17-point rise in hearing about climate change from family and friends.
- 50% of African Americans have shifted toward public transport (vs. 31% nationally and 34% of Latinos); 25% of White Americans have done this.
- 39% of African Americans and 30% of Latinos have shifted toward hybrid cars (vs. 24% nationally); 18% of White Americans have done this.

## Communities' Climate Efforts Get More Notice and Support From Latinos and African Americans

City initiatives to address climate change are more visible to African Americans and Latinos with African Americans most aware. Since 2015, African Americans have had a 36-point increase in saying their city is preparing and a 22-point increase in saying their city is educating others. Across the board, White Americans notice community-based climate programs least often. Regardless of awareness, however, both Latinos and African Americans report significantly rising support for their city or town to prepare and set goals for climate change and mitigation, educate and talk to the public about it, and purchase clean energy.

- 54% of African Americans say their city is taking action to prepare (vs. 30% nationally and 35% of Latinos); 22% of White Americans say this.
- 43% of African Americans say their city is educating others in their city or town on climate change (vs. 24% nationally and 31% of Latinos); 18% of White Americans say this.
- African American and Latinos want their cities to have goals to reduce climate impacts, with 24 and 12-point increases since 2015 (46% and 44% in 2017, respectively).
- African Americans report a 20-point rise in support for their city purchasing clean energy since 2015 (40% in 2017).

### Percentage point difference from 2015 to 2017

<u>Statement</u>	<u>African American</u>	<u>Latino</u>
Yes, my town or city is taking actions to prepare	+31 points	+11 points
Yes, I want my town or city to have goals to reduce climate impacts	+24 points	+12 points
My city or town is talking to the public	+19 points	+10 points
My city or town is educating others	+22 points	+10 points

These findings illustrate that Latinos and African Americans are ready, and required, to be engaged on climate. It is important to note, however, that since 2015, African American support for more coal production has risen 18-points, from 28% up to 46%. Advocacy organizations must be mindful of this increase in support for coal as we all work toward engaging a broad diversity of Americans to advance clean energy, clean vehicles, and other climate solutions.

## Methodology

ecoAmerica and Lake Research Partners (LRP) designed and LRP administered this survey, which was conducted online September 25–27, 2017. The survey yielded a total of 802 adult responses. The sample was drawn from an online panel and the respondents were screened to ensure that they were over the age of 18. The national sample was weighted slightly by gender, region, age, and race.

The margin of error for the sample is +/-3.5%. In interpreting the survey results, it is important to note that all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from the results that would be obtained if the entire population was interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of the responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of the respondents in a sample of 802 respondents answered, “Yes” to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within 3.5 points, or range from 46.5% to 53.5%.

## Special Thanks

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## Suggested Citation

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