



## Climate Note · Jul 12, 2016

### Global Warming's Six Americas and the Election, 2016

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Filed under: [Audiences](#), [Policy & Politics](#) and [Behaviors & Actions](#)

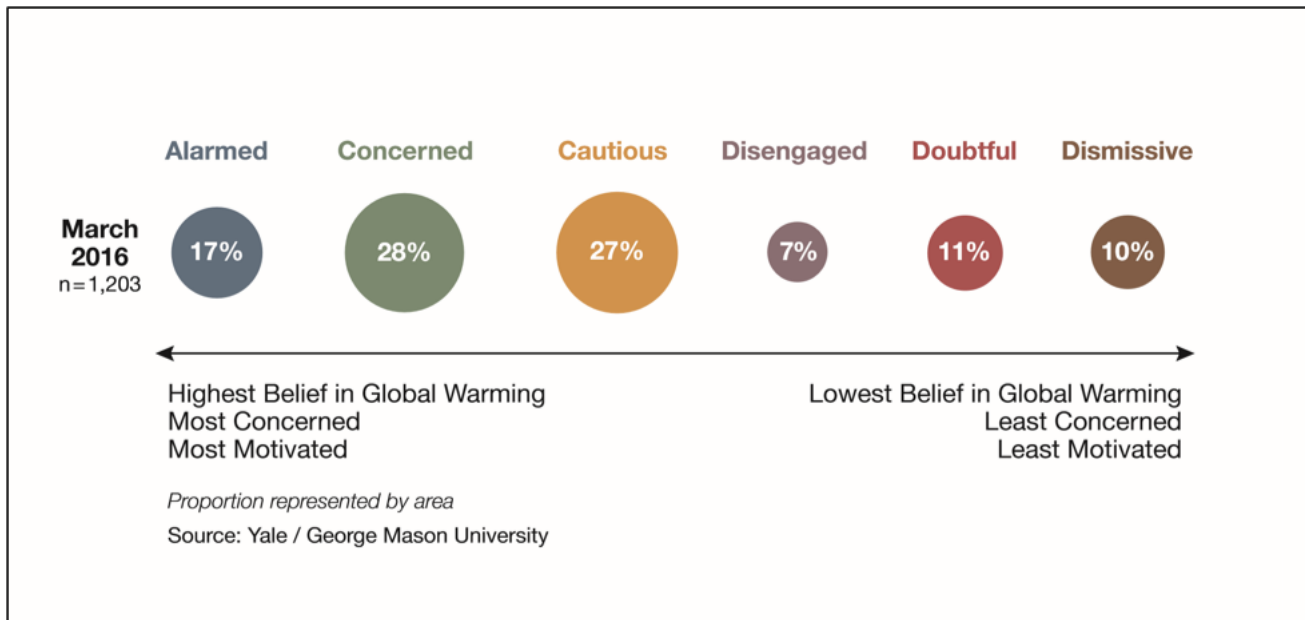
#### Summary

Americans hold diverse views on global warming, falling into six distinct groups – Global Warming's Six Americas – that range in their beliefs, attitudes, policy preferences and behavior. Climate change is a top-tier issue in the 2016 presidential election only for Americans who are in the most engaged of the six groups – the Alarmed (a group constituting 17% of the U.S. population and 19% of registered voters). However, presidential candidates who support taking action to reduce global warming are also more likely to earn the votes of a large majority of the Concerned (28% of the population and 29% of registered voters) and a substantial minority of the Cautious (27% of the population and 25% of registered voters). Conversely, candidates who oppose taking action on global warming are less likely to earn the votes of Americans in three of the six groups. Only the Dismissive (10% of the population and of registered voters) are more likely to vote for a candidate who opposes action on global warming.

#### Global Warming's Six Americas in March, 2016

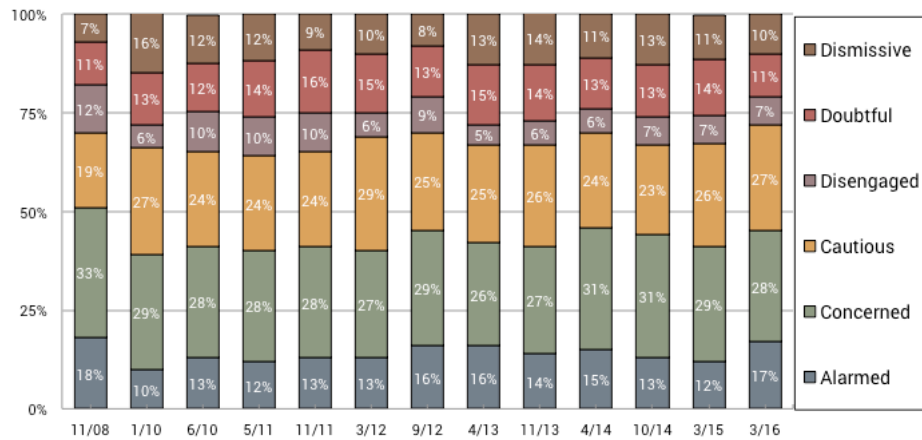
The most engaged group are the Alarmed, who are very worried about the issue and strongly support government and individual action to address it. At the opposite end of the spectrum are the Dismissive, who do not believe global warming is real and are likely to believe in various conspiracy theories about the issue (e.g., it's a scientific hoax, etc.).

In March of 2016, 45 percent of Americans belonged to the two most engaged segments, the Alarmed and Concerned. One in three (34%) belonged to the two middle segments, the Cautious and Disengaged; these groups have thought little about the issue and see it as having little personal relevance. The remaining 21 percent belonged to the two groups that are skeptical and tend to oppose climate action, the Doubtful and Dismissive.



The proportion of Americans in the Alarmed segment increased by five percentage points over the past year, and is now comparable to proportion found in the fall of 2008, when the segments were first identified and global warming concern was at a high point nationally.

## Six Americas Segments, 2008 - 2016



Base: Americans 18+.



### Voting Issue Priorities Among the Six Americas

As Americans decide which candidate to support in the upcoming presidential election, global warming, environmental protection and clean energy production are central to the decisions of some segments and largely irrelevant to others. More than 80 percent of the Alarmed say these issues will be very or extremely important in their voting decisions. Among the Concerned, half (53%) consider environmental protection to be very or extremely important, and more than 40 percent consider clean energy and global warming the same. Among the remaining segments, however, global warming is the least important issue of the 23 assessed, and only a third or fewer say environmental protection and developing clean energy will be very or extremely important in their vote.

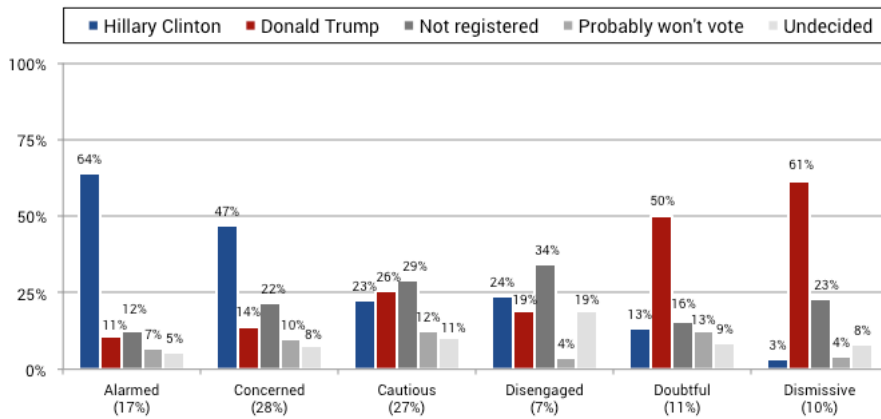
How important will the following issues be when you decide <u>who</u> you will vote for in the 2016 Presidential election?						
Rank	Alarmed (17%)	Concerned (28%)	Cautious (27%)	Disengaged (7%)	Doubtful (11%)	Dismissive (10%)
1	Protecting environment (84%)	The economy (74%)	The economy (63%)	The economy (53%)	The economy (66%)	Terrorism (71%)
2	Global warming (83%)	Health care (67%)	Terrorism (59%)	Social Security (49%)	Terrorism (59%)	The economy (67%)
3	Developing clean energy (82%)	Terrorism (65%)	Social Security (57%)	Health care (48%)	Federal budget deficit (53%)	Gun control/rights (60%)
4	Health care (76%)	Education (60%)	Health care (55%)	Education (46%)	Tax reform (50%)	Federal budget deficit (56%)
5	The economy (76%)	Social Security (59%)	Federal budget deficit (52%)	Gun control/rights (43%)	Supreme Court nominations (46%)	Supreme Court nominations (55%)
6	Education (75%)	Income gap (55%)	Education (48%)	Federal budget deficit (42%)	Social Security (45%)	Immigration reform (51%)
7	Income gap (74%)	Protecting environment (53%)	Tax reform (40%)	Terrorism (42%)	Health care (43%)	Tax reform (48%)
8	Energy independence (68%)	Federal budget deficit (51%)	Immigration reform (40%)	Tax reform (38%)	Immigration reform (41%)	Foreign policy (44%)
9	Terrorism (63%)	Infrastructure (51%)	Infrastructure (37%)	Infrastructure (35%)	Foreign policy (38%)	Abortion (43%)
10	Social Security (62%)	Gun control/rights (47%)	Gun control/rights (35%)	Protecting environment (35%)	Gun control/rights (34%)	Health care (40%)
11	Infrastructure (59%)	Foreign policy (45%)	Foreign policy (32%)	Income gap (35%)	Education (30%)	Education (35%)
12	Gun control/rights (56%)	Developing clean energy (45%)	Income gap (31%)	Immigration reform (35%)	Infrastructure (28%)	Social Security (33%)
13	Race relations (55%)	Race relations (43%)	Energy independence (30%)	Energy independence (31%)	Energy independence (23%)	Same-sex marriage (29%)
14	Campaign finance reform (54%)	Global warming (42%)	Supreme Court nominations (27%)	Abortion (29%)	Abortion (21%)	Energy independence (26%)
15	Federal budget deficit (54%)	Energy independence (41%)	Developing clean energy (26%)	Developing clean energy (28%)	Income gap (20%)	International trade (25%)
16	Reforming Wall St. (51%)	Tax reform (40%)	Race relations (26%)	Supreme Court nominations (28%)	International trade (20%)	Campaign finance reform (17%)
17	Foreign policy (49%)	Immigration reform (40%)	International trade (26%)	Race relations (25%)	Campaign finance reform (18%)	Reforming Wall St. (16%)
18	Tax reform (49%)	Supreme Court nominations (35%)	Abortion (26%)	Reforming Wall St. (23%)	Same-sex marriage (18%)	Infrastructure (12%)
19	Immigration reform (50%)	Abortion (33%)	Protecting environment (24%)	Foreign policy (23%)	Protecting environment (17%)	Race relations (9%)
20	Supreme Court nominations (45%)	Reforming Wall St. (31%)	Same-sex marriage (21%)	International trade (22%)	Reforming Wall St. (16%)	Income gap (9%)
21	Abortion (36%)	Campaign finance reform (27%)	Campaign finance reform (20%)	Campaign finance reform (20%)	Race relations (12%)	Developing clean energy (6%)
22	International trade (35%)	Same-sex marriage (25%)	Reforming Wall St. (19%)	Same-sex marriage (18%)	Developing clean energy (10%)	Protecting environment (4%)
23	Same-sex marriage (30%)	International trade (24%)	Global warming (14%)	Global warming (18%)	Global warming (6%)	Global warming (2%)



### Presidential Voting Preferences

Vote preferences are strongly linked to Six Americas segment; two out of three Alarmed (64%) say they plan to vote for Hillary Clinton, and three out of five Dismissive (61%) prefer Donald Trump. Close to half of the Concerned prefer Clinton, and half of the Doubtful prefer Trump. The Cautious and Disengaged are more divided in their vote preferences, and a plurality of both segments say they are not registered voters.

## Presidential Vote Preference By Six Americas Segment



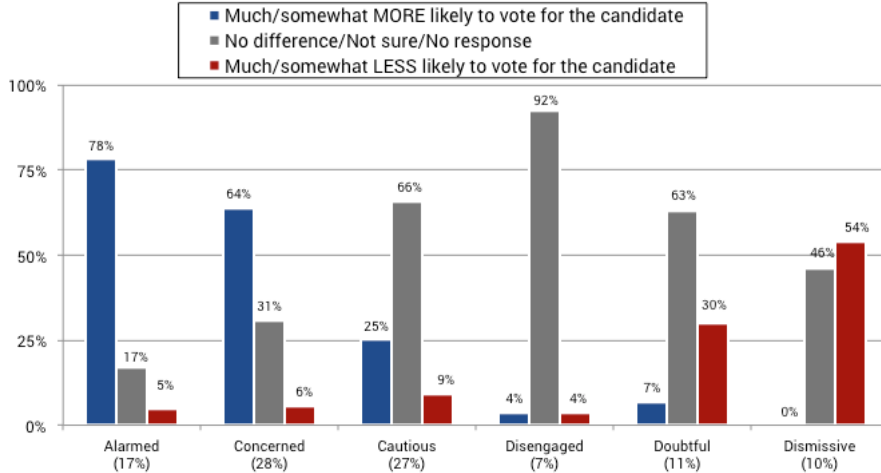
If the November 2016 presidential election were held today, and the candidates were Hillary Clinton (Democrat) and Donald Trump (Republican), who would you vote for? [Order of candidate names randomized]

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,204). March, 2016.



More than three-quarters of the Alarmed and close to two-thirds of the Concerned say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who strongly supports taking action to reduce global warming. Majorities of the Cautious, Disengaged and Doubtful say it would make no difference to their vote or they're not sure whether it would make a difference. Only among the Dismissive do a majority (54%) say that a candidate's support for action to reduce global warming would make them less likely to vote for the candidate.

## Vote For a Presidential Candidate Who Supports Action to Reduce Global Warming By Six Americas Segment



If a candidate for U.S. president strongly supports taking action to reduce global warming, would you be more or less likely to do each of the following, or would it make no difference? [Vote for the candidate].

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,204). March, 2016.



Large majorities of the Alarmed and Concerned say they would be less likely to vote for a candidate who opposes action to reduce global warming. Majorities of the Cautious, Disengaged and Doubtful say it would make no difference to their vote or they're not sure whether it would make a difference. Even among the Dismissive – the segment most convinced that global warming is not real – half (51%) indicate that opposition to action would make no difference to their vote, while slightly less than half – 45 percent – say it would increase the likelihood that they would vote for the candidate.