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# U.S. Concern About Global Warming at Eight-Year High

AMERICANS WORRIED A GREAT DEAL/FAIR AMOUNT ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING

64%

GALLUP POLL, MAR 2-6

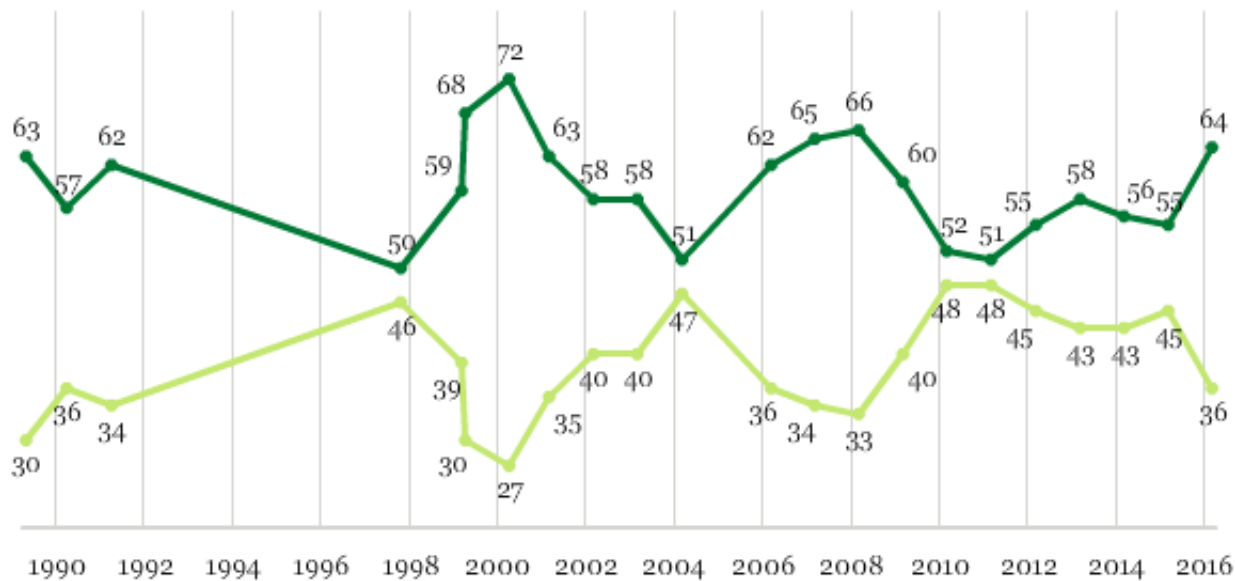
by Lydia Saad and Jeffrey M. Jones

PRINCETON, N.J. -- Americans are taking global warming more seriously than at any time in the past eight years, according to several measures in Gallup's annual environment poll. Most emblematic is the rise in their stated concern about the issue. Sixty-four percent of U.S. adults say they are worried a "great deal" or "fair amount" about global warming, up from 55% at this time last year and the highest reading since 2008.

## How Much Americans Worry About Global Warming

■ % Great deal/Fair amount

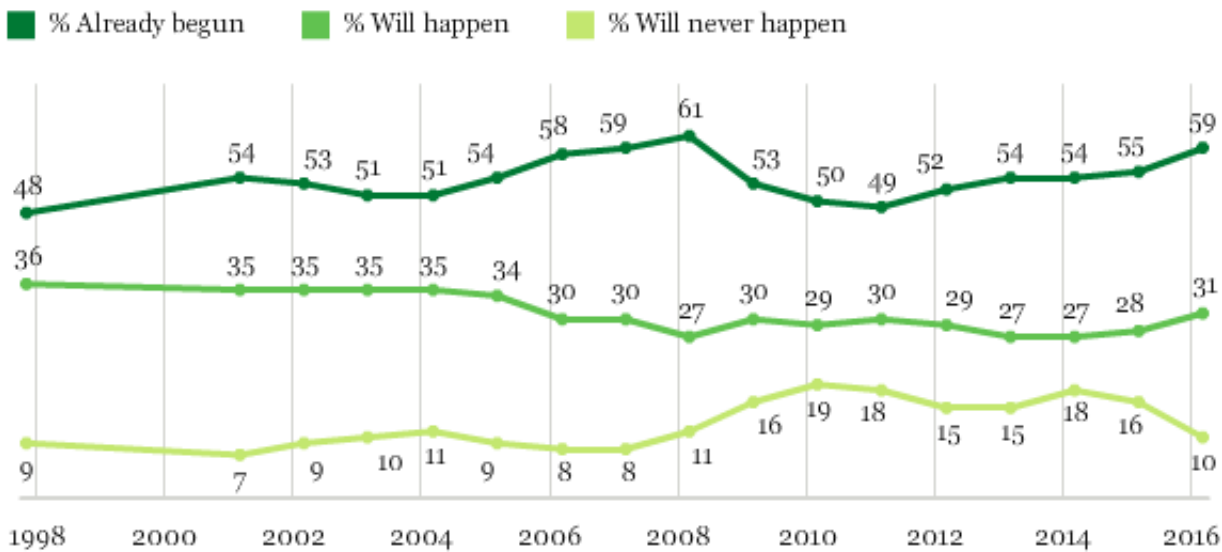
■ % Only a little/Not at all



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Mirroring this, the March 2-6 survey -- conducted at the close of what has reportedly been the warmest winter on record in the U.S. -- documents a slight increase in the percentage of Americans who believe the effects of global warming have already begun. Nearly six in 10 (59%) today say the effects have already begun, up from 55% in March 2015. Another 31%, up from 28% in 2015, believe the effects are not currently manifest but will be at some point in the future. That leaves only 10% saying the effects will never happen, down from 16% last year and the lowest since 2007.

### U.S. Views About When Effects of Global Warming Will Occur



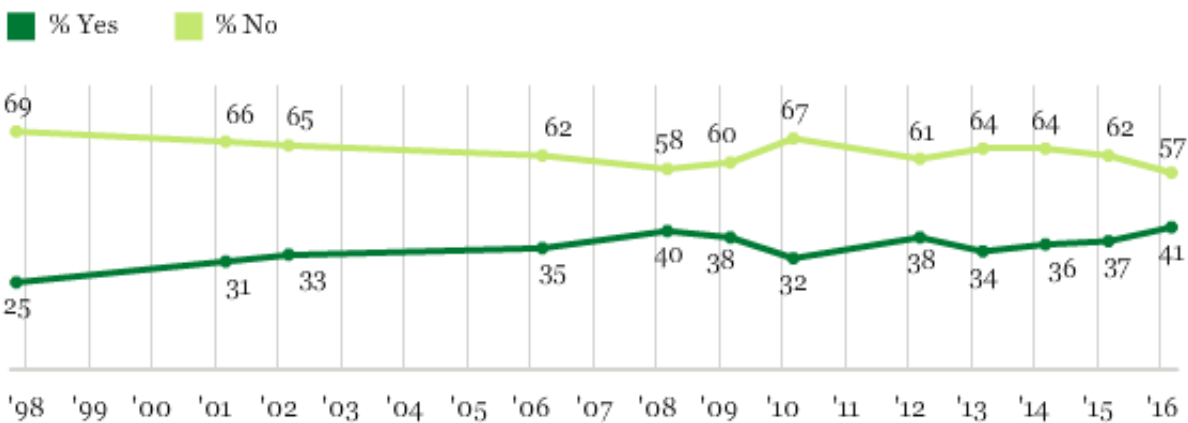
% "Will happen" includes those who think effects will happen in their lifetime, or not in their lifetime but in the future

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A third key indicator of public concern about global warming is the percentage of U.S. adults who believe the phenomenon will eventually pose a serious threat to them or their way of life. Forty-one percent now say it will, up from 37% in 2015 and, by one point, the highest in Gallup's trend dating back to 1997.

### Americans' Perception of Global Warming as a Serious Threat

Do you think that global warming will pose a serious threat to you or your way of life in your lifetime?



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Americans' clear shift toward belief in global warming follows a winter that most described in the same poll as being **unusually warm**. Sixty-three percent say they experienced an unusually warm winter, and the majority of this group ascribes the warm weather pattern to human-

caused climate change.

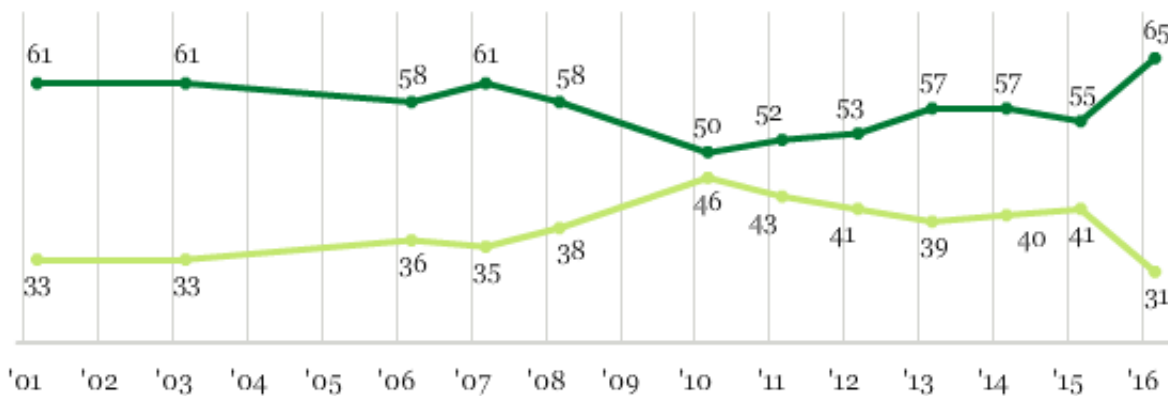
## Record 65% Blame Human Activity for Rising Temperatures

That finding relates to another record broken in the new poll -- the 65% of Americans now saying increases in the Earth's temperature over the last century are primarily attributable to human activities rather than natural causes. This represents a striking 10-percentage-point increase in the past year and is four points above the previous high of 61% in 2007.

### *Perceived Cause of Global Warming*

And from what you have heard or read, do you believe increases in the Earth's temperature over the last century are due more to -- [the effects of pollution from human activities (or) natural changes in the environment that are not due to human activities]?

■ % Human activities    ■ % Natural causes



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## All Party Groups Show Increased Concern

Concern about global warming has increased among all party groups since 2015, although it remains much higher among Democrats than Republicans and independents. For example, 40% of Republicans say they worry a great deal or fair amount about global warming, up from 31% last year. The percentage of independents expressing concern has also increased nine points, from 55% to 64%. Democrats' concern is up slightly less, from 78% to 84%.

Democrats and independents also show double-digit increases in the percentages attributing warmer temperatures to human activities. Republicans show a more modest uptick of four points on this question.

Changes in Attitudes About Global Warming, 2015-2016, by Political Party

## Identification

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
	%	%	(pct. pts.)
<b>Worried a great deal/fair amount about global warming</b>			
Republicans	31	40	+9
Independents	55	64	+9
Democrats	78	84	+6
<b>Effects of global warming already begun</b>			
Republicans	36	40	+4
Independents	55	55	0
Democrats	72	77	+5
<b>Will pose serious threat to you in your lifetime</b>			
Republicans	18	20	+2
Independents	37	43	+6
Democrats	53	58	+5
<b>Increased temperatures due to human activities</b>			
Republicans	34	38	+4
Independents	56	68	+12
Democrats	74	85	+11

GALLUP ENVIRONMENT POLL

## Bottom Line

A confluence of factors -- the economic downturn, the Climategate controversy and some well-publicized pushback against global warming science -- may have dampened public concern about global warming from about 2009 to 2015. However, Americans are now expressing record- or near-record-high belief that global warming is happening, as well as concern about the issue. Several years of unseasonably warm weather -- including the **2011-2012, 2012-2013** and 2015-2016 winters -- has potentially contributed to this shift in attitudes. If that's true, continuation of such weather patterns would likely do more than anything politicians and even climate-change scientists can to further raise public concern.

*Historical data are available in [Gallup Analytics](#).*

## Survey Methods

Results for this Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted March 2-6, 2016, with a random sample of 1,019 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. For results based on the total sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 4$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting.

Each sample of national adults includes a minimum quota of 60% cellphone respondents and 40% landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas by time zone within region. Landline and cellular telephone numbers are selected using random-digit-dial methods.

[View survey methodology, complete question responses and trends.](#)

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Real Unemployment	Department of Labor (U-6)	9.7%	-0.2
Gallup Good Jobs	Percent of Adult Population	44.3%	+0.2
Engaged at Work		34.9%	-1.1
Economic Confidence		-7	-
Consumer Spending		\$106	+7
Obama Approval		50%	-2

Updates daily at 1 p.m.ET; reflects one-day change.

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by Jeffrey M. Jones

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The U.S.-Global Leadership Report: What people worldwide think of U.S. leadership

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by Frank Newport

March 16, 2016

Gallup <http://www.gallup.com/poll/190010/concern-global-warming-eight-year-high.aspx>

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Americans overwhelmingly agree with proposals to allow veterans to get healthcare at non-Veterans Affairs facilities, and to spend more federal money on the VA in general. Americans also widely agree with spending more federal money on infrastructure.

POLITICS 5 HOURS AGO

### **U.S.** Support for Garland Average for Supreme Court Nominees

Fifty-two percent of Americans favor and 29% oppose Senate confirmation of U.S. Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland. Support for Garland is similar to the 51% average for high court nominees since 1991.

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### Slim Majority of Retired **U.S. Investors** Hopeful About 2016

Fewer retired U.S. investors today than in 2015 are optimistic that they can maintain their

income or reach short-term investment targets over the next year. They remain optimistic about reaching their five-year investment goals.

POLITICS MAR 18, 2016

## For First Time, Majority **in U.S.** Oppose Nuclear Energy

For the first time since Gallup began asking the question in 1994, a majority of Americans now oppose the use of nuclear energy. Forty-four percent are in favor, down significantly from 51% last year.

ELECTION 2016 MAR 17, 2016

## **Americans** React to Presidential Candidates' Tax Proposals

When asked to react to six presidential candidate tax proposals, Americans are most likely to favor eliminating loopholes for the rich. They are least likely to support cutting everyone's taxes and implementing a flat tax of 10%.

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## **Americans'** Concerns About Water Pollution Edge Up

Americans' worries about polluted drinking water ticked upward in 2016, along with concerns about several other environmental problems. About six in 10 now express a great deal of concern about the pollution of drinking water.

POLITICS MAR 16, 2016

## **U.S.** Concern About Global Warming at Eight-Year High

Americans are taking global warming more seriously today than at any time in the past eight years, according to Gallup's annual environment poll. Along with increased concern, a record percentage blame human activity for the warming.

## Most **U.S. Investors** Still Want a Human Advising Them

U.S. investors are no more inclined now than a year ago to favor digital financial advice over traditional resources. About half still prefer relying on a personal financial adviser; 24% favor digital tools and 18% on-call advice.

POLITICS MAR 15, 2016

## In U.S., Percentage Predicting Energy Shortage at New Low

A new low of 31% of Americans believe the U.S. will face a critical energy shortage in the next five years. The prior low in Gallup's trend was 45% recorded in 1978 and again in 2010.

ECONOMY MAR 15, 2016

## **U.S.** Economic Confidence Index Steady at -10

Economic confidence in the U.S. remains where it has been in recent weeks, with Gallup's Economic Confidence Index registering -10 for the week ending March 13.

POLITICS MAR 14, 2016

## More **Americans** View Obama Positively on Key Issues

More Americans say President Barack Obama is doing a good job of making America prosperous (45%) and improving the nation's energy policy (48%) than at most points in his presidency. Fifty-four percent say he is doing well on the environment.

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## **Americans** Attribute Warm Winter Weather to Climate Change

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# Economic Confidence Index in U.S. Steady at -11

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