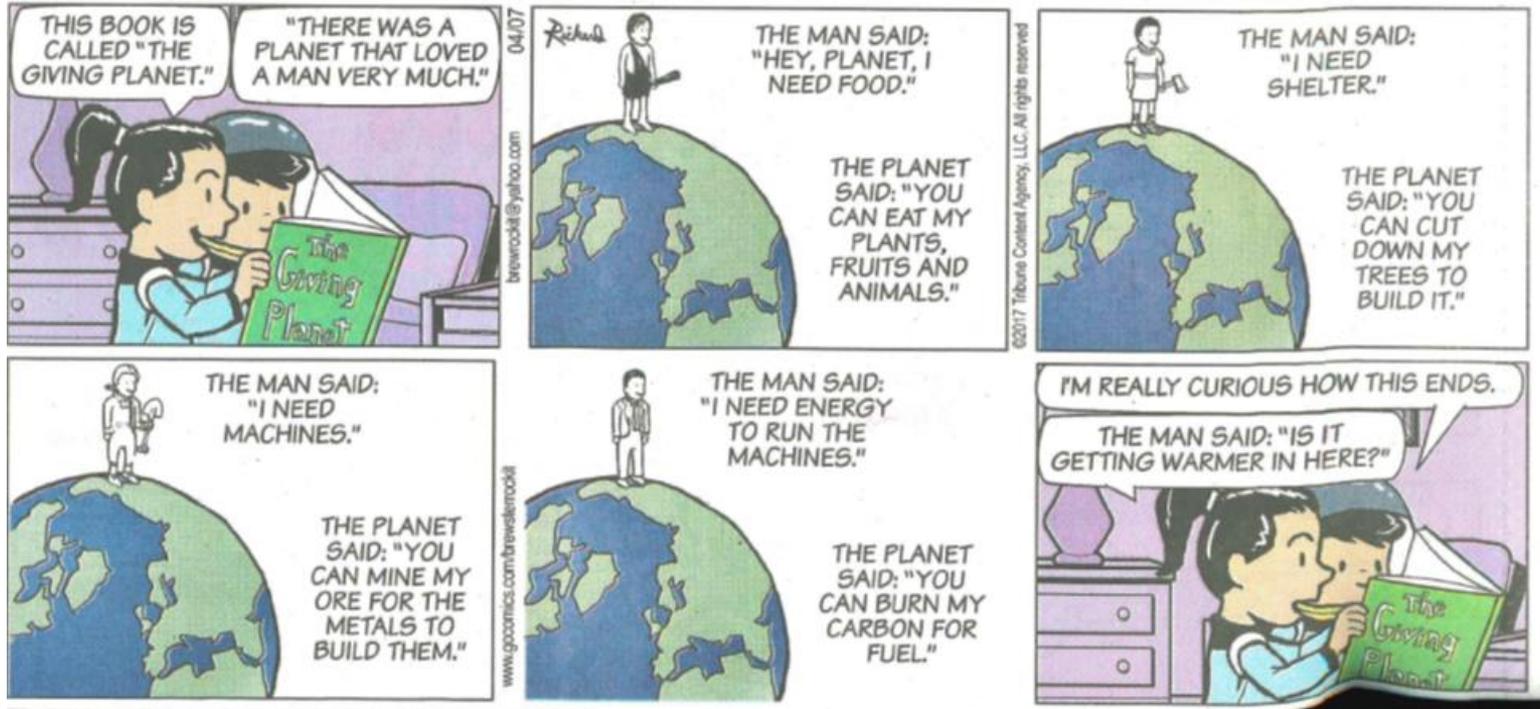


# Engaging the Church on Climate Solutions

SLT, January 2022



*"Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?" (Ezekiel 34:18)*

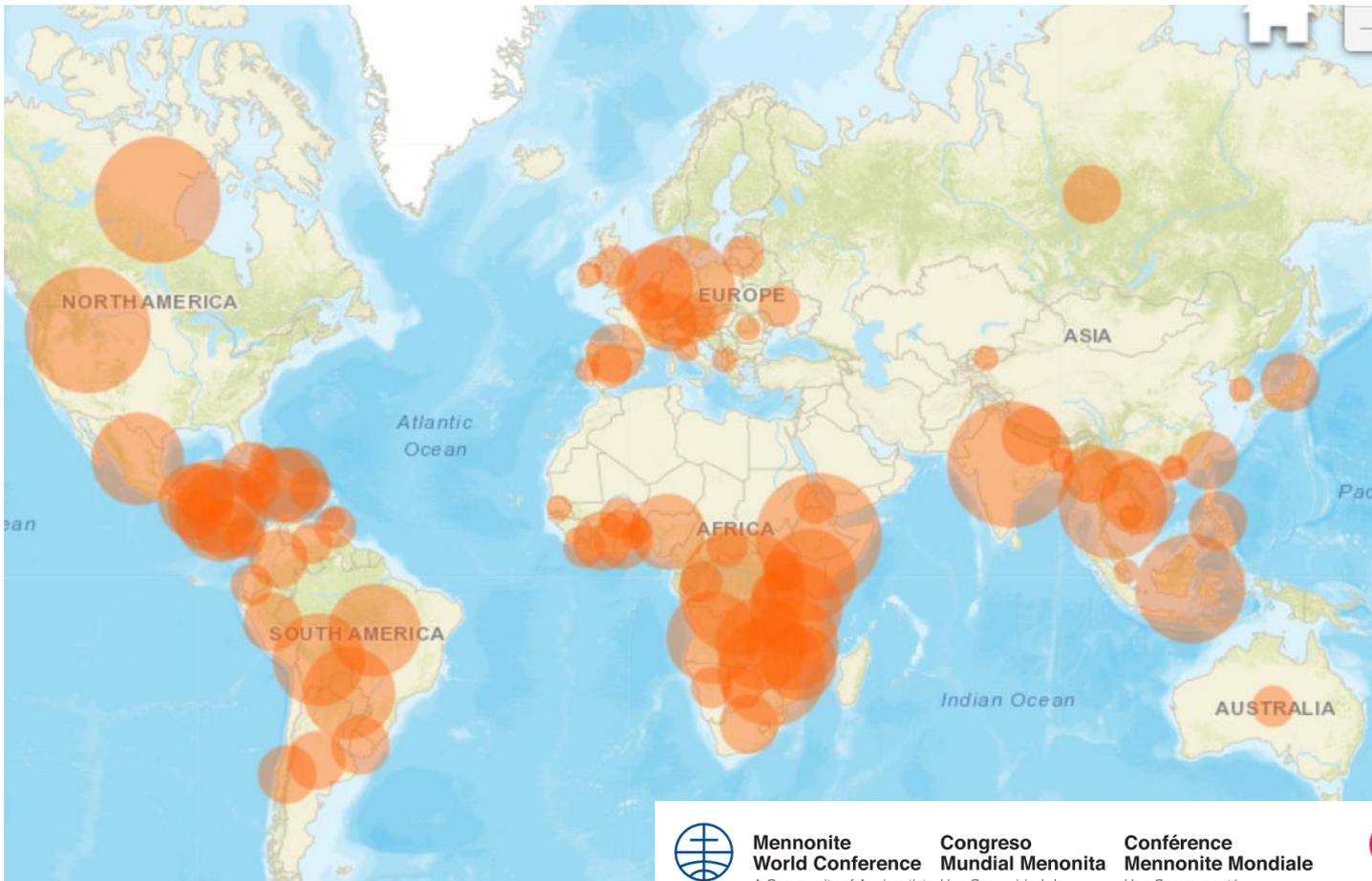


“Malawi’s agriculturally-based economy is particularly susceptible to climate change’s negative consequences. Already, temperature increases and changing precipitation patterns are harming agricultural growth.

MB Malawi works to develop a strategy for combatting deforestation and for improving forest governance. Complementary site-based interventions have been initiated to address drivers of climate change, while also helping to generate livelihood opportunities for vulnerable households.”

*Malawian Mennonite church leader*





**Mennonite  
World Conference**  
A Community of Anabaptist  
related Churches

**Congreso  
Mundial Menonita**  
Una Comunidad de  
Iglesias Anabautistas

**Conférence  
Mennonite Mondiale**  
Une Communauté  
d'Églises Anabaptistes



**Creation  
Care  
Task  
Force**



**CENTER FOR  
Sustainable  
Climate Solutions**



<i><b>Do you think your church would be interested in learning more about creation care and how to respond as individuals and as a church? (colors correspond to general thematic area)</b></i>	<i><b>Percent expressing interest</b></i>
Reducing our environmental impact as a church	75%
Biblical basis for creation care	71%
Impacts and response to climate change	65%
Integrating creation care in church worship and ministries	64%
Simple lifestyle / living in a way that cares for the planet	59%







It is happening

It is us

It is bad

We care about it

And we can do something about it





# Global Risks

## Top Risks

by likelihood

- 1 Extreme weather
- 2 Climate action failure
- 3 Human environmental damage
- 4 Infectious diseases
- 5 Biodiversity loss

## Top Risks

by impact

- 1 Infectious diseases
- 2 Climate action failure
- 3 Weapons of mass destruction
- 4 Biodiversity loss
- 5 Natural resource crises

It is happening

It is us

It is bad

We care about it

And we can do something about it



# HOW MUCH DO WE CARE? AND HOW MUCH ARE WE RESPONDING?

<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/sassy/>



**A**larmed



**C**oncerned



**C**autious



**D**isengaged

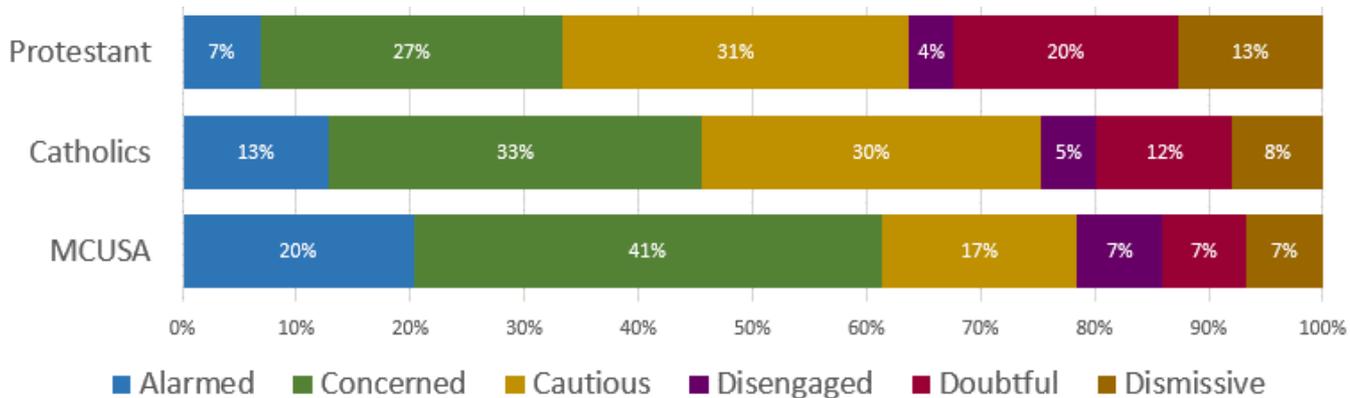
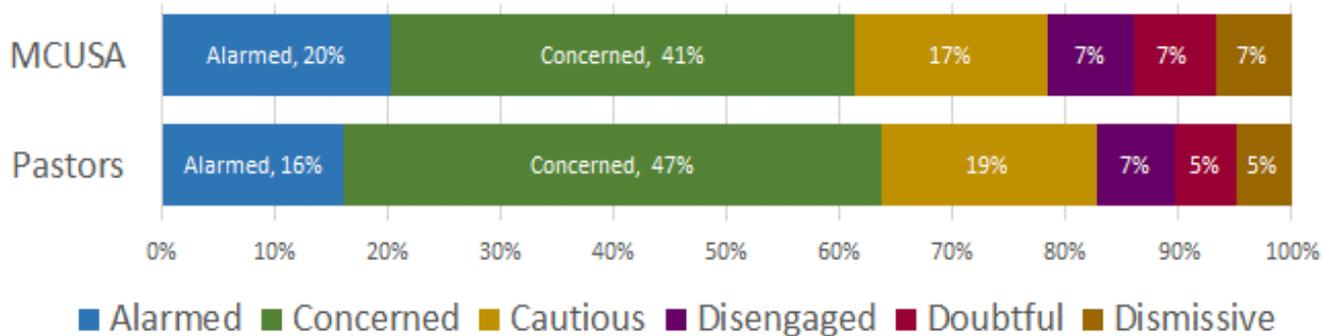


**D**oubtful



**D**ismissive





Sources: CSCS Baseline Survey, weighted;  
 Faith, Morality & the Environment - Yale Program on Climate Change Communic.

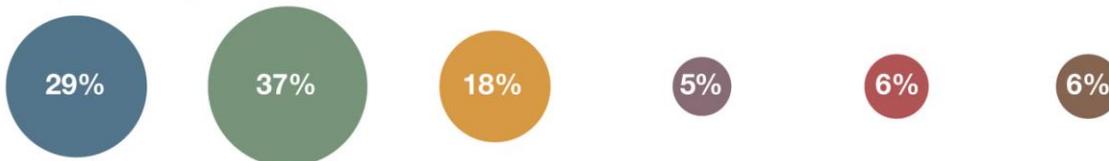
# May 2017

Alarmed Concerned Cautious Disengaged Doubtful Dismissive

Non-Latinos n=1,140



English-Language Latinos n=1,256



Spanish-Language Latinos n=798



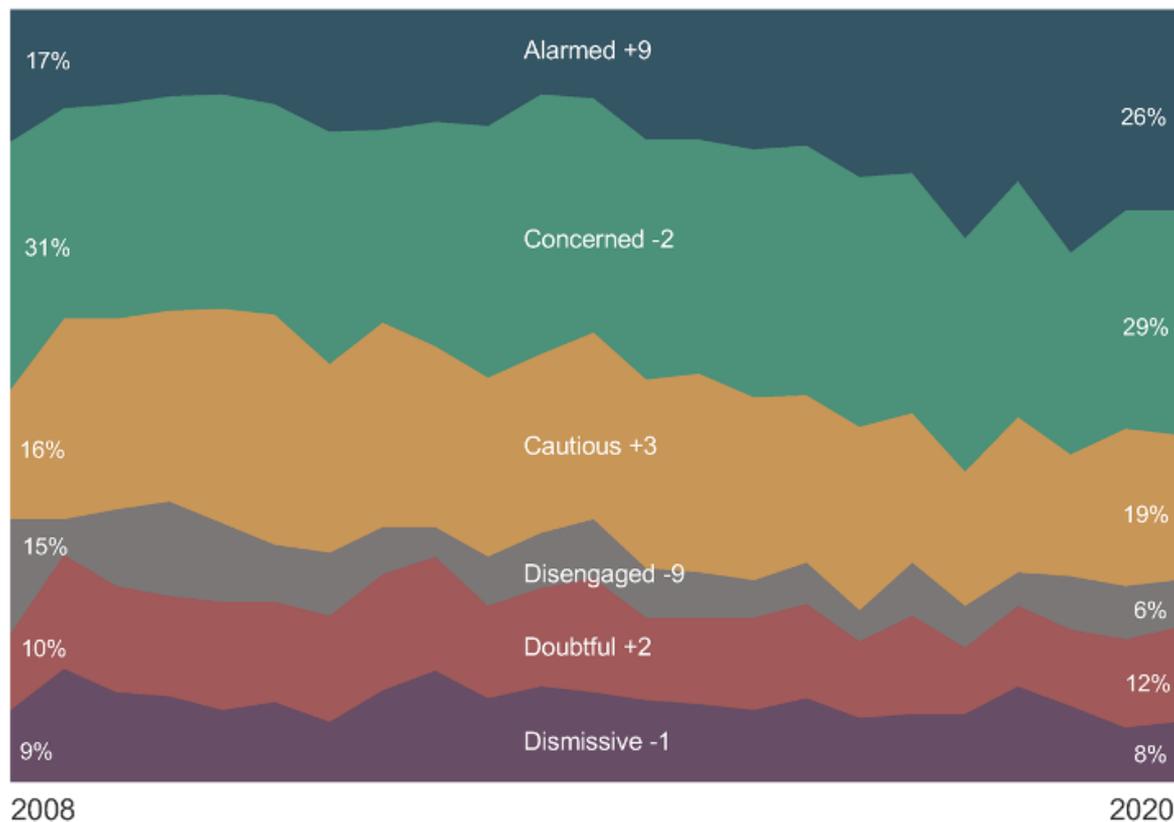
Alarmed Concerned Cautious Disengaged Doubtful Dismissive



Highest Belief in Global Warming  
Most Concerned  
Most Motivated

Lowest Belief in Global Warming  
Least Concerned  
Least Motivated

# Global Warming's Six Americas



Data from 23 waves of the *Climate Change in the American Mind* national survey.  
November 2008 – December 2020. (n = 27,075).

It is happening

It is us

It is bad

We care about it

And we can do something about it



What of these actions do you feel are most effective?  
Why?

# Some Lessons

The trend is towards increased alarm/concern

There aren't that many climate deniers, we're sort of past that

*...but they're vocal (and there's more in Congress)*

Who are the 'real' environmentalists? ("environmental belief paradox")

What do we think of as being most effective?



## Some Lessons

The trend is towards increased alarm/concern

There aren't that many climate deniers, we're sort of past that

*...but they're vocal (and there's more in Congress)*

Who are the 'real' environmentalists? ("environmental belief paradox")

What do we think of as being most effective?

## & Assumptions

Most people just want to know what they can do

Solutions have to be scalable; small changes aren't enough

Some things are better to do than other things; expertise matters

*But my caveat...I'm not saying these things are the final word on what to do!*



Technical/Policy  
Climate Communication  
Framing  
Civic Engagement



# SOLUTIONS: The Drawdown List

What does this tell us? What are the most impactful things society can (feasibly) do?

PROJECT DRAWDOWN

email sign up donate

THE WORLD'S LEADING RESOURCE FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS.

View the solutions

As we enter a new decade,  
please consider donating to Project Drawdown.

DONATE NOW

▲ SOLUTION	◆ SECTOR(S)	◆ SCENARIO 1*	◆ SCENARIO 2
Abandoned Farmland Restoration	Land Sinks	12.48	20.32
Alternative Cement	Industry	7.98	16.10
Alternative Refrigerants	Industry / Buildings	43.53	50.53
Bamboo Production	Land Sinks	8.27	21.33
Bicycle Infrastructure	Transportation	2.56	6.65
Biochar Production	Engineered Sinks	2.22	4.39
Biogas for Cooking	Buildings	4.65	9.70
Biomass Power	Electricity	2.52	3.57
Bioplastics	Industry	0.96	3.80
Building Automation Systems	Electricity / Buildings	6.47	10.48
Building Retrofitting	Electricity / Buildings		
Carpooling	Transportation	7.70	4.17
Coastal Wetland Protection	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Coastal and Ocean Sinks	0.99	1.45

	Solution	Sector(s)	Scenario 2 *
1			
2	<a href="#">Onshore Wind Turbines</a>	Electricity	147.72
3	<a href="#">Utility-Scale Solar Photovoltaics</a>	Electricity	119.13
4	<a href="#">Reduced Food Waste</a>	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Land Sinks	101.71
5	<a href="#">Plant-Rich Diets</a>	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Land Sinks	91.72
6	<a href="#">Health and Education</a>	Health and Education	85.42
7	<a href="#">Tropical Forest Restoration</a>	Land Sinks	85.14
8	<a href="#">Improved Clean Cookstoves</a>	Buildings	72.65
9	<a href="#">Distributed Solar Photovoltaics</a>	Electricity	68.64
10	<a href="#">Refrigerant Management</a>	Industry / Buildings	57.75
11	<a href="#">Alternative Refrigerants</a>	Industry / Buildings	50.53
12	<a href="#">Silvopasture</a>	Land Sinks	42.31
13	<a href="#">Peatland Protection and Rewetting</a>	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Land Sinks	41.93
14	<a href="#">Tree Plantations (on Degraded Land)</a>	Land Sinks	35.94
15	<a href="#">Perennial Staple Crops</a>	Land Sinks	31.26

*So what are the lessons here?*

42	<a href="#">Efficient Aviation</a>	Transportation	9.18
43	<a href="#">Forest Protection</a>	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Land Sinks	8.75
44	<a href="#">Smart Thermostats</a>	Electricity / Buildings	7.4
45	<a href="#">Perennial Biomass Production</a>	Land Sinks	7.04
46	<a href="#">Bicycle Infrastructure</a>	Transportation	6.65
47	<a href="#">Efficient Ocean Shipping</a>	Transportation	6.3
48	<a href="#">Methane Digesters</a>	Electricity / Industry	6.18
49	<a href="#">Recycling</a>	Industry	6.02
50	<a href="#">Walkable Cities</a>	Transportation	5.45
51	<a href="#">Hybrid Cars</a>	Transportation	4.63
52	<a href="#">Biochar Production</a>	Engineered Sinks	4.39
53	<a href="#">System of Rice Intensification</a>	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Land Sinks	4.26
54	<a href="#">Grassland Protection</a>	Food, Agriculture, and Land Use / Land Sinks	4.25
55	<a href="#">Carpooling</a>	Transportation	4.17
56	<a href="#">Electric Bicycles</a>	Transportation	4.07
57	<a href="#">Telepresence</a>	Transportation	3.8

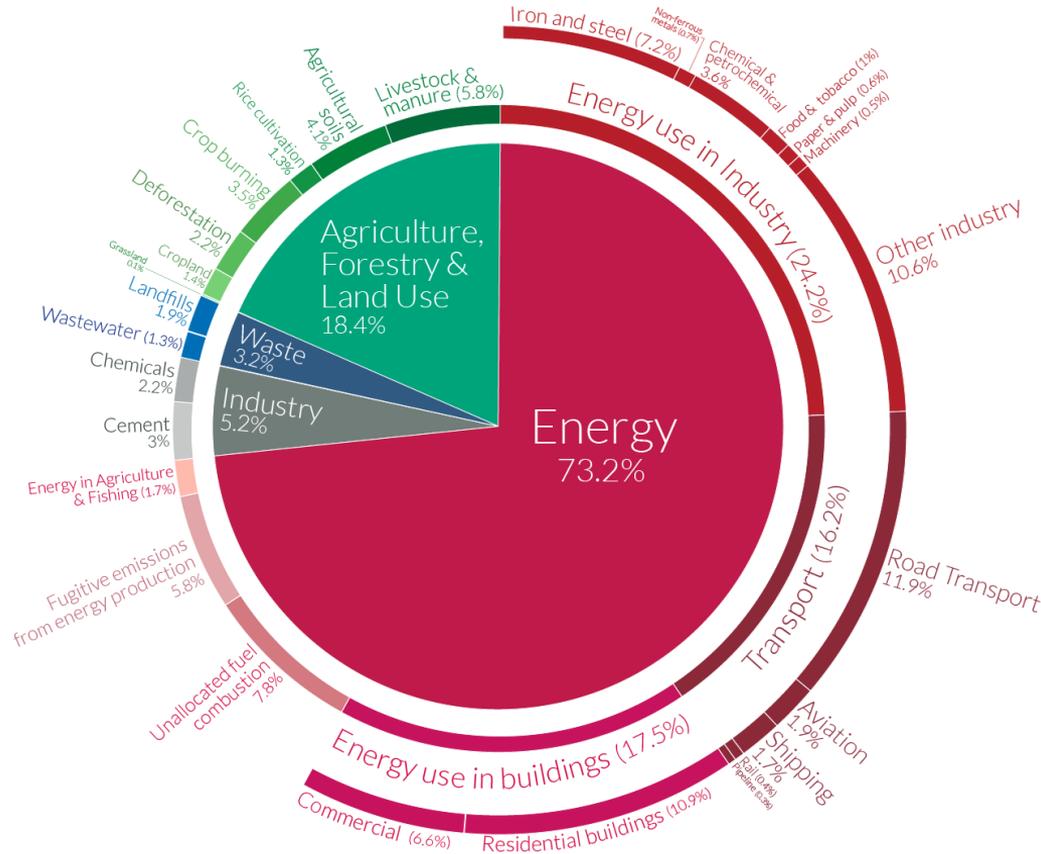
## **“There’s no one silver bullet that will fix it for us: but there is a lot of silver buckshot.**

And the very best type of buckshot are solutions that fix other things at the same time: like increasing clean energy use, which grows the local economy, reduces air pollution, and increases energy security; reducing food waste, which also tackles hunger; and my personal favorite, educating women and girls, which reduces infant mortality, increases economic security, and allows them the freedom to choose how many children they have.”

# Global greenhouse gas emissions by sector

This is shown for the year 2016 – global greenhouse gas emissions were 49.4 billion tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq.

Our World  
in Data



OurWorldinData.org – Research and data to make progress against the world's largest problems.

Source: Climate Watch, the World Resources Institute (2020).

Licensed under CC-BY by the author Hannah Ritchie (2020).

Reports

# The Sky's the Limit: Solar and wind energy potential is 100 times as much as global energy demand

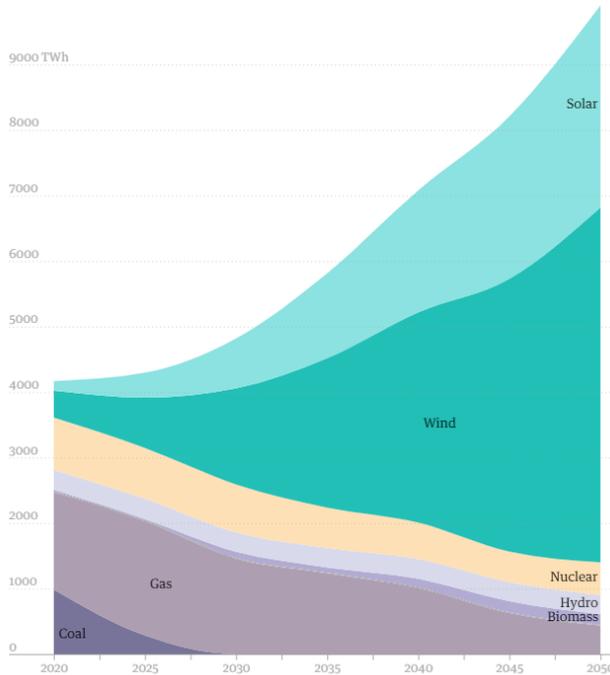
# So...electrification as a key step

“Essenti  
said Dav  
San Dieg  
electrific  
central r

**How sources of generated electricity would need to change in the next 30 years**

Projected change in energy sources based on a scenario where the US aggressively works to adopt electrification

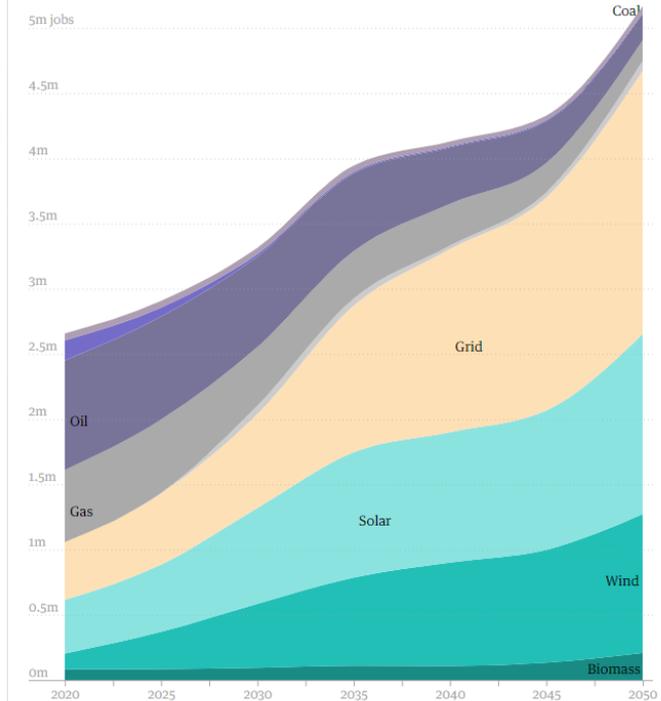
[https://www  
actually-t](https://www.actually-t)



**Projected jobs in the energy sector, by subsector**

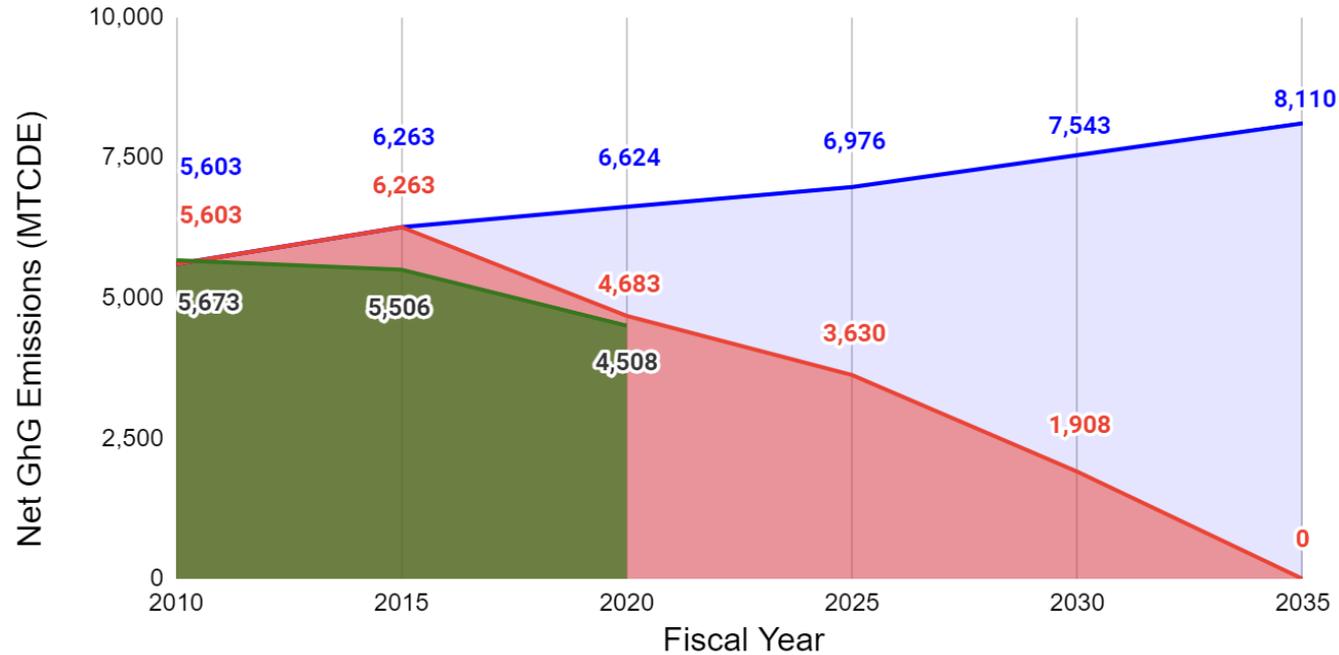
Projected jobs based on a scenario where the US aggressively works to adopt electrification

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: at th  
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en-want



Guardian graphic. Source: Princeton University's Net-Zero America report

# EMU GhG Emissions Trajectory

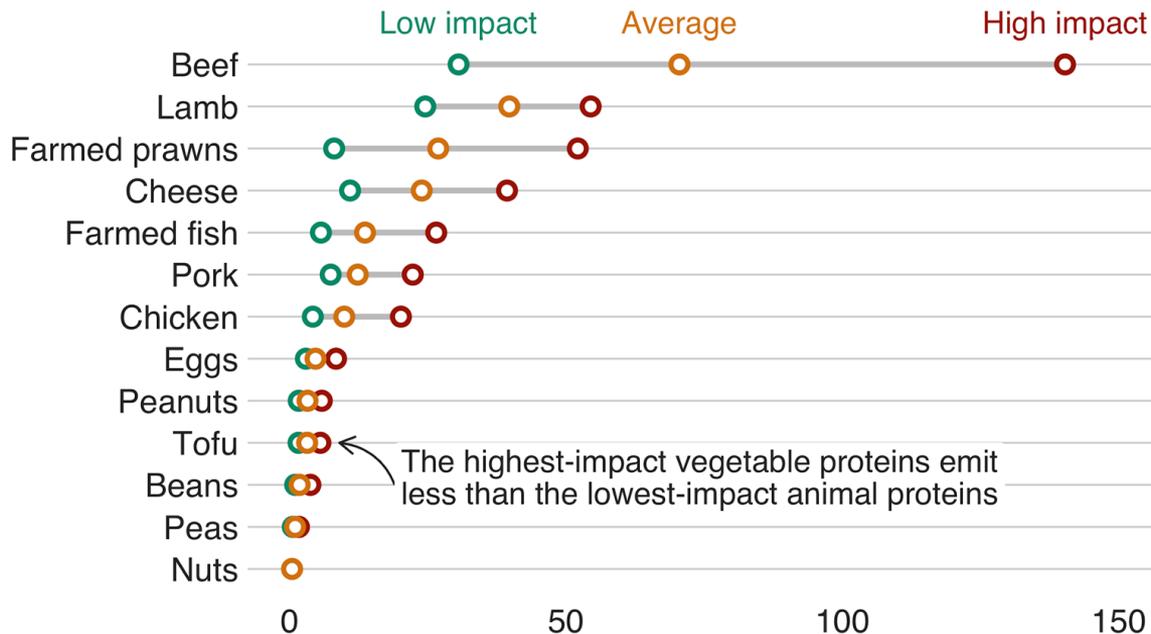


■ Business as usual emissions ■ Emissions with reductions and offsets in CAP ■ Actual emissions

The impact of diet changes give a range of emissions saving

## Beef has the biggest climate impact

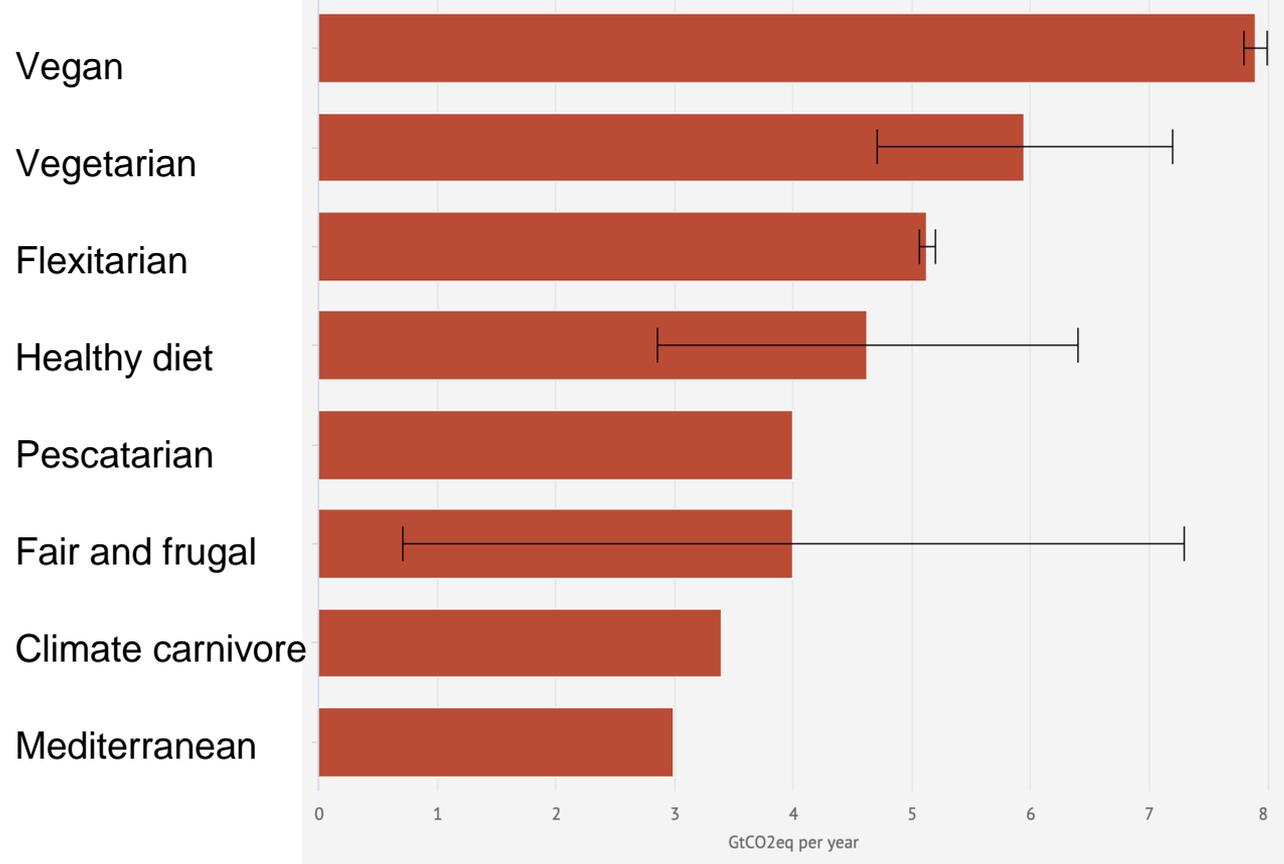
Greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram



Source: Poore & Nemecek (2018), Science

BBC

# The impact of diet changes give a range of emissions saving



## Some lessons:

We need silver buckshot (so don't get stuck on just one thing...)

Electrification is a key step

There are some underappreciated impacts (that might be low-hanging fruit)

Going part-way on some measures is helpful

## Questions it raises:

Does this just assume business-as-usual with consumption?

Does this ignore systemic approaches?

Does this ignore mindset changes?

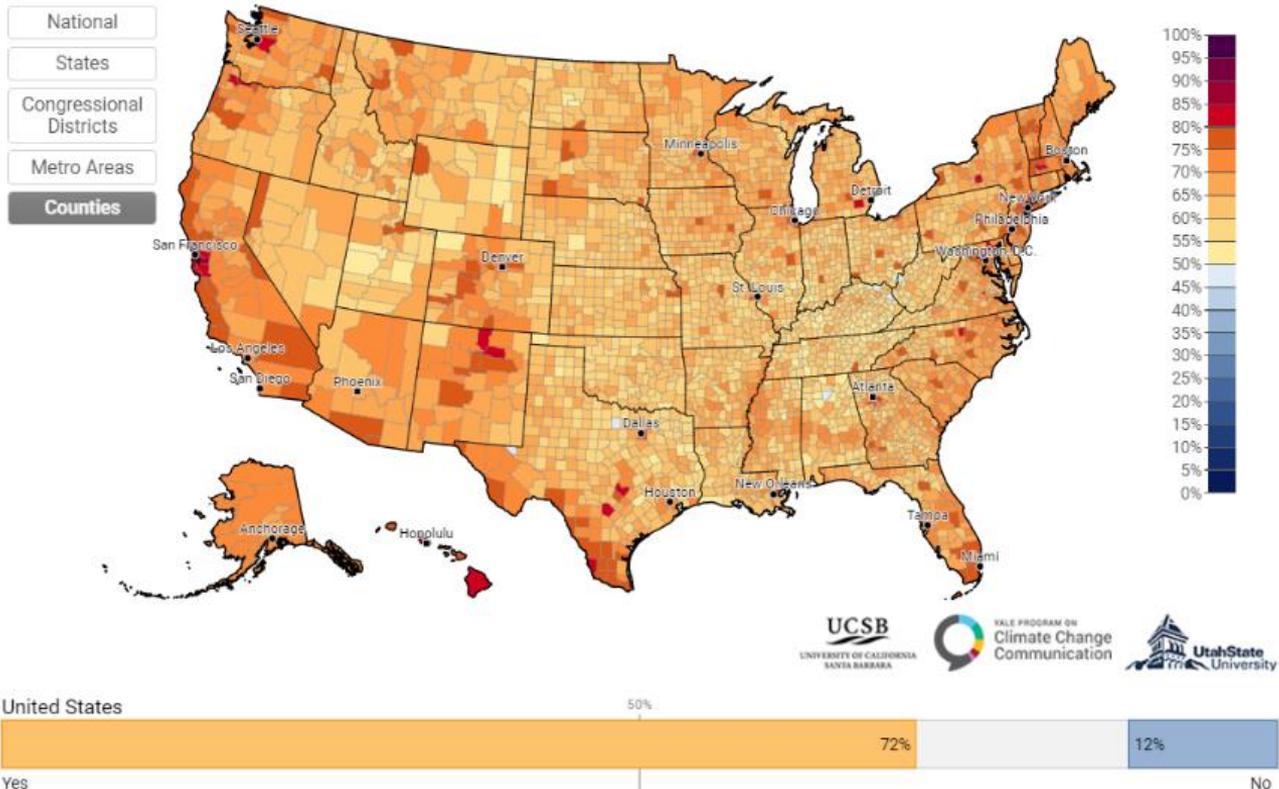
**"The problem with personal carbon reduction is that awareness doesn't lead to action; people know about it, but they don't change."**



# Estimated % of adults who think global warming is happening (72%), 2020

Select Question:  Absolute Value

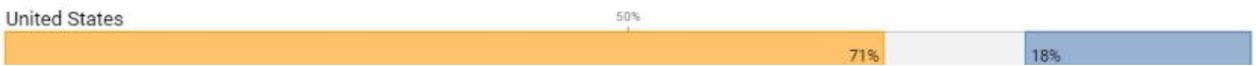
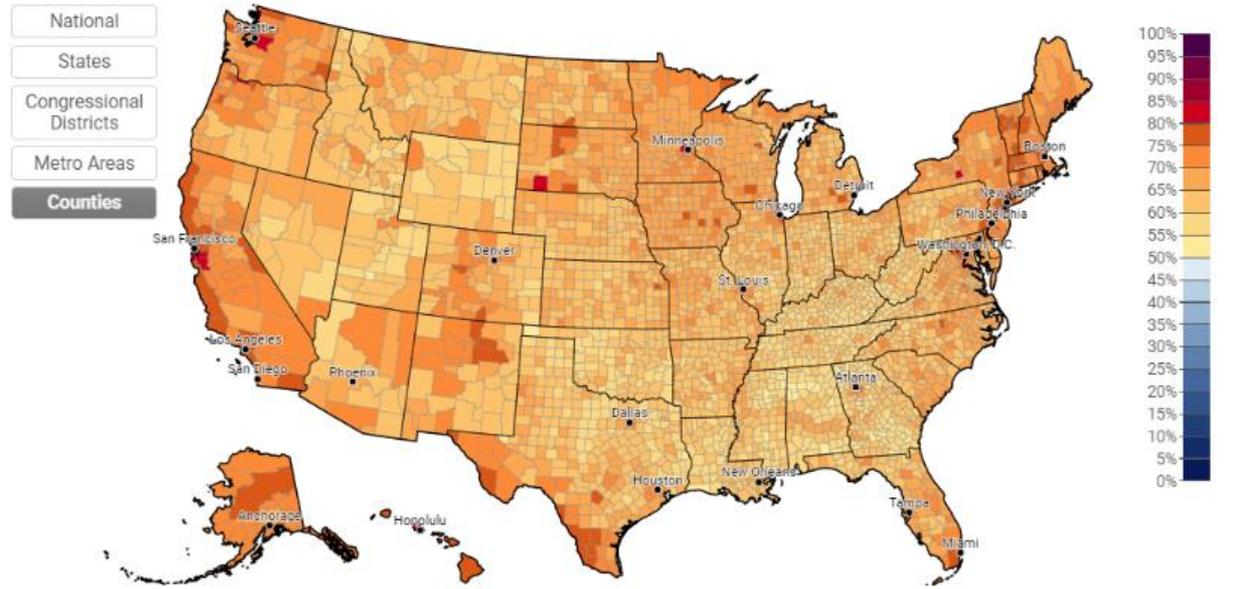
Click on map to select geography, or:



# Estimated % of adults who think global warming will harm future generations (71%), 2020

Select Question:  Absolute Value

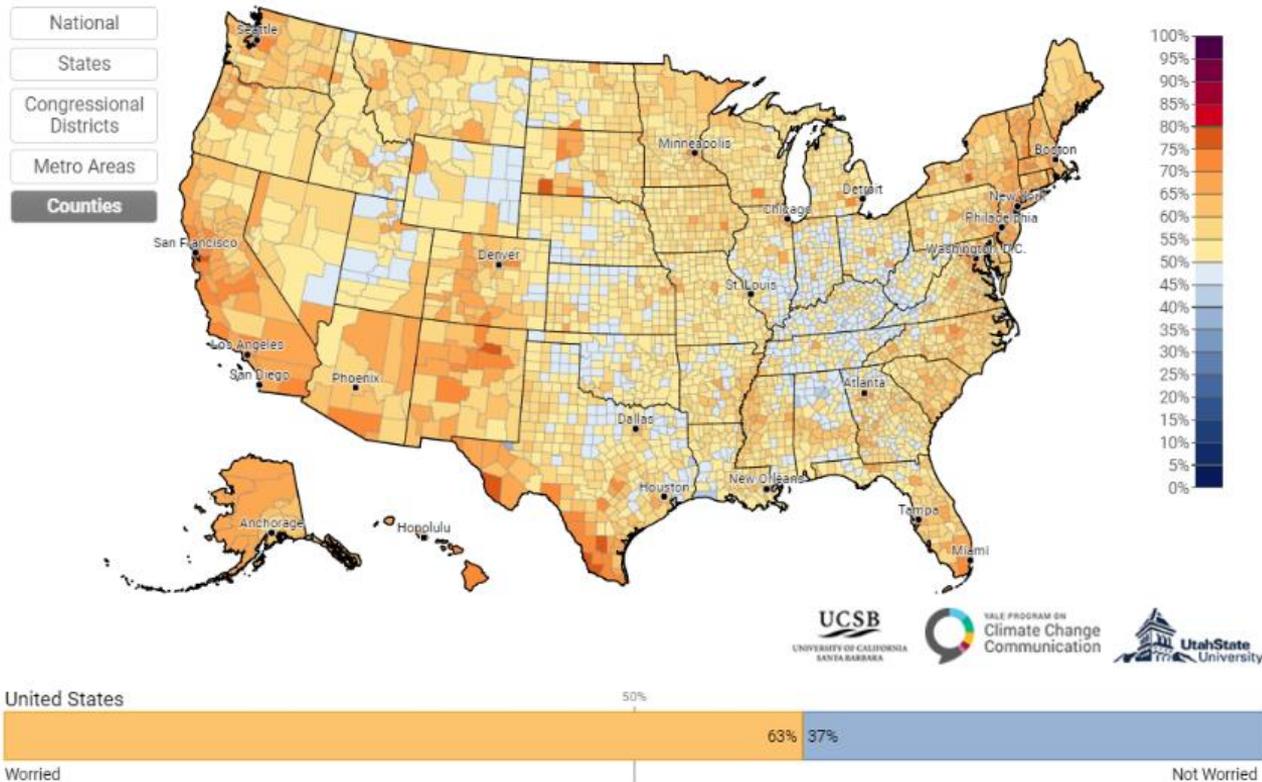
Click on map to select geography, or:



# Estimated % of adults who are worried about global warming (63%), 2020

Select Question:

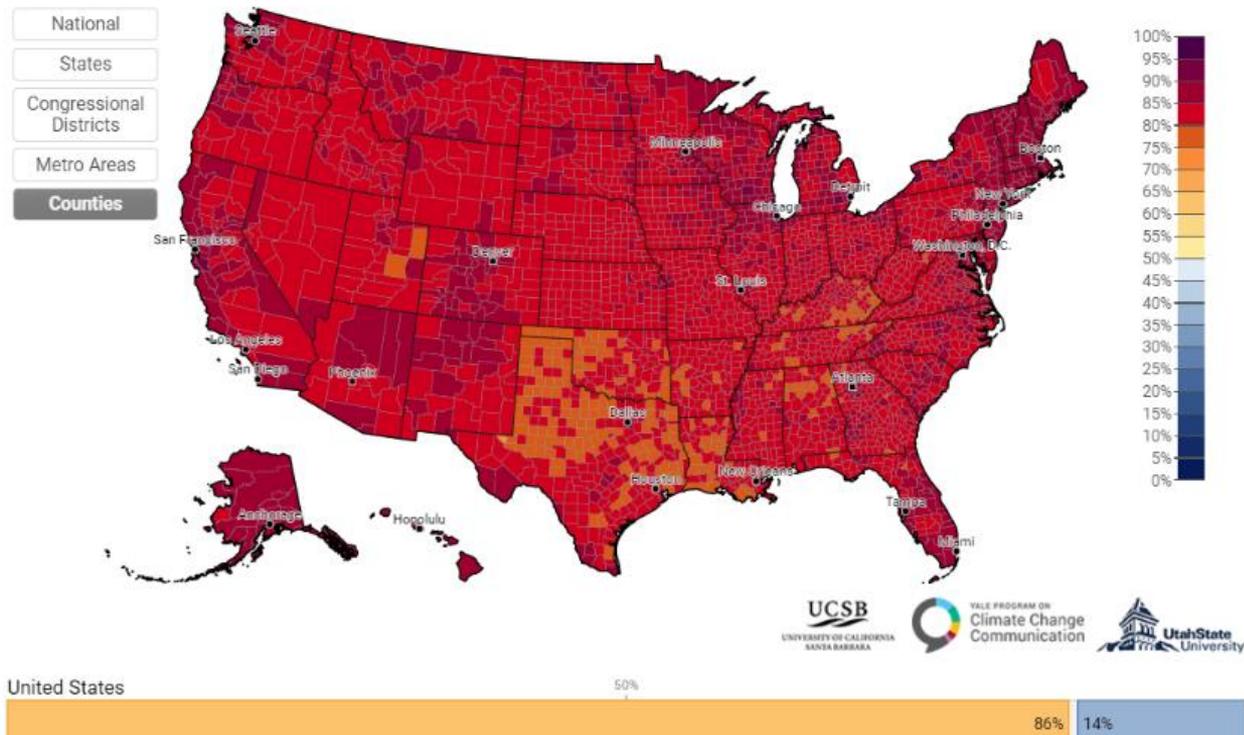
Click on map to select geography, or:



# Estimated % of adults who support funding research into renewable energy sources (86%), 2020

Select Question:  Absolute Value

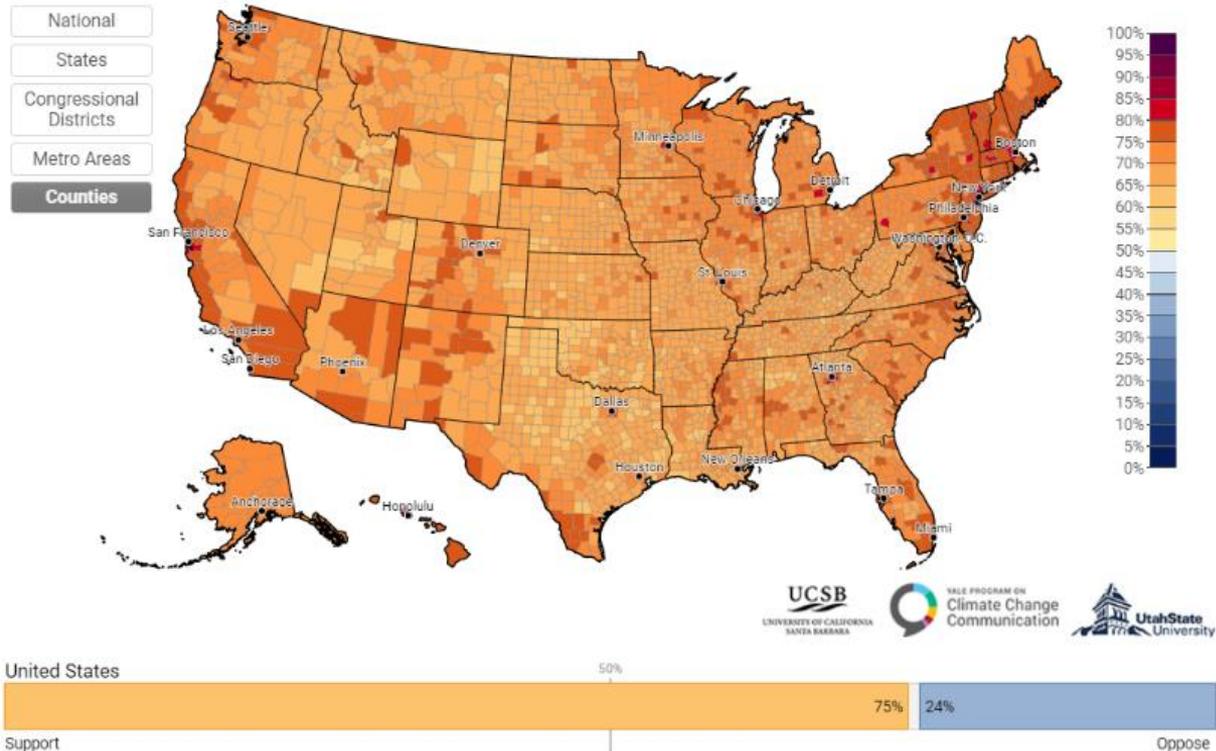
Click on map to select geography, or:



# Estimated % of adults who support regulating CO2 as a pollutant (75%), 2020

Select Question:  Absolute Value

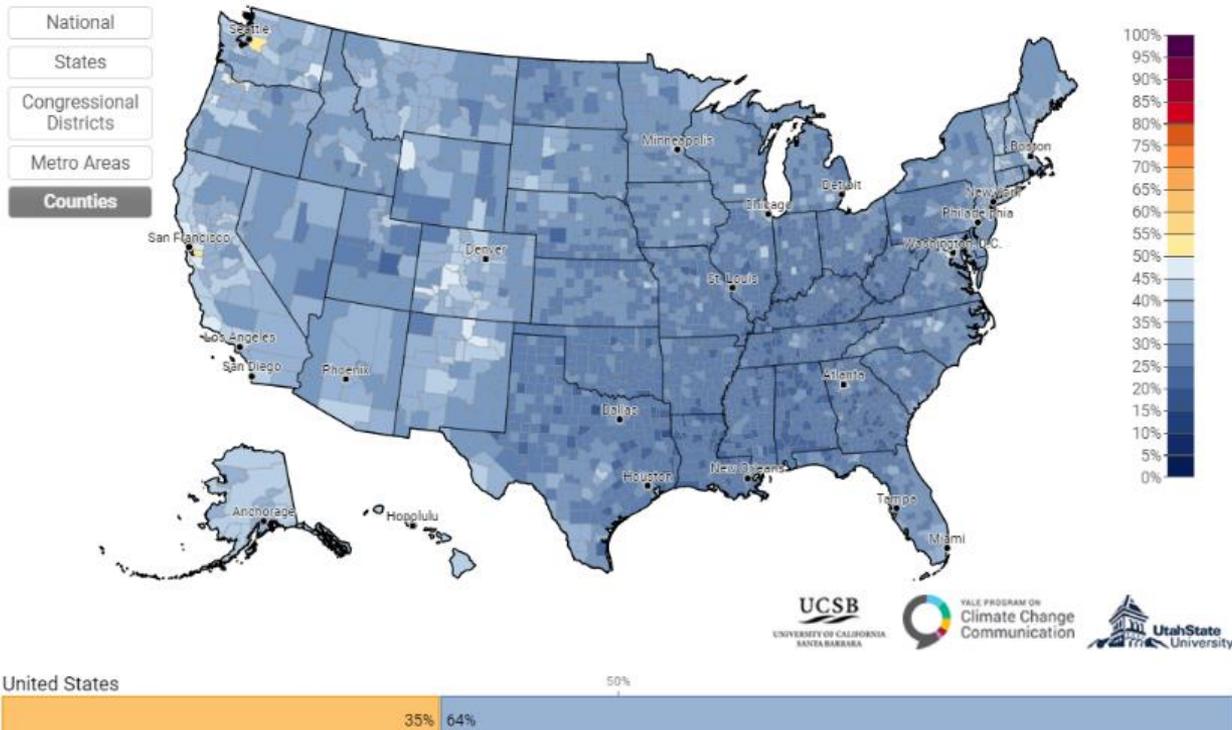
Click on map to select geography, or:



# Estimated % of adults who discuss global warming at least occasionally (35%), 2020

Select Question:  Absolute Value

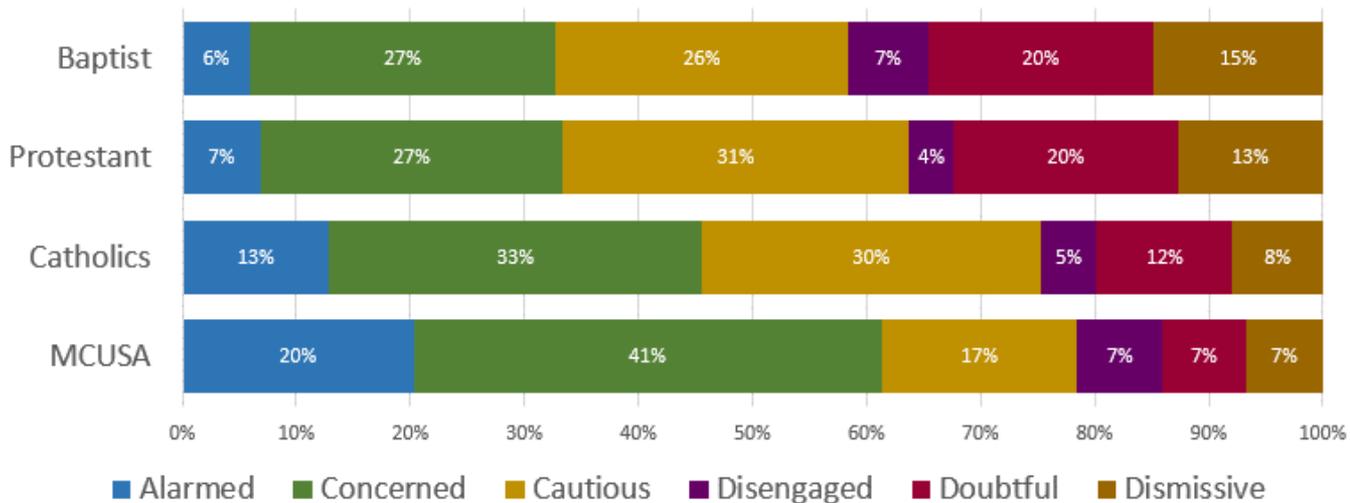
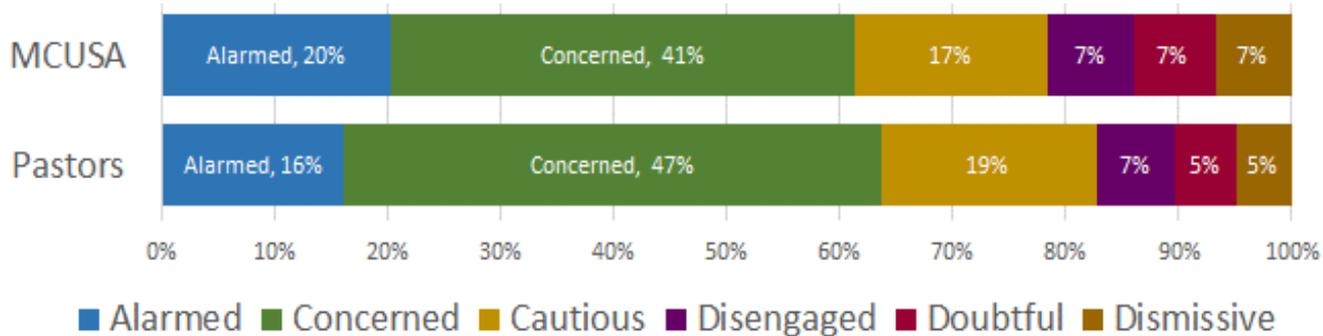
Click on map to select geography, or:



# SOLUTION: Talk about it



*How do we best communicate?*



# SOLUTION: What's the target audience?

*Who do we want to influence?*



<https://gimletmedia.com/shows/howtosaveaplanet/94hznzk1/the-evangelical-christians-taking-on>

The deniers?  
Those already alarmed/concerned?  
The apathetic?

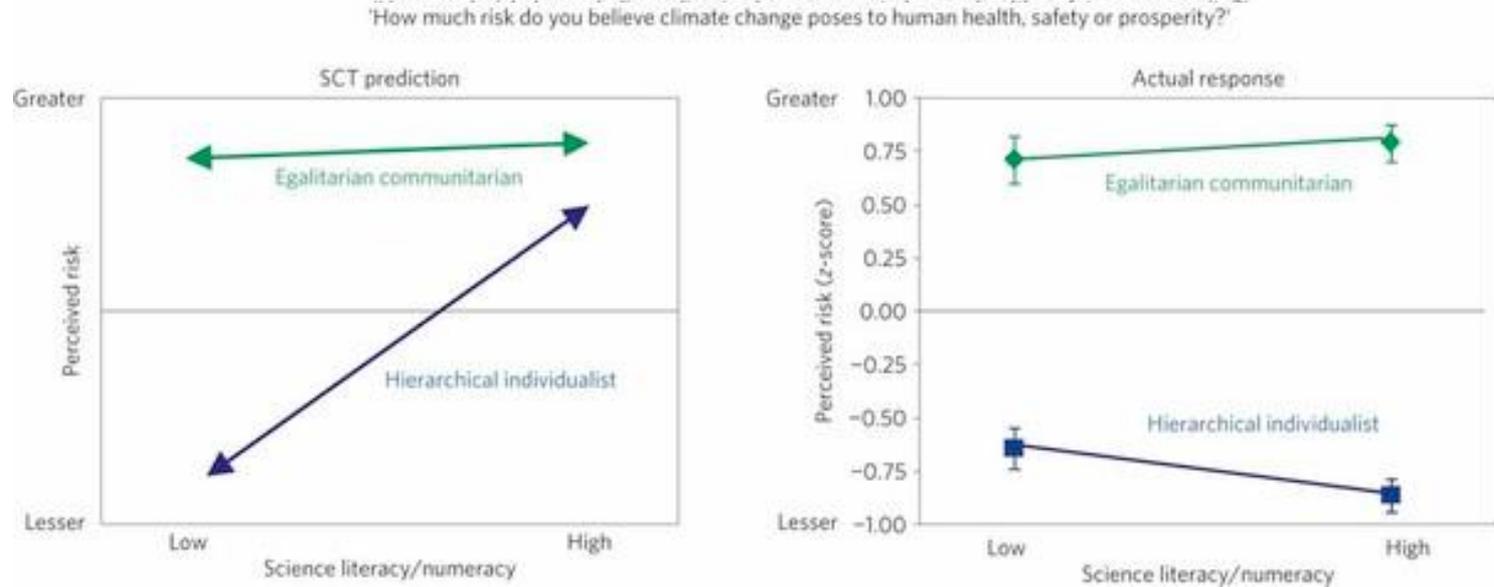
## SOLUTION: Trusted voices

I'm not an HVAC expert, so it was unnerving to listen to sales reps steering me away from making the climate-friendly choice. But I also knew that a respected person in my professional community, Marlon, wouldn't think getting a heat pump was weird. That helped me to muster my courage, ignore the salesmen, and insist on the heat pump. In other words, a casual conversation helped me to make a decision that will prevent the release of tens of thousands of pounds of carbon pollution during the next 10 years.



# SOLUTION: Trusted voices

*Who are people going to listen to?*



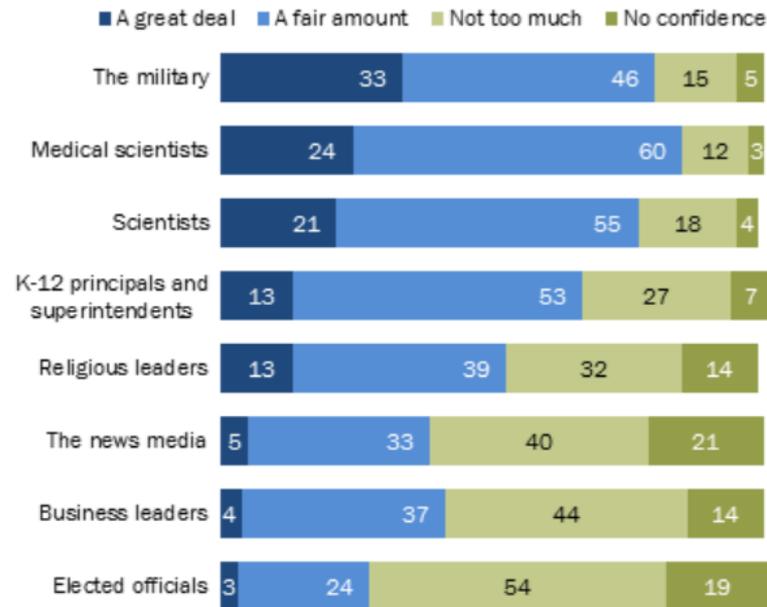
Kahan, D.M., Peters, E., Wittlin, M., Slovic, P., Ouellette, L.L., Braman, D. & Mandel, G. The polarizing impact of science literacy and numeracy on perceived climate change risks. *Nature Climate Change* 2, 732-735 (2012).



# SOLUTION: Trusted voices

## Americans' trust in military, scientists relatively high; media, business leaders, elected officials low

*% of U.S. adults who say they have \_\_\_ of confidence in each of the following groups to act in the best interests of the public*



<https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2016/10/04/the-politics-of-climate/#confidence-in-scientists-and-other-groups-to-act-in-the-public-interest>

Note: One third of respondents randomly assigned to rate "medical scientists"; two-thirds randomly assigned to rate "scientists." Other questions asked of all, N = 4,563.

Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

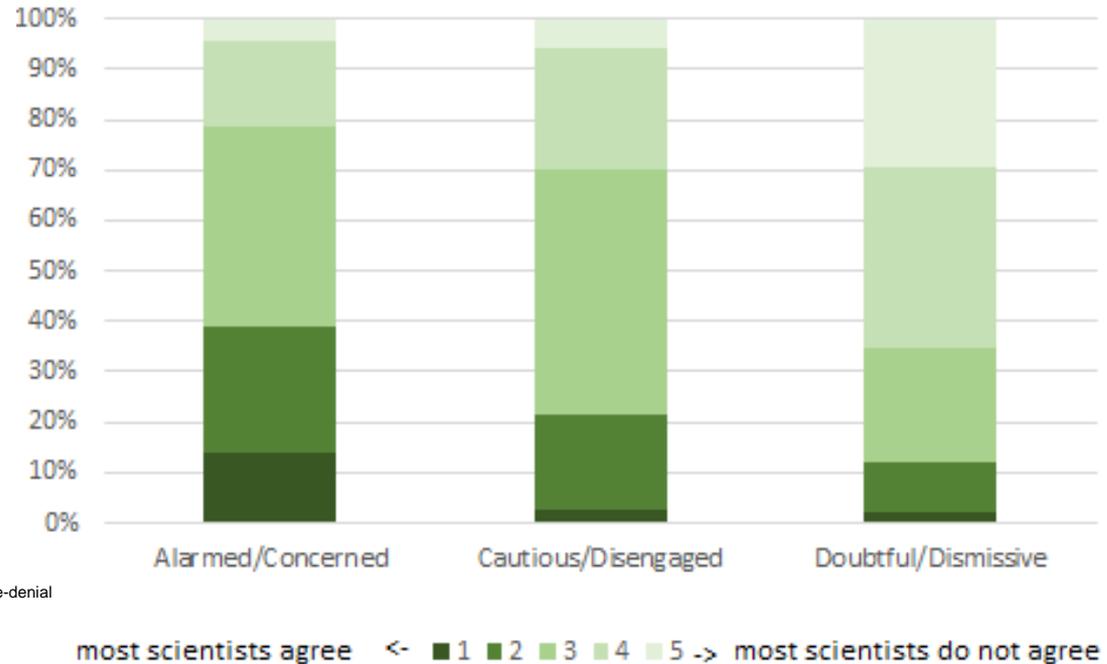
Source: Survey conducted May 10-June 6, 2016.

# SOLUTION: Consensus messaging

“Consensus messages don’t ask people to change their beliefs — they ask them to change their opinion about what other people believe, so they’re not a direct threat to their identity,” says van der Linden. “We’ve found that they’re one way to get people more aligned on the side of climate science.”

<https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2017/5/31/15713838/inoculation-climate-change-denial>

*To what extent do environmental scientists agree among themselves about the existence and causes of global warming?*



# Republicans could get behind a green jobs program. Just not this one.

The Civilian Climate Corps was a broadly popular idea. How did it become so polarizing?



[https://grist.org/politics/republicans-polarization-civilian-climate-corps/?utm\\_campaign=Hot%20News&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmi=199143460&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9HvmDw5zi1Ppysd3xP4iX9oDiCGjlysUN7OHIBxOLkUKRC92Q2ll3cvJvoe\\_IsmtBflJJe3Fix-hoNZCaiDtezQ6P3KjzEY0KQcO31CRypOtx0Fnw&utm\\_content=199143460&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://grist.org/politics/republicans-polarization-civilian-climate-corps/?utm_campaign=Hot%20News&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=199143460&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9HvmDw5zi1Ppysd3xP4iX9oDiCGjlysUN7OHIBxOLkUKRC92Q2ll3cvJvoe_IsmtBflJJe3Fix-hoNZCaiDtezQ6P3KjzEY0KQcO31CRypOtx0Fnw&utm_content=199143460&utm_source=hs_email)



*“The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth”*

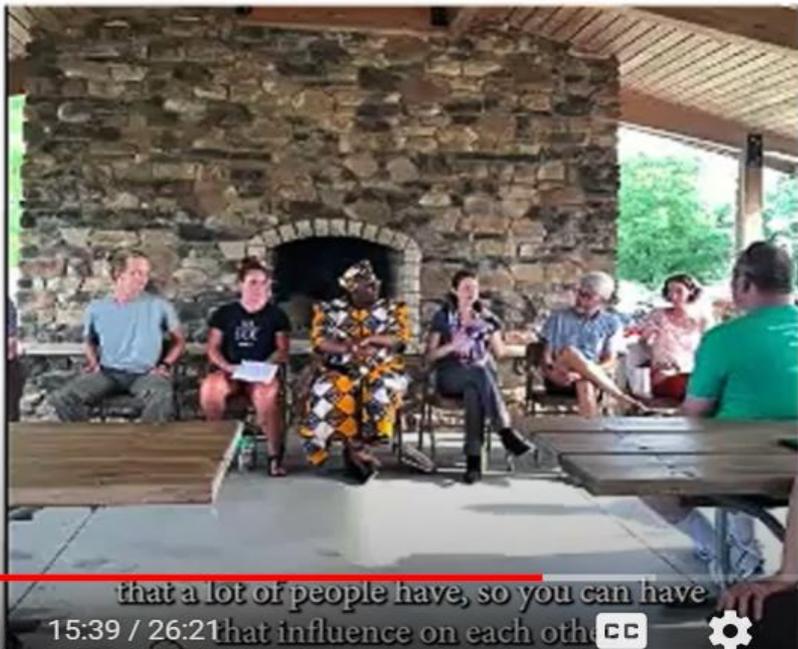
Pope Francis

Luntz came to the hearing prepared to share advice for people pushing for action on the climate crisis. He offered a chart of “words to use and words to lose” based on what he’s learned from focus groups:

- USE: Cleaner, safer, healthier. LOSE: Sustainable/sustainability.
- USE: Solving climate change. LOSE: Ending global warming.
- USE: Principles and priorities. LOSE: Values.
- USE: Reliable technology/energy. LOSE: Ground-breaking/State of the art.
- USE: New careers. LOSE: New jobs.
- USE: Peace of mind. LOSE: Security.
- USE: Consequences. LOSE: Threats/Problems.
- USE: Working together. LOSE: One world.

[https://grist.org/article/the-gops-most-famous-messaging-strategist-calls-for-climate-action/?fbclid=IwAR2WgNBWerbU7OyvOJtExVQsEsYvovlL\\_m0ThTbKz4\\_ScqxfvD9vNu8YLsU](https://grist.org/article/the-gops-most-famous-messaging-strategist-calls-for-climate-action/?fbclid=IwAR2WgNBWerbU7OyvOJtExVQsEsYvovlL_m0ThTbKz4_ScqxfvD9vNu8YLsU)





that a lot of people have, so you can have

that influence on each other



## Lessons

- Focus on the persuadable middle, or activate the alarmend/concerned; don't expect to change deniers
- Rely on trusted voices (for instance, health professionals)
- Knowing there is a scientific consensus helps
- Language is important
- Peer pressure is one of the strongest motivators





# O BEING



[ON BEING STUDIOS](#) ▲ [INITIATIVES](#) ▲ [SUBSCRIBE](#) ▲ [ABOUT](#) ▲ [HOW TO LISTEN](#)



## THE MOTH SNOWSTORM

Nature, Joy, and Human Becoming

WITH MICHAEL MCCARTHY

MAY 3, 2018

**MICHAEL MCCARTHY**  
**THE MOTH SNOWSTORM**  
NATURE AND JOY



CENTER FOR  
Sustainable  
Climate Solutions

## SOLUTION: Attending to emotions

“Anxieties and doubts can be healthy and creative, not only for the person, but for society, because they permit new and original approaches to reality. ...What disintegrates in periods of rapid transformation is not the self, but its defenses and assumptions. Self-protection restricts vision and movement like a suit of armor, making it harder to adapt.” - Joanna Macy

“[one] who remains passive when overwhelmed with grief loses the best chance of recovering elasticity of mind” - Charles Darwin



# SOLUTION: Attending to emotions

## Ritual & “Navigating the emotional terrain of eco-anxiety and grief” - Jennifer Atkinson, Judy Twedt, Univ. Washington

- “If you can name it, you can tame it” – creating time & space for grief
- The role of ritual and expressive arts
- Provide a way to take action

1



Arctic Sea Ice  
a sonic and gestural composition of the satellite record from 1979-2016

July Twedt



# SOLUTION: Framing



## SOLUTION: Doomism

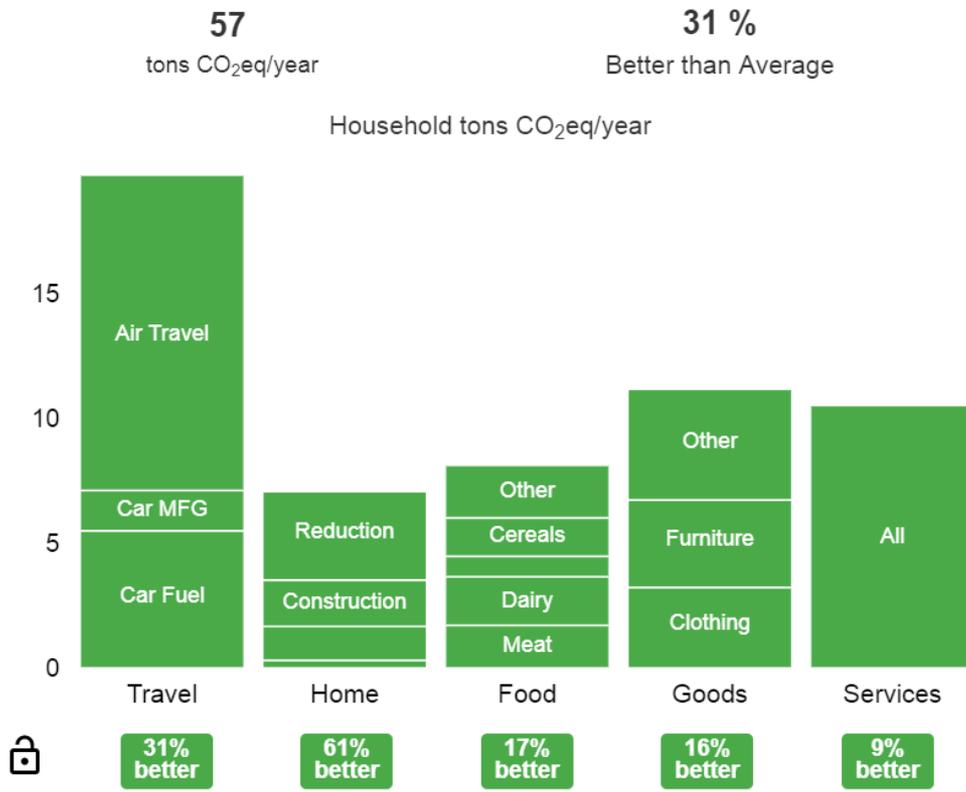
“The new climate wars...defeatism has succeeded outright climate denial as the great obstacle to addressing the crisis.”

However, deniers have not given up their opposition to plans to curtail fossil fuel use and among their new tactics they have also tried to encourage “doomism”, as Mann put it. “This is the idea that we are now so late in the game [in tackling global warming] that there is nothing that we can do about the problem,” he added. “By promoting this doom and gloom attitude this leads people down a path of despair and hopelessness and finally inaction, which actually leads us to the same place as outright climate-change denialism.”

This is the new climate war, said Mann, and it is just as dangerous as the old one which focused on outright denial of the science. This new approach has a veneer of credibility, he added. It seems reasonable to many people. And that makes it, to some extent, even more dangerous, Mann concluded.



# FRAMING: Carbon footprints



📍 Compared to households with same size and income in United States.

What could be wrong with carbon footprints?!

*“The hard truth is that the answer to the question ‘What can I, as an individual, do to stop climate change?’ is: nothing. ...*

*In terms of carbon, the individual decisions that we make are not going to add up to anything like the kind of scale of change that we need. And I do believe that the fact that for so many people it’s so much more comfortable to talk about our own personal consumption, than to talk about systemic change, is a product of neoliberalism, that we have been trained to see ourselves as consumers first.”*

*-Naomi Klein*

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/sep/14/naomi-klein-we-are-seeing-the-beginnings-of-the-era-of-climate-barbarism>



What could be wrong with carbon footprints?!

Do small actions give us **moral license**, or **encourage** more action?

---

## Nudging out support for a carbon tax

David Hagmann<sup>1\*</sup>, Emily H Ho<sup>2</sup> and George Loewenstein<sup>1</sup>

An ideal world would have a place for both nudges and more heavy-handed interventions to combat climate change. However, our results indicate that an effort to deploy both can backfire by reducing the likelihood that the most effective policies will be implemented. Such a policy cost must be accounted for when determining the potential benefit of nudges in combating climate change<sup>33</sup>. Our last study suggests that we may be able to avoid this cost by informing the public that nudges are not a substitute for more substantive policies, even if they are cost-effective. Encouragingly, this disclosure does not diminish support for the nudge, suggesting that it may provide a means for capitalizing on both tools.



# FRAMING: The Importance (or not) of Personal Actions

## Lessons:

On their own, they aren't enough

But...they can lead to collective action (normalizing behaviors, and engaging in collective action)

So by all means, skip that next beef burger, or take a pass on that cheap flight to Cancún.

But then ask yourself how you can magnify the impact of what you do. Are there campaigns or advocacy groups you can join? Can you talk to friends or family about the shifts you are making? Can you influence policy or practices at your place of work or study? Can you identify barriers to action that are preventing others from joining in?

In so doing, remember to cut yourself, and those around you, some slack. We are not each on an individual journey to slash our footprint to zero. We are on a collective mission to shift the only true footprint that matters: that of society as a whole.



## **Climate Justice.** Three points to consider:

### 1. Who's mostly responsible?

“At the national level, this puts special responsibility on the US and Europe, where about 12% of the global population have spewed half the world’s fossil pollution. At the company level, it’s the 100 companies behind 71% of industrial greenhouse gas emissions. At the individual level, the super-rich “polluter elite” are clear offenders, but we can’t ignore those of us in the global richest 10%, earning \$38,000 and up, who account for about half of household carbon pollution. “



## SOLUTION: Climate Justice Framing

“...if you’re a nomad, you’re not an environmentalist. Those who are nomadic ... do not care about the environment; they have no homeland.”



## SOLUTION: Climate Justice Framing

“Environmentalism [is] the natural child of patriotism, because it’s the natural child of rootedness...if you’re a nomad, you’re not an environmentalist. Those who are nomadic ... do not care about the environment; they have no homeland.”



# SOLUTION: Climate Justice Framing

Three points to consider:

2. Messages of community care can be co-opted

“When the Roman empire fell, it was largely as a result of uncontrolled immigration – the empire could no longer control its borders, people came in from the east and all over the place”

- *Boris Johnson before COP26, on why we should tackle the climate crisis*



Three points to consider:

3. Maybe we need to think more in terms of restoration

## Tropical forests can partially regenerate in just 20 years without human interference

**Study finds natural regrowth yields better results than human plantings and offers hope for climate recovery**



## Lessons

Avoid doomism

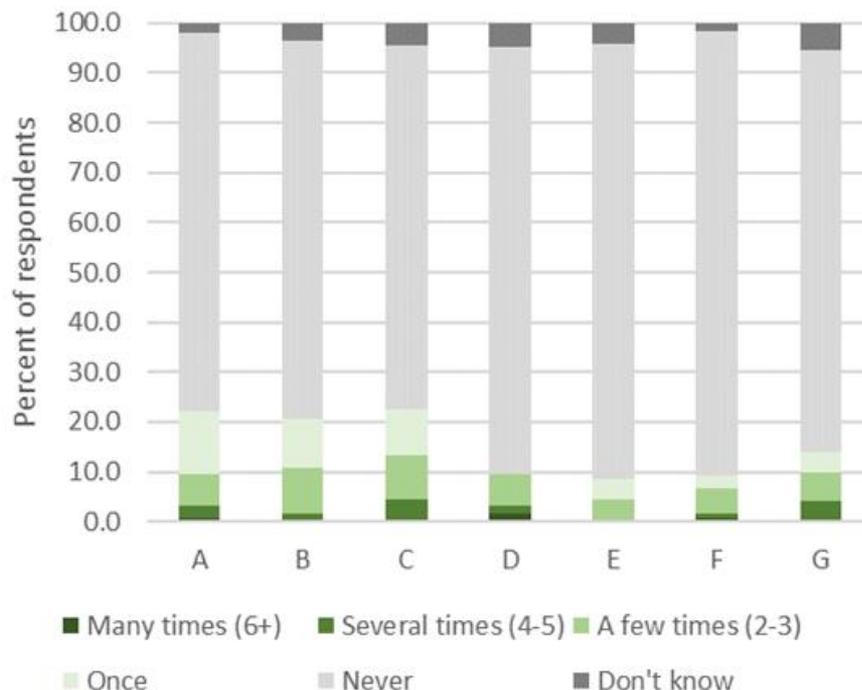
View personal actions in the context of larger changes

Frame it as a justice issue...carefully

Engage in advocacy

# SOLUTIONS: Advocacy (civic engagement)

*Over the past 12 months, how many times have you talked with public officials (for example, offices of local representatives) about global warming?*

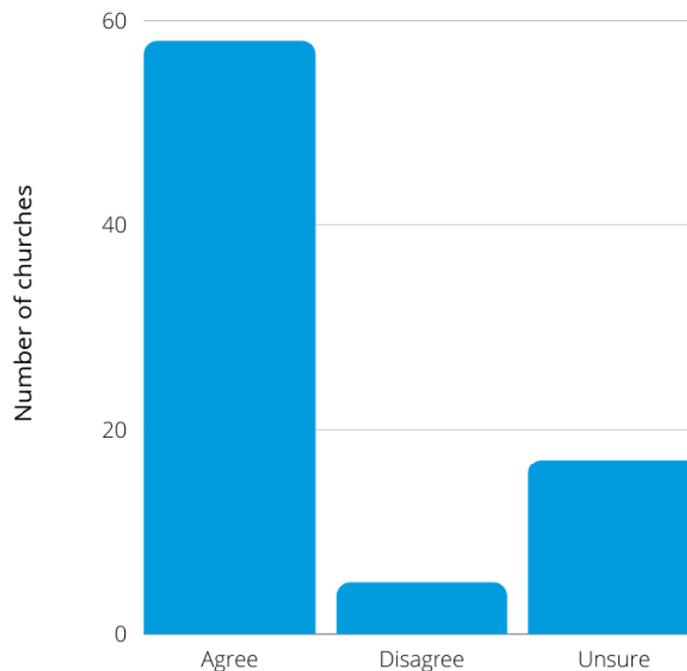


# SOLUTIONS: Advocacy (civic engagement)

## Lesson

Most are willing to advocate, but are hindered by not knowing what to do, or just need a catalyst to start

“Engaging with policy makers and policies is a part of my calling as a Christian.”



*Fig. 5 Churches' perception of political advocacy as a part of Christian calling.*

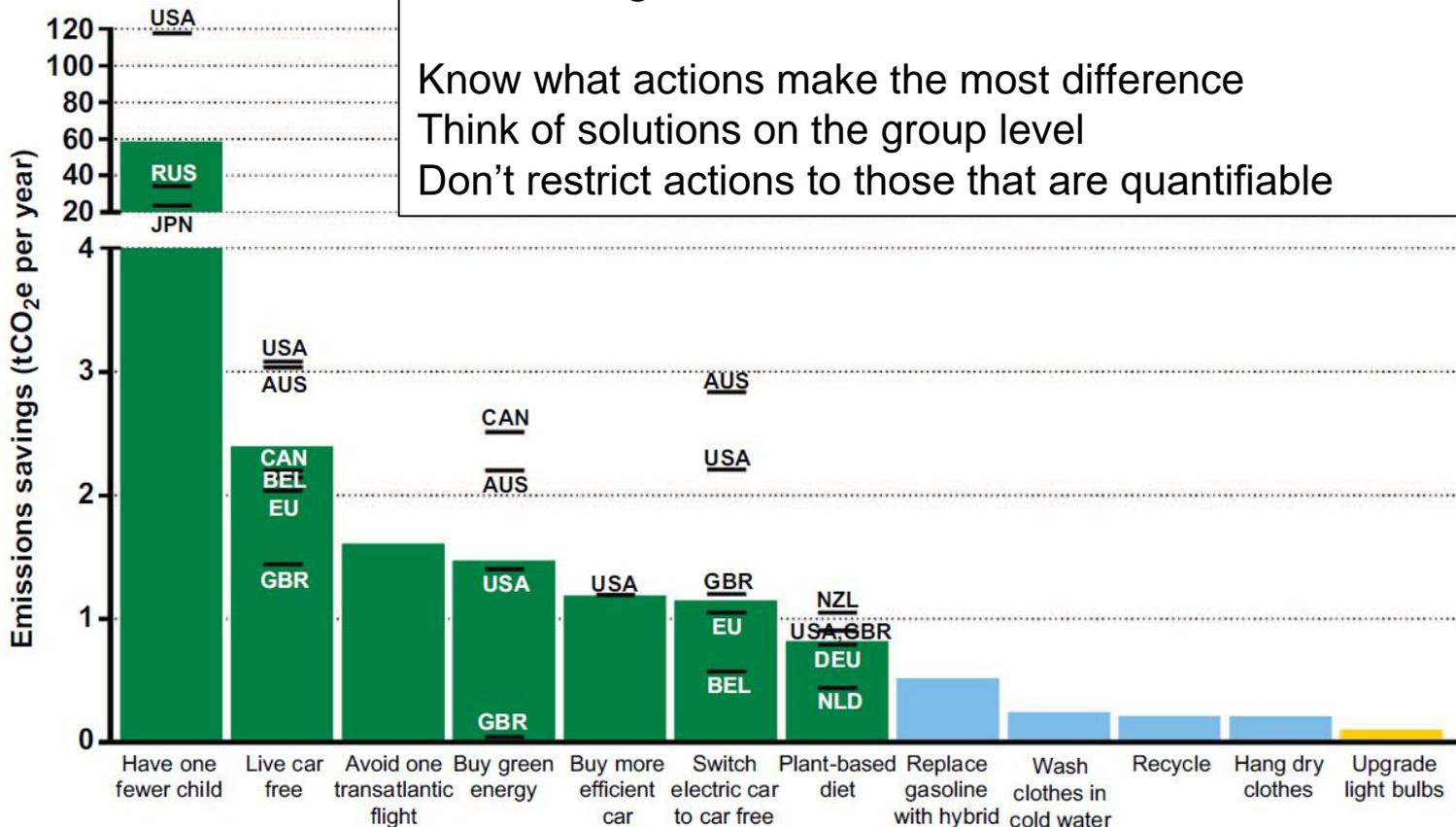


## Concluding Lessons:

Know what actions make the most difference

Think of solutions on the group level

Don't restrict actions to those that are quantifiable



*What does this mean for how a congregation would respond?*