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Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate

Bipartisan backing for carbon capture tax credits, extensive tree-planting efforts

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How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this study to understand how Americans view climate, energy and environmental issues. We surveyed 10,957 U.S. adults from April 29 to May 5, 2020.

Everyone who took part is a member of Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), an online survey panel that is recruited through national, random sampling of residential addresses. This way nearly all U.S. adults have a chance of selection. The survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education and other categories. Read more about the ATP's [methodology](#).

See here to read more about the [questions](#) used for this report, along with responses, and its [methodology](#).

Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate

Bipartisan backing for carbon capture tax credits, extensive tree-planting efforts

A majority of Americans continue to say they see the effects of climate change in their own communities and believe that the federal government falls short in its efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change.

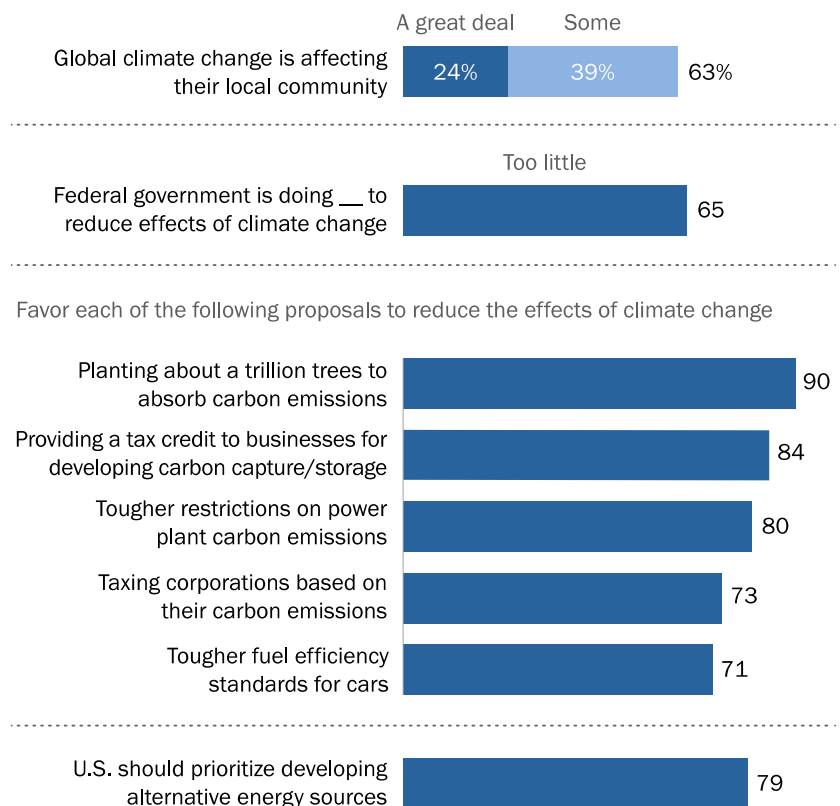
At a time when partisanship colors most views of policy, broad majorities of the public – including more than half of Republicans and overwhelming shares of Democrats – say they would favor a range of initiatives to reduce the impacts of climate change, including large-scale tree planting efforts, tax credits for businesses that capture carbon emissions and tougher fuel efficiency standards for vehicles, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

Public concern over climate change has been growing in recent years, particularly

among Democrats, and there are no signs that the COVID-19 pandemic has dampened concern levels. A recent Center analysis finds 60% view climate change as a [major threat](#) to the well-being

Americans see too little federal action on climate change, back range of policies to reduce its effects

% of U.S. adults who say ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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of the United States, as high a share taking this view as in any Pew Research Center survey going back to 2009.

The new national survey by Pew Research Center, conducted April 29 to May 5 among 10,957 U.S. adults using the Center's online American Trends Panel, finds a majority of U.S. adults want the government to play a larger role in addressing climate change. About two-thirds (65%) of Americans say the federal government is doing too little to reduce the effects of climate change – a view that's about as widely held today as it was last fall.

And public dissatisfaction with government environmental action is not limited solely to climate: Majorities also continue to say the government is doing too little in other areas, such as protecting air and water quality and wildlife.

Consistent with public concerns over climate and the environment, 79% of Americans say the priority for the country's energy supply should be developing alternative sources of energy, such as wind and solar; far fewer (20%) give priority to expanding the production of oil, coal and natural gas. To shift consumption patterns toward renewables, a majority of the public (58%) says government regulations will be necessary to encourage businesses and individuals to rely more on renewable energy; fewer (39%) think the private marketplace will ensure this change in habits.

Partisans remain far apart on several overarching questions about climate change. Much larger shares of Democrats and those who lean toward the Democratic Party than Republicans and Republican leaners say human activity is contributing a great deal to climate change (72% vs. 22%), that it is impacting their own local community (83% to 37%) and that the government is doing too little to reduce the effects of climate change (89% to 35%).

Despite these differences, there is bipartisan support for several policy options to reduce the effects of climate change. This is especially true when it comes to proposals put forth earlier this year by [Republican members of Congress](#), such as large scale tree-plantings to help absorb carbon emissions and offering tax credits to businesses that capture carbon emissions.

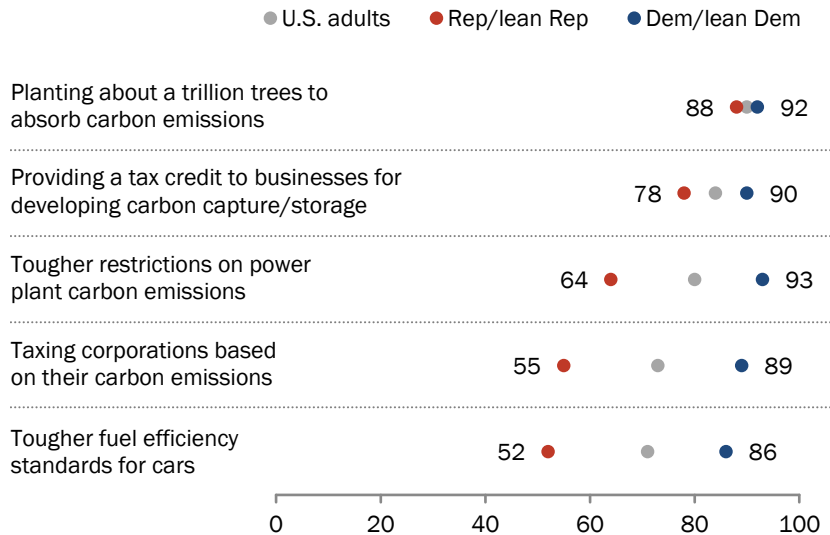
In order to reduce the effects of global climate change, 90% of Americans favor planting about a trillion trees around the world to absorb carbon emissions in the atmosphere, including comparably large shares of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (92%) and Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (88%). President Donald Trump expressed [support for tree planting efforts](#) in February during his State of the Union address.

Similarly, 84% of U.S. adults support providing a business tax credit for carbon capture technology that can store carbon emissions before they enter the atmosphere. Large majorities of Democrats (90%) and Republicans (78%) back this proposal, which House Republicans rolled out earlier this year.

Most Americans also support tougher restrictions on power plant emissions (80%), taxing corporations based on the amount of carbon emissions they produce (73%) and tougher fuel-efficiency standards for automobiles and trucks (71%). Partisan divides are wider on these three policies, with Democrats much more supportive than Republicans. Still, about half or more of Republicans say they would favor each of these policies, including 64% who back tougher emission standards for power plants.

Bipartisan support for several policies aimed at reducing the effects of global climate change

% of U.S. adults who favor each of the following proposals to reduce the effects of global climate change



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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While partisanship remains the predominant dividing line in many views of climate and the environment, there are meaningful differences within party coalitions.

In particular, Republicans and Republican leaners who describe their political views as moderate or liberal (roughly a third of all Republicans and leaners) are much more likely than conservative Republicans to see local impacts of climate change, support policies to address it and say the federal government is doing too little in areas of environmental protection. Further, younger generations and women in the GOP tend to be more critical of government action on the environment than their older and male counterparts. Republican women also are more supportive of policies aimed at reducing the impacts of climate change than GOP men.

Differences among Democrats and Democratic leaners are more modest. Strong majorities of both moderate or conservative and liberal Democrats believe the federal government is doing too little to reduce climate change and support a range of policies to address its effects on the environment. There are not meaningful differences in these views among Democrats by either gender or generation.

Americans see local impacts from climate change, but that view is colored more by politics than place

A majority of Americans (63%) say that climate change is affecting their local community a great deal or some. Fewer (37%) say climate change is impacting their own community not too much or not at all. The share who see at least some local impact from climate change is about the same as it was last fall (62%).

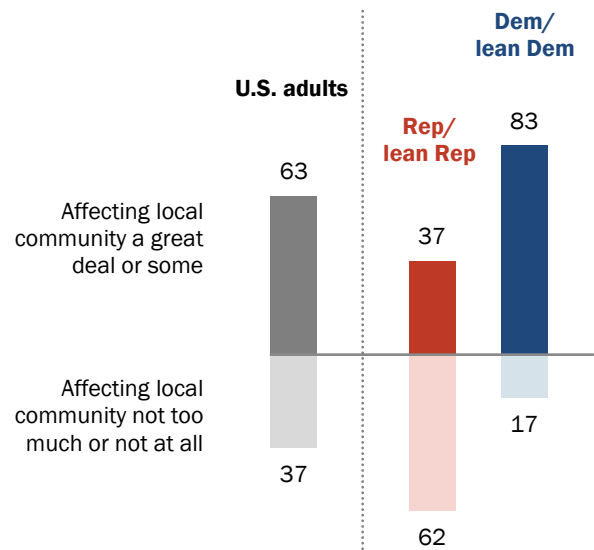
Views of the local impact of climate change are largely similar among Americans who live in different regions of the country. In fact, an identical 64% of those who live in the Northeast, South and West say climate change is affecting their community a great deal or some. Those who live in the Midwest are slightly less likely to say this (58%).

Partisanship is a far larger factor in views of the local impact of climate change. A large majority of Democrats (83%) say climate change is affecting their local community a great deal or some. By contrast, far fewer Republicans (37%) believe climate change is affecting their local community at least some; most Republicans (62%) say climate change is impacting their local community not too much or at all.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, moderates and liberals (55%) are much more likely than conservatives (27%) to say climate change is impacting their community a great deal or some. Among Democrats and Democratic leaners, large shares of both liberals (86%) and conservative and moderates (81%) see local impacts from climate change.

Partisan divide in views of climate change's impact on own community

% of U.S. adults who say global climate change is ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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A more granular analysis of geography shows that Americans who live near a coastline are more likely than those who live further away to say climate change is affecting their local community. This pattern holds within both parties but is particularly evident among Republicans.

Seven-in-ten of those who live less than 25 miles from the coastline say climate change is affecting their local community a great deal or some. By comparison, 57% of those who live 300 miles or more from the coastline say climate change is affecting their local community at least some.

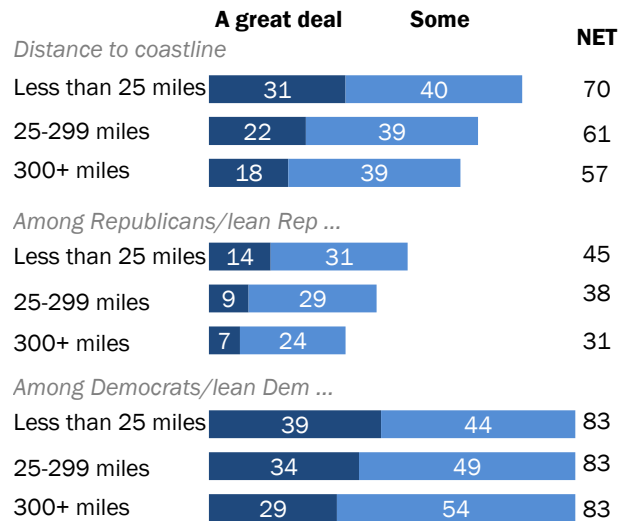
Overall, 45% of Republicans who live less than 25 miles from the coastline say climate change is affecting their local community at least some, compared with a significantly smaller share (31%) of Republicans who live 300 or more miles from the coastline.

Roughly eight-in-ten Democrats, no matter where they live, say climate change is affecting their local community at least some. However, Democrats who live close to the coastline are more likely than Democrats who live farthest away from the ocean to say climate change is affecting their local community a *great deal* (39% vs. 29%).

When those who see a local impact from climate change are asked about the nature of the impact, those who live near a coastline are far more likely (73%) than those who live farther away (45%) to cite rising sea levels that erode beaches and shorelines as a major impact in their community.

Those living near the coast are most likely to say climate change is affecting their local community

% of U.S. adults who say global climate change is currently affecting their local community ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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Strong majorities of Americans back policies aimed at reducing the effects of climate change

Majorities of U.S. adults favor each of the five proposals to reduce the effects of climate change included in the survey. The most popular, favored by 90% of Americans, is to plant about a trillion trees to absorb carbon

emissions. President Trump [announced](#) in this year's State of the Union that the U.S. would join the World Economic Forum's One Trillion Trees Initiative.

Widespread public support extends to proposals to provide a tax credit to businesses for development of carbon capture and storage capacity (84%) and tougher restrictions on power plant carbon emissions (80%).

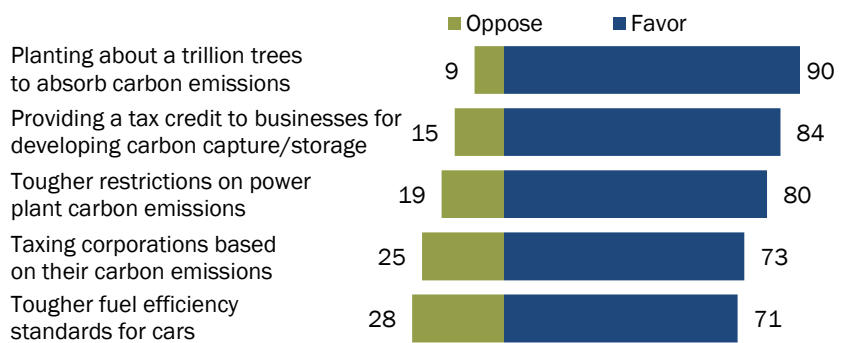
About seven-in-ten also favor taxing corporations based on their carbon emissions (73%) and adopting tougher fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks (71%).

The Trump administration has taken steps over the past year to roll back regulations on carbon emissions in areas such as [fuel-efficiency standards](#) for vehicles and [power plants emissions](#).

Support for these policies aligns with how effective the public thinks they would be. [A 2018 survey](#) found majorities of Americans believed restrictions on power plant emissions, tax incentives to encourage businesses to reduce carbon emissions and tougher fuel-efficiency standards for cars would all make a difference at reducing climate change.

Strong public support for a range of policies to limit carbon output, reduce the effects of climate change

% of U.S. adults who ___ each of the following proposals to reduce the effects of global climate change



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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Democrats are particularly supportive of policy proposals to reduce the effects of global climate change. Roughly 90% of Democrats favor each of these five policy proposals, and differences among Democrats by ideology tend to be modest. For example, 93% of Democrats, including 96% of liberals and 91% of moderates and conservatives, say they support tougher restrictions on power plant carbon emissions. Differences among Democrats across demographic characteristics such as age and gender also are small.

Among Republicans, there are large gaps in support for some of these policies by ideology, as well as differences in views between GOP men and women.

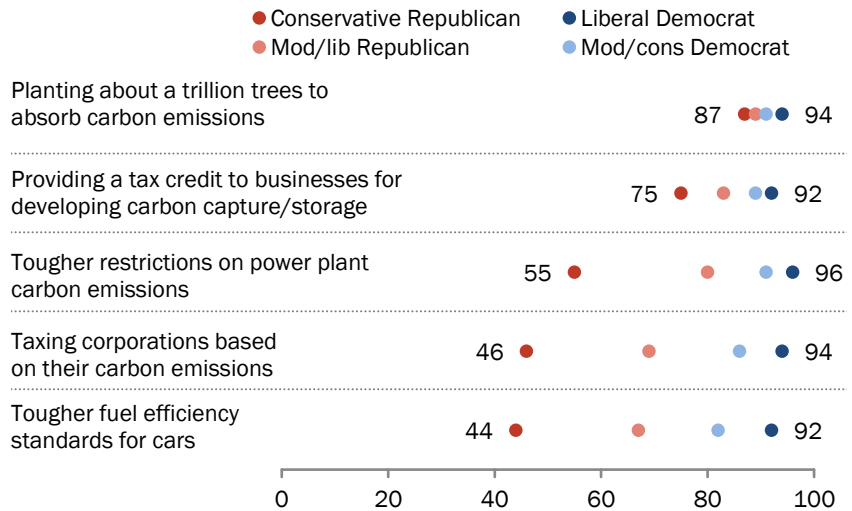
Moderate and liberal Republicans are broadly

supportive of these proposals aimed at reducing the effects of climate change. Two-thirds or more favor each of the five proposals, including 80% who say they support tougher power plant carbon emissions standards.

Among conservative Republicans, 87% support planting more trees to reduce the effects of climate change and 75% favor a tax credit for businesses to develop carbon capture and storage technology. However, their support is significantly lower for other policies: 55% back tougher restrictions on power plant emissions, while fewer than half favor taxing corporations based on their carbon emissions (46%) or tougher fuel efficiency standards for cars (44%).

Majorities of moderate Republicans back policies to address global climate change

% of U.S. adults who favor each of the following proposals to reduce the effects of global climate change



Note: Republicans and Democrats include independents and others who lean to each of the parties. Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

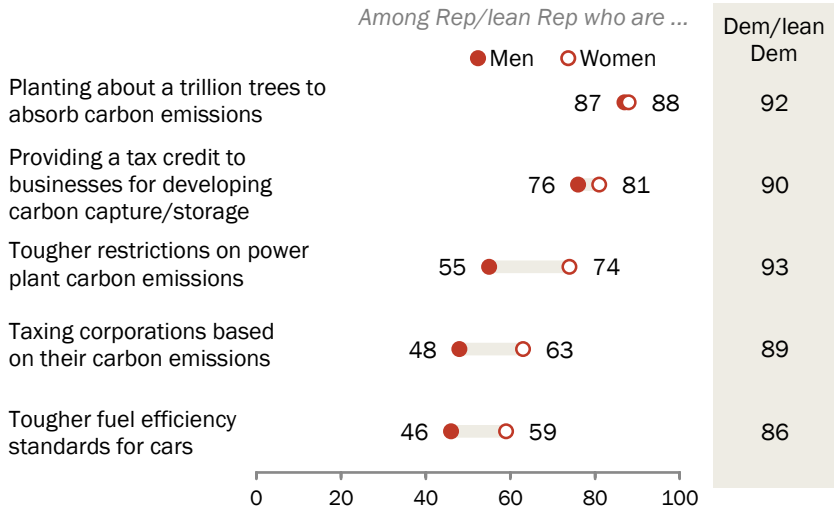
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Most Republican men and women support tree-planting efforts and offering a tax credit to businesses for carbon capture technology. But GOP women are significantly more likely than men to favor tougher emissions restrictions on power plants, taxing corporations based on their emissions and tougher fuel-efficiency standards for cars.

Republican women more supportive than GOP men of restricting carbon emissions from power plants

% of U.S. adults who favor each of the following proposals to reduce the effects of global climate change



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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Political groups continue to differ over role human activity plays in climate change

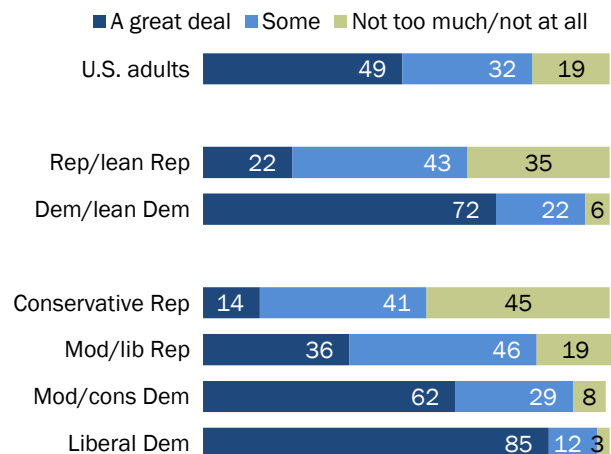
Most U.S. adults think human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels, contributes a great deal (49%) or some (32%) to climate change. About two-in-ten (19%) say human activity contributes not too much or not at all to climate change. Views on this question are about the same as they were last fall.

Americans continue to be deeply politically divided over how much human activity contributes to climate change. About seven-in-ten Democrats (72%) say human activity contributes a great deal to climate change, compared with roughly two-in-ten Republicans (22%), a difference of 50 percentage points.

The difference is even wider among those at the ends of the ideological spectrum. A large majority of liberal Democrats (85%) say human activity contributes a great deal to climate change. Only 14% of conservative Republicans say the same – 45% of this group says human activity contributes not too much or not at all to climate change.

Wide partisan divide over impact of human activity on climate change

% of U.S. adults who say human activity contributes to climate change ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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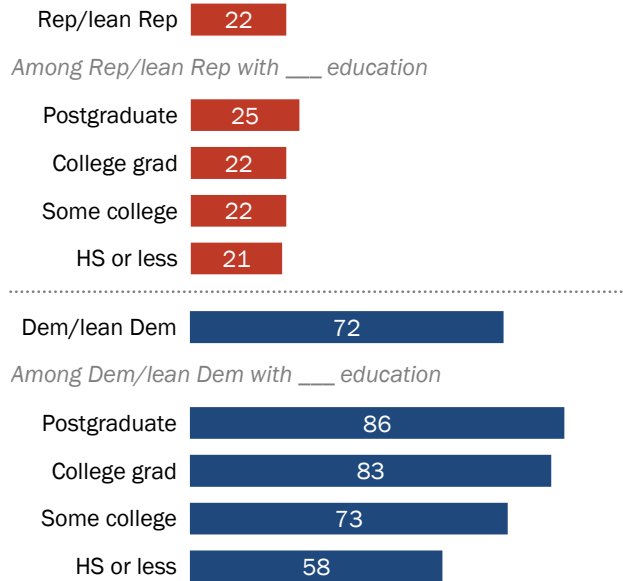
Views about the role of human activity in climate change also vary by education among Democrats, but not among Republicans. Democrats who have graduated from college are more likely to say human activity contributes a great deal to climate change than Democrats without a college degree. For example, 86% of Democrats with a postgraduate degree say human activity contributes a great deal to climate change, compared with a smaller majority (58%) of Democrats with no college experience. Among Republicans, comparably small shares across level of education see human activity as contributing a great deal to climate change.

[Previous Pew Research Center analyses](#) have found a similar dynamic in views of climate change by level of science knowledge, based on an 11-item index. Among Democrats, those with higher levels of science knowledge are more likely to say human activity influences climate change a great deal than those with lower levels of science knowledge. By contrast, there is no such relationship among Republicans.

There also are significant differences in these views among Democrats by race and ethnicity. Overall, 80% of white Democrats and 70% of Hispanic Democrats say human activity contributes a great deal to climate change. By contrast, black Democrats are much less likely to take this view: 49% believe human activity contributes a great deal to climate change.

Education tied to views of human impact on climate change among Democrats, but not Republicans

% of U.S. adults who say that human activity contributes a great deal to climate change



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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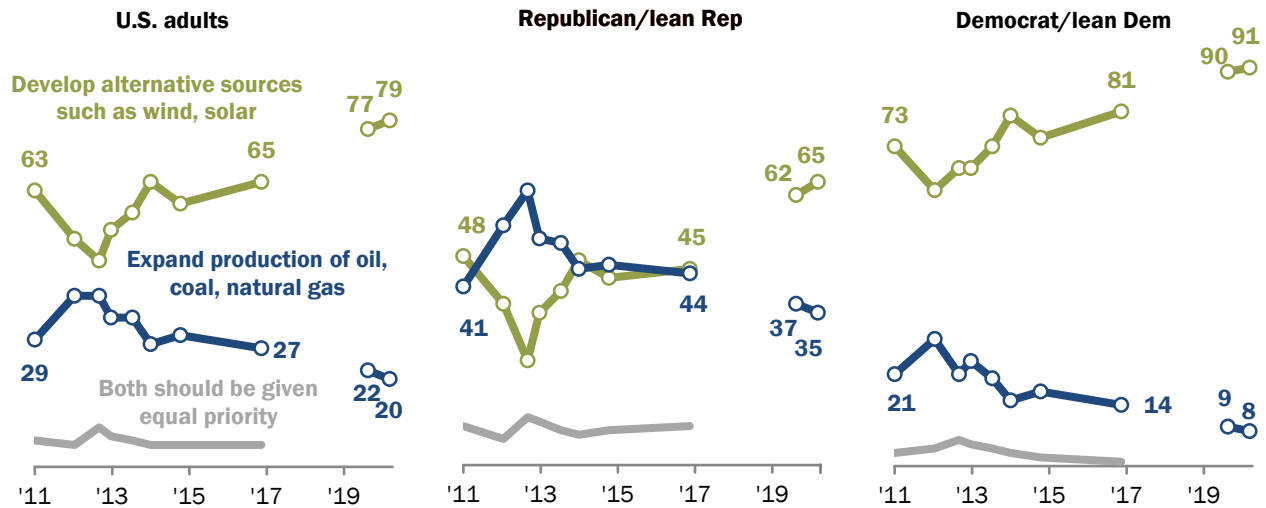
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Majorities of both Democrats and Republicans prioritize alternative energy over fossil fuel sources

Reducing reliance on carbon-based fuels is viewed by [climate advocates](#) as a critical step to preventing the worst impacts of climate change. The survey finds a broad majority of Americans (79%) say the more important priority for the country is to develop alternative sources, such as wind and solar; far fewer (20%) say the more important energy priority is to expand the production of oil, coal and natural gas. Views on this question are about the same as they were in October 2019, the first time the measure was asked on Pew Research Center’s online [American Trends Panel](#).

Most say that developing alternative sources should be U.S. energy priority

% of U.S. adults who say the more important priority for addressing America’s energy supply should be to ...



Note: Surveys conducted from 2011 to 2017 were conducted by phone using somewhat different question wording than the online surveys that begin in 2019. “Both should be given equal priority” was a volunteered response in telephone survey. Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Apr 29-May 5, 2020.

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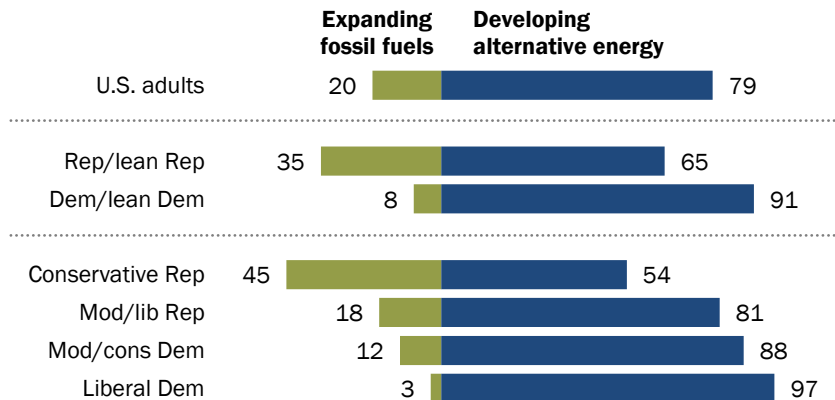
An overwhelming majority of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (91%) say that developing alternative sources should be the nation's energy priority. A smaller majority of Republicans and Republican leaners (65%) also takes this view.

Among moderate and liberal Republicans, a large share (81%) say developing alternative sources should be the nation's energy priority. The views of moderate and liberal Republicans are relatively close to those of Democrats: 88% of moderate

and conservative Democrats and a near-unanimous 97% of liberal Democrats say the more important energy priority is developing alternative sources. By contrast, conservative Republicans are much more divided in their views: A narrow majority (54%) gives greater priority to developing alternative energy sources, while 45% say the priority should be expanding the production of oil, coal and natural gas.

Most Americans prioritize developing alternative energy sources over expanding fossil fuels

% of U.S. adults who say the more important priority for U.S. energy supply should be ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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On balance, a majority of U.S. adults see a role for government in shifting usage patterns toward renewables.

About six-in-ten Americans (58%) say that government regulations are necessary to encourage businesses and consumers to rely more on renewable energy sources. Fewer (39%) think the private marketplace will encourage the use of renewable energy, without the need for government intervention.

Partisans hold opposing views on this question: 77% of Democrats, including those

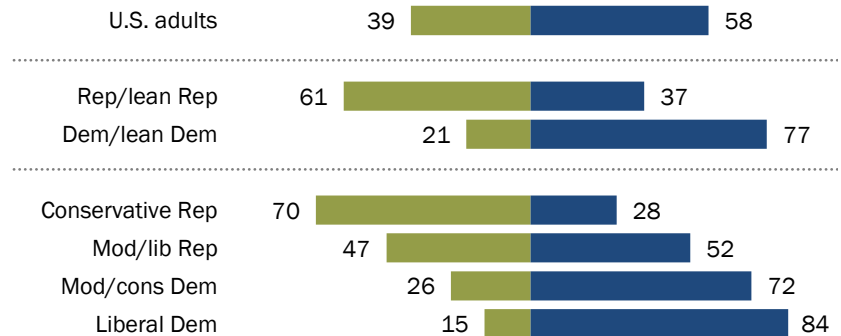
who lean to the Democratic Party, believe that government regulations are necessary to shift the country toward reliance on renewable energy, while 61% of Republicans and Republican leaners say the private marketplace will be enough.

Views on this question, and opinion dynamics among partisans, are comparable to what they were when the question was last asked in 2018.

A majority says government regulations are needed to encourage reliance on renewable energy sources

% of U.S. adults who say ...

- The private marketplace will ensure that businesses and consumers rely more on renewable energy sources, even without government regulations
- Government regulations are necessary to encourage businesses and consumers to rely more on renewable energy sources



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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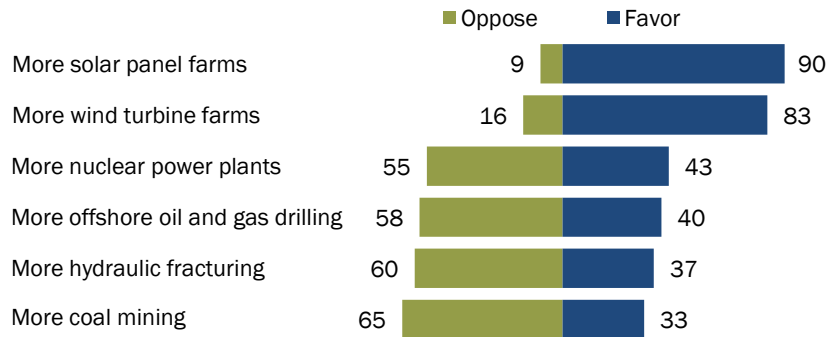
Americans' overall preference to prioritize alternative energy is reflected in views of specific energy source development.

Large shares say they would favor developing more solar panel farms (90%) and more wind turbine farms (83%).

There is far less support for expanding fossil fuel energy sources. Majorities *oppose* expanding coal mining (65%), hydraulic fracturing (60%) and offshore oil and gas drilling (58%).

Broad public support for developing more solar and wind power

% of U.S. adults who say they ___ expanding each energy source



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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A narrow majority of the public (55%) opposes more nuclear power plants in the country, while 43% are in favor. Larger shares of women than men oppose expanding nuclear power, a pattern that's seen among both Republicans and Democrats and is consistent with views about nuclear power in past Center surveys.

Public views on which energy sources the country should expand have been stable in recent years, and opinions are very similar to those measured in 2018 and 2019 surveys.

There is bipartisan support for expanding solar and wind power, though somewhat smaller majorities of conservative Republicans back these two policies.

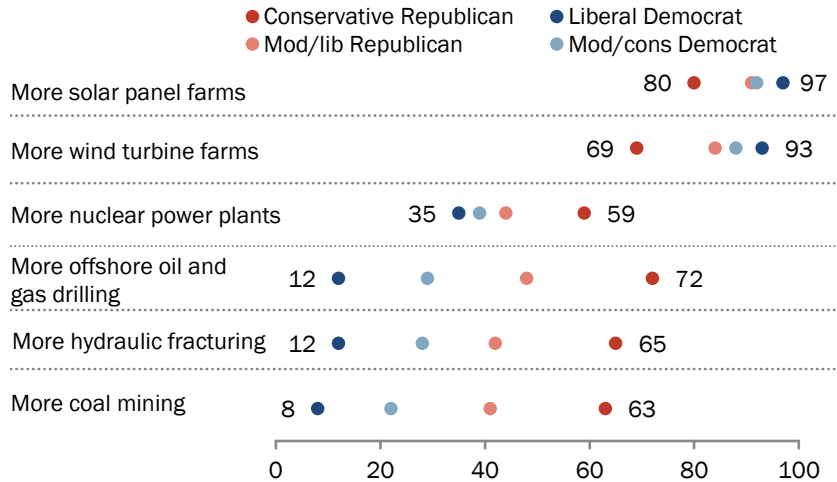
By contrast, Republicans – especially conservative Republicans – are more supportive than Democrats of expanding fossil fuel energy sources and nuclear power.

Majorities of conservative Republicans favor expanding offshore drilling (72%), hydraulic fracturing (65%) and coal mining (63%). By contrast, about half or fewer of moderate and liberal Republicans favor expanding these forms of energy development. Democrats broadly oppose these methods, and opposition is particularly widespread among liberal Democrats.

Differences in views of energy development by partisanship are about the same as they have been in recent years. [See Appendix for details.](#)

Majorities across political groups support expanding use of solar panel and wind turbine farms

% of U.S. adults who say they favor expanding each energy source



Note: Republicans and Democrats include independents and others who lean to each of the parties. Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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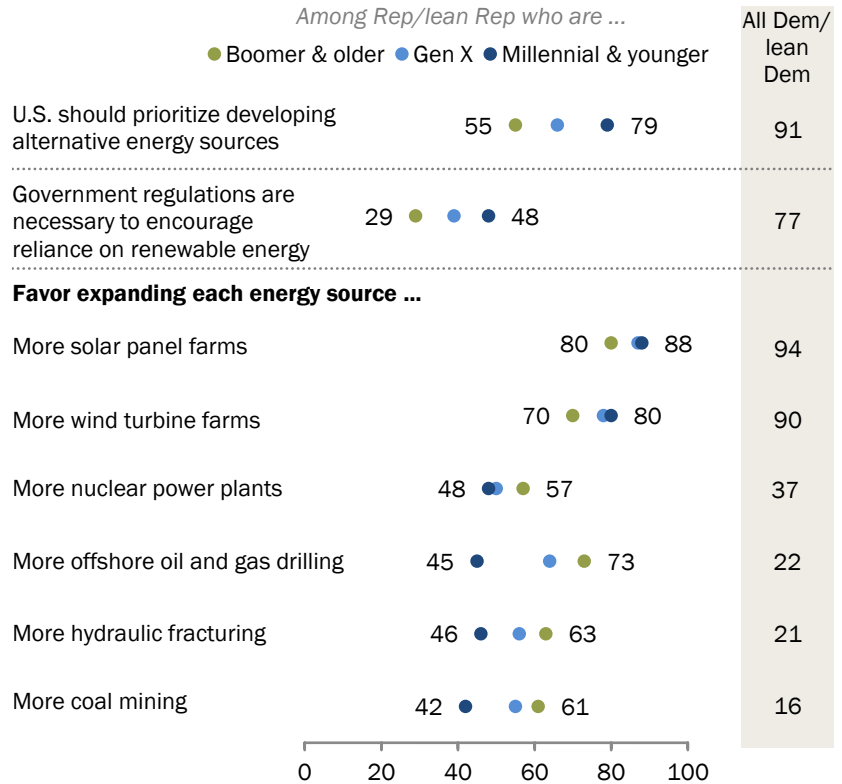
Consistent with past Pew Research Center surveys, younger Republicans give more priority to alternative energy development – and are less supportive of expanding fossil fuel sources – than older Republicans.

Overall, 79% of Millennial and Gen Z Republicans prioritize the development of alternative energy sources, compared with 66% of Gen X Republicans and 55% of Republicans who are Baby Boomers or older. While Republicans generally are skeptical about the need for government to encourage public reliance on renewable sources, about half of Millennial and Gen Z Republicans (48%) think government regulations are necessary; smaller shares of older Republicans say this.

Millennial and younger Republicans are less supportive of expanding the use of offshore oil and gas drilling, coal mining or hydraulic fracturing than Baby Boomer and older Republicans. There’s a similar, but smaller, generational dynamic among Republicans in views of expanding nuclear power.

Younger Republicans more likely to prioritize renewable energy sources than older Republicans

% of U.S. adults who say ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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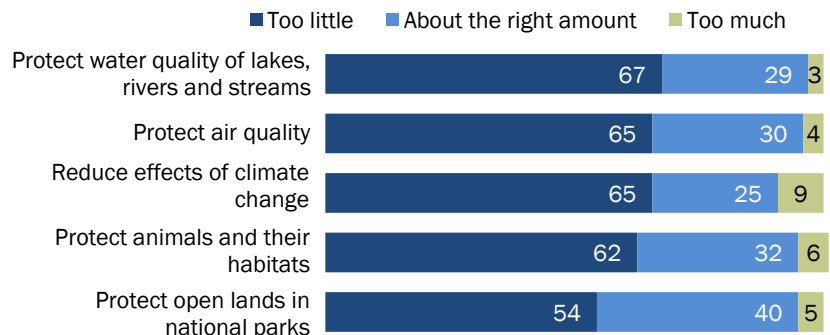
Among Republicans, there is broad support across generations for expanding solar and wind farms, though support is somewhat higher among Millennial and Gen Z than older Republicans. (At this point, [Gen Z adults](#) hold views on a range of issues – including the role of government, diversity and climate and energy – that are similar to those of Millennials.)

Majorities of U.S. adults say federal government is not doing enough on the environment

Majorities of Americans continue to say the federal government is doing too little to protect key aspects of the environment. About two-thirds of Americans say the federal government is doing too little to protect water quality of rivers, lakes and streams (67%), protect air quality (65%) and reduce the effects of climate change (65%). About six-in-ten think the federal government is doing too little to protect animals and their habitats (62%), and a slightly smaller majority say the federal government is doing too little to protect open lands in national parks (54%).

Majorities say federal government is doing too little to protect aspects of the environment

% of U.S. adults who say the federal government is doing ___ in each area



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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These findings come amid a changing federal regulatory landscape. The Trump administration is reversing or seeking to change [more than 100 rules and regulations](#) related to carbon dioxide emissions, clean air, water or toxic chemicals.

Public views on how much the federal government is doing to protect key aspects of the environment are virtually unchanged in the last two years. In Pew Research Center surveys in both [2018](#) and [2019](#), about two-thirds of Americans said the federal government was doing too little to protect air or water quality or reduce the effects of climate change.

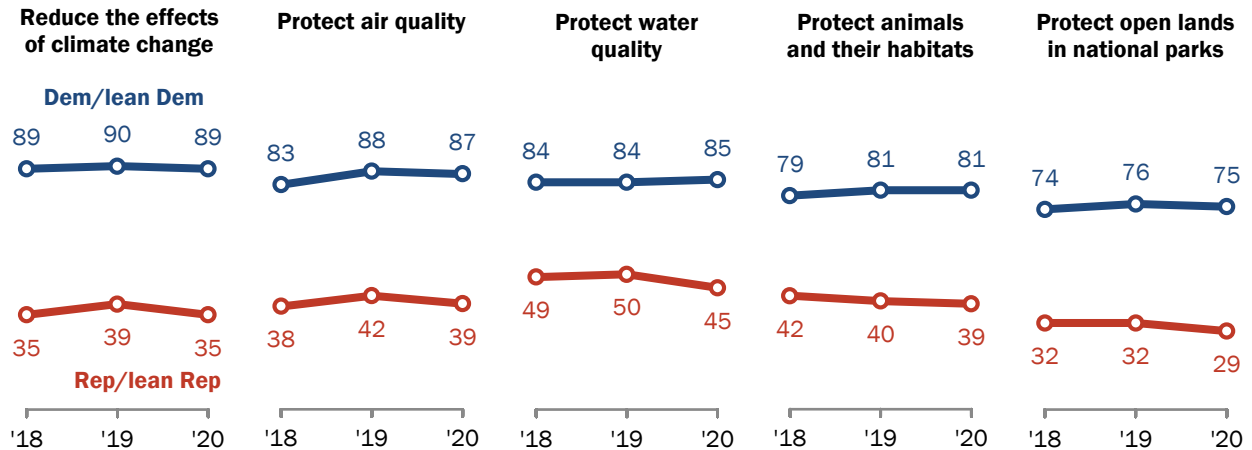
Over the past several years, Americans have become significantly more likely to say protecting the environment and addressing climate change should be top priorities for the president and Congress, according to [a 2020 Pew Research Center survey](#).

Democrats remain far more likely than Republicans to say the government is doing too little to address aspects of the environment. For instance, about nine-in-ten liberal Democrats say the federal government is doing too little to protect air quality (93%) or water quality (91%). By comparison, among conservative Republicans, just 36% say the federal government is doing too little to protect water quality and only 28% say this about air quality. Majorities of conservative Republicans say the federal government is doing the right amount in these areas.

Moderate and liberal Republicans are more critical of government action on the environment than conservative Republicans. Narrow majorities say the government is doing too little to protect water and air quality, wildlife and their habitat and to reduce the effects of climate change. Ideological gaps among Democrats are more modest than among Republicans. [See Appendix for details.](#)

Consistent partisan divides over government environmental action

% of U.S. adults who say the federal government is doing too little to ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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Among Republicans, women and younger adults are more likely to say the government is doing too little to address aspects of the environment than men and older adults in the GOP.

About half of Republican women (51%) say the government is doing too little to protect water quality, compared with 39% of Republican men. There's a similar gap in views that government is doing too little to protect air quality (47% to 32%), and Republican women also are significantly more likely than men to say the government is doing too little in the three other environmental areas included in the survey.

Millennial and younger Republicans are at least 10 points more likely than Baby Boomer and older Republicans to say the federal government is doing too little in each of the five areas measured in the survey. For example, 53% of Millennial and younger Republicans say the federal government is doing too little to protect air quality, compared with just 30% of Baby Boomer and older Republicans.

Among Democrats, there are hardly any gaps in views on these questions by generation or gender. ([See appendix for more details](#)).

Acknowledgments

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Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted April 29 to May 5, 2020. A total of 10,957 panelists responded out of 13,459 who were sampled, for a response rate of 81%. This does not include 10 panelists who were removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 4.5%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 1.6%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 10,957 respondents is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points.

This study featured a stratified random sample from the ATP. The sampling strata were defined by the following variables: age, race, ethnicity, education, country of birth (among Hispanics), internet status, party affiliation, voter registration and volunteerism.

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

| Recruitment dates | Mode | Invited | Joined | Active panelists remaining |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014 | Landline/ cell RDD | 9,809 | 5,338 | 2,310 |
| Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015 | Landline/ cell RDD | 6,004 | 2,976 | 1,335 |
| April 25 to June 4, 2017 | Landline/ cell RDD | 3,905 | 1,628 | 685 |
| Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018 | ABS/web | 9,396 | 8,778 | 6,411 |
| Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019 | ABS/web | 5,900 | 4,720 | 4,686 |
| | Total | 35,014 | 23,440 | 15,427 |

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. The same recruitment procedure was carried out on August 19, 2019, from which a total of 5,900 were invited to join the panel and 4,720 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 23,440 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 15,427 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.¹ The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

Weighting

The ATP data was weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents’ original selection probability. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Weighting dimensions

| Variable | Benchmark source |
|--|---|
| Gender | 2018 American Community Survey |
| Age | |
| Education | |
| Race/Hispanic origin | |
| Country of birth among Hispanics | |
| Years lived in the United States among Hispanics | |
| Home internet access | |
| Region x Metropolitan status | 2019 CPS March Supplement |
| Volunteerism | 2017 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement |
| Voter registration | 2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement |
| Party affiliation | Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys. |

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

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¹ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. “[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling.](#)”

Sampling errors and test of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

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Margins of error

| | Unweighted Sample size | Margin of error in percentage points |
|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| U.S. adults | 10,957 | +/- 1.4 |
| Men | 4,909 | +/- 2.2 |
| Women | 6,026 | +/- 1.8 |
| White | 7,143 | +/- 1.7 |
| Black | 890 | +/- 4.6 |
| Hispanic | 2,173 | +/- 3.8 |
| Millennial & younger | 2,866 | +/- 2.7 |
| Generation X | 2,911 | +/- 2.6 |
| Boomer & older | 5,112 | +/- 2.1 |
| Postgraduate | 2,770 | +/- 2.4 |
| College grad | 3,176 | +/- 2.2 |
| Some college | 3,294 | +/- 2.3 |
| HS or less | 1,692 | +/- 3.0 |
| Rep/lean Rep | 4,437 | +/- 2.1 |
| Dem/lean Dem | 6,182 | +/- 2.0 |
| Cons Republican | 2,854 | +/- 2.6 |
| Mod/lib Republican | 1,534 | +/- 3.7 |
| Mod/cons Democrat | 2,946 | +/- 2.8 |
| Liberal Democrat | 3,159 | +/- 2.7 |

Note: The margins of error are reported at the 95% level of confidence and are calculated by taking into account the average design effect for each subgroup. Whites and blacks include those who report being only one race and are non-Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Republicans and Democrats include independents and others who lean to each of the parties.

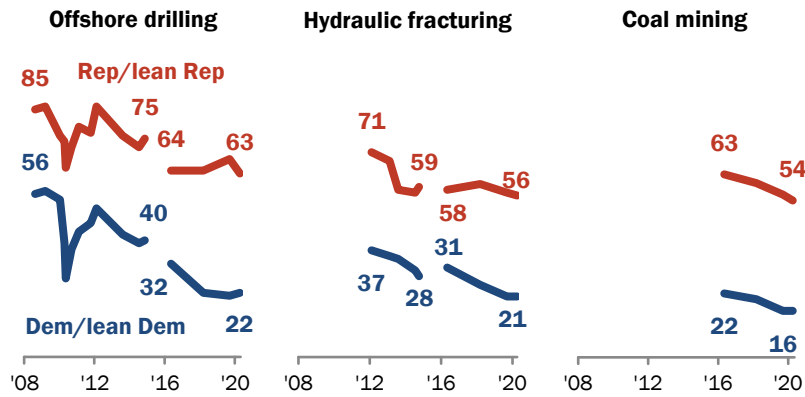
Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

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Appendix: Detailed charts and tables

Republicans more likely than Democrats to support expanded fossil fuel development

% of U.S. adults who favor more ...



Note: Surveys conducted from 2008 to 2015 were conducted by phone using somewhat different question wording than the online surveys that begin in 2016. Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

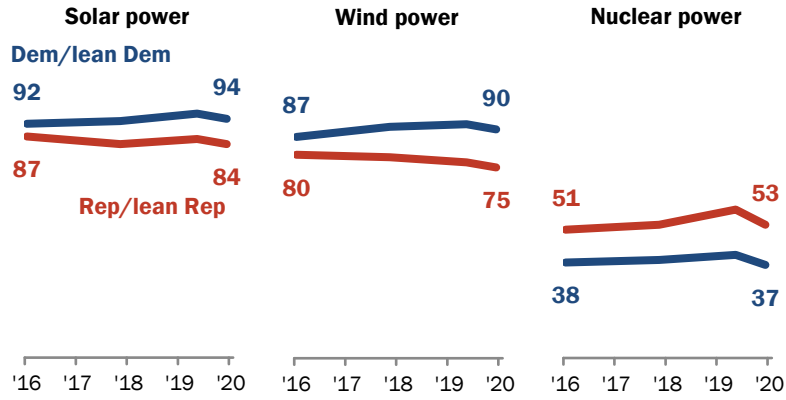
Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

"Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate"

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Majorities in both political parties support expanding use of wind and solar power

% of U.S adults who favor more ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

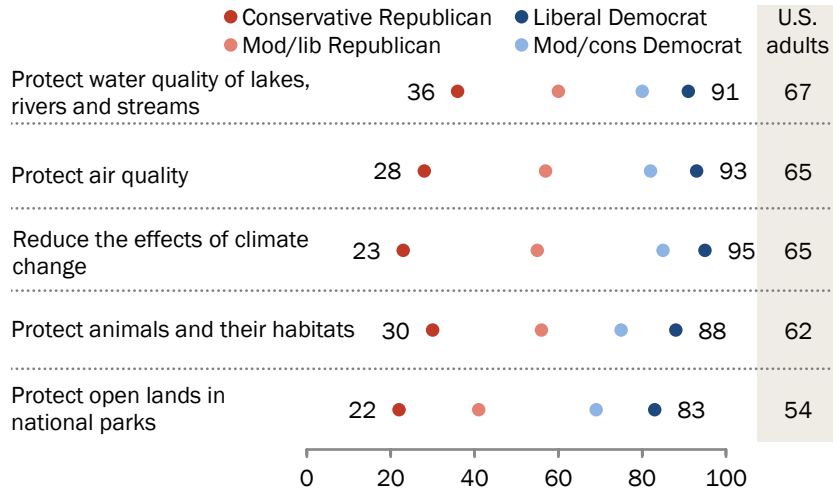
Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

"Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Republicans differ by ideology in views of the government's role in protecting the environment

% of U.S. adults who say the federal government is doing too little to ...



Note: Republicans and Democrats include independents and others who lean to each of the parties. Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

"Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Younger Republicans are more likely than older generations to say federal government is doing too little to protect key aspects of the environment

% of U.S. adults who say the federal government is doing too little to ...

| | Protect water quality of lakes, rivers, streams | Protect air quality | Reduce the effects of climate change | Protect animals and their habitats | Protect open lands in national parks |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| U.S. adults | 67 | 65 | 65 | 62 | 54 |
| Rep/lean Rep | 45 | 39 | 35 | 39 | 29 |
| Dem/lean Dem | 85 | 87 | 89 | 81 | 75 |
| Among Rep/lean Rep | | | | | |
| Men | 39 | 32 | 30 | 34 | 25 |
| Women | 51 | 47 | 41 | 45 | 33 |
| Millennial & younger | 57 | 53 | 49 | 52 | 38 |
| Gen X | 43 | 40 | 38 | 37 | 28 |
| Baby Boomer & older | 38 | 30 | 25 | 33 | 24 |
| Among Dem/lean Dem | | | | | |
| Men | 85 | 87 | 91 | 79 | 76 |
| Women | 84 | 86 | 87 | 82 | 75 |
| Millennial & younger | 84 | 86 | 88 | 80 | 72 |
| Gen X | 85 | 87 | 89 | 81 | 77 |
| Baby Boomer & older | 85 | 87 | 90 | 81 | 77 |

Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

"Two-Thirds of Americans Say Government Should Do More on Climate"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Topline questionnaire

**2020 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL
WAVE 67 TOPLINE
April 29-May 5
TOTAL N=10,957**

OTHER QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED OR HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

ENV2 Do you favor or oppose EXPANDING each of the following sources of energy in our country? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | <u>No Answer</u> |
|--|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| a. More offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 40 | 58 | 2 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 42 | 56 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 39 | 60 | 1 |
| May 10-Jun 6, 2016 | 45 | 52 | 3 |
| b. More nuclear power plants to generate electricity | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 43 | 55 | 2 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 49 | 49 | 2 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 44 | 54 | 2 |
| May 10-Jun 6, 2016 | 43 | 54 | 3 |
| c. More coal mining | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 33 | 65 | 2 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 35 | 63 | 2 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 37 | 61 | 2 |
| May 10-Jun 6, 2016 | 41 | 57 | 3 |
| d. More solar panel "farms" | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 90 | 9 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 92 | 8 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 89 | 10 | 1 |
| May 10-Jun 6, 2016 | 89 | 9 | 2 |
| e. More hydraulic fracturing, sometimes called "fracking," for oil and natural gas | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 37 | 60 | 3 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 38 | 60 | 2 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 39 | 58 | 2 |
| May 10-Jun 6, 2016 | 42 | 53 | 5 |
| f. More wind turbine "farms" | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 83 | 16 | 2 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 85 | 14 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 85 | 13 | 2 |
| May 10-Jun 6, 2016 | 83 | 14 | 3 |

TRENDS FOR COMPARISON

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: Would you favor or oppose allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters?

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | (VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Jan 10-15, 2018 | 41 | 57 | 12 |
| Aug 15-25, 2014 ² | 39 | 51 | 10 |

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: As I read some possible government policies, tell me whether you would favor or oppose. Would you favor or oppose the government allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters?

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | (VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u> |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Mar 7-11, 2012 | 65 | 31 | 4 |
| Oct 13-18, 2010 | 57 | 37 | 6 |
| Jun 16-20, 2010 | 44 | 52 | 4 |
| May 6-9, 2010 | 54 | 38 | 8 |
| Feb 3-9, 2019 | 63 | 31 | 6 |
| April 2009 | 68 | 27 | 5 |
| September 2008 | 67 | 28 | 5 |

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: All in all, do you favor or oppose building more nuclear power plants to generate electricity?

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | (VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u> |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Aug 15-25, 2014 | 45 | 51 | 4 |
| Apr 28-May 12, 2009 | 51 | 42 | 7 |

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: As I read some possible government policies, tell me whether you would favor or oppose. Would you favor or oppose the government promoting the increased use of nuclear power?

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | (VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u> |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Mar 7-11, 2012 | 44 | 49 | 7 |
| Nov 3-6, 2011 | 39 | 53 | 8 |
| Mar 17-20, 2011 | 39 | 52 | 8 |
| Oct 13-18, 2010 | 45 | 44 | 11 |
| Jun 16-20, 2010 | 47 | 47 | 6 |
| May 6-9, 2010 | 45 | 44 | 11 |
| Feb 3-9, 2019 | 52 | 41 | 7 |
| April 2009 | 45 | 46 | 7 |
| September 2008 | 50 | 43 | 7 |
| Late February, 2008 | 44 | 48 | 8 |
| February, 2006 | 44 | 49 | 7 |
| Mid-September 2005 | 39 | 53 | 8 |

² In August 2014 respondents were asked, "All in all, do you favor or opposed allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters?"

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: Do you favor or oppose increased use of fracking, a drilling method that uses high-pressure water and chemicals to extract oil and natural gas from underground rock formations?

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | <u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u> |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Nov 6-9, 2014 | 41 | 57 | 12 |
| Aug 15-25, 2014 | 39 | 51 | 10 |
| Sep 4-8, 2013 | 44 | 49 | 7 |
| Mar 13-17, 2013 | 48 | 38 | 14 |

ASK ALL:

EN1

Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be the more important priority for addressing America's energy supply? **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS]**

| Apr 29- May 5 2020 | | Oct 1-13 2019 |
|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| 79 | Developing alternative sources, such as wind, solar and hydrogen technology | 77 |
| 20 | Expanding exploration and production of oil, coal and natural gas | 22 |
| 1 | No answer | 1 |

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: Right now, which ONE of the following do you think should be the more important priority for addressing America's energy supply **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

| | <u>Developing alternative sources such as, wind, solar and hydrogen technology</u> | <u>Expanding exploration and production of oil, coal and natural gas</u> | <u>(VOL.) Both should be given equal priority</u> | <u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------|
| Jan 4-9, 2017 | 65 | 27 | 5 | 3 |
| Dec 3-7, 2014 | 60 | 30 | 5 | 4 |
| Feb 12-26, 2014 | 65 | 28 | 5 | 2 |
| Sep 4-8, 2013 | 58 | 34 | 6 | 3 |
| Feb 13-18, 2013 | 54 | 34 | 7 | 4 |
| Oct 24-28, 2012 | 47 | 39 | 9 | 5 |
| Mar 7-11, 2012 | 52 | 39 | 5 | 4 |
| Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011 | 63 | 29 | 6 | 2 |

ASK ALL:

ENVIR6

Which of these statements comes closest to your own view about the MOST EFFECTIVE WAY to increase reliance on renewable energy sources, even if neither is exactly right?

[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS]

| Apr 29– May 5 <u>2020</u> | | Mar 27– Apr 9 <u>2018</u> |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 58 | Government regulations are necessary to encourage businesses and consumers to rely more on renewable energy sources | 56 |
| 39 | The private marketplace will ensure that businesses and consumers rely more on renewable energy sources, even without government regulations | 42 |
| 2 | No Answer | 1 |

TREND FOR COMPARISON

Pew Research Center survey conducted by telephone: Which of these statements come closest to your own view about the MOST EFFECTIVE WAY to increase reliance on renewable energy sources, even if neither is exactly right? [READ AND RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 AND 2]

*May 3-7
2017*

| | |
|----|---|
| 54 | <i>Government regulations are necessary to encourage businesses and consumers to rely more on renewable energy sources</i> |
| 38 | <i>The private marketplace will ensure that businesses and consumers rely more on renewable energy sources, even without government regulations</i> |
| 8 | <i>No answer</i> |

ASK ALL:

ENVIR8

How much do you think the federal government is doing to... **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS; show on same screen]**

| | <u>Too much</u> | <u>Too little</u> | <u>About the right amount</u> | <u>No Answer</u> |
|---|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. Protect air quality | | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 4 | 65 | 30 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 4 | 67 | 28 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 8 | 64 | 27 | 1 |
| b. Protect water quality of lakes, rivers and streams | | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 3 | 67 | 29 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 4 | 68 | 27 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 6 | 69 | 24 | 1 |
| c. Protect animals and their habitats | | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 6 | 62 | 32 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 7 | 62 | 31 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 9 | 63 | 27 | 1 |
| d. Protect open lands in national parks and nature preserves | | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 5 | 54 | 40 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 5 | 55 | 39 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 8 | 57 | 34 | 1 |
| e. Reduce the effects of global climate change | | | | |
| April 29-May 5, 2020 | 9 | 65 | 25 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 10 | 67 | 23 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 | 13 | 67 | 19 | 1 |

ASK ALL:

EN7

How much do you think human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels, contributes to global climate change?

| Apr 29- May 5 2020 | | Oct 1-13 2019 |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| 49 | A great deal | 49 |
| 32 | Some | 30 |
| 13 | Not too much | 14 |
| 6 | Not at all | 6 |
| 1 | No answer | 2 |

ASK ALL:

CCPOLICY

Do you favor or oppose the following proposals to reduce the effects of global climate change? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS; show on same screen]**

| | <u>Favor</u> | <u>Oppose</u> | <u>No Answer</u> |
|--|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| a. Planting about a trillion trees around the world to absorb carbon emissions in the atmosphere Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 90 | 9 | 1 |
| b. Taxing corporations based on the amount of carbon emissions they produce Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 73 | 25 | 1 |
| c. Providing a tax credit to encourage businesses to develop technology which captures and stores carbon emissions so they do not enter the atmosphere Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 84 | 15 | 1 |
| d. Tougher restrictions on power plant carbon emissions Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 80 | 19 | 1 |
| e. Tougher fuel-efficiency standards for automobiles and trucks Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 71 | 28 | 1 |

ASK ALL:

CLIM9 How much, if at all, do you think global climate change is currently affecting your local community?

| | A great <u>deal</u> | <u>Some</u> | Not too <u>much</u> | <u>Not at all</u> | <u>No Answer</u> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 24 | 39 | 25 | 12 | <1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 ³ | 22 | 39 | 24 | 13 | 1 |
| Mar 27-Apr 9, 2018 ⁴ | 22 | 37 | 25 | 15 | <1 |

ASK IF CLIM9=1,2 (LOCAL COMMUNITY AFFECTED A GREAT DEAL OR SOME) [N=7,384]:

CLIM10 Would you say each of the following is a MAJOR way that global climate change is currently affecting your local community, or not? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

BASED ON ALL ASKED [N=7,384]

| | <u>Yes, a major way</u> | <u>No, not a major way</u> | <u>No answer</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. Droughts or water shortages | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 60 | 39 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 64 | 35 | 1 |
| b. Long periods of unusually hot weather | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 73 | 26 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 79 | 21 | 1 |
| c. Severe weather, like floods or intense storms | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 70 | 29 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 70 | 29 | <1 |
| d. Rising sea levels that erode beaches and shore lines | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 58 | 41 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 56 | 43 | 1 |
| e. Damage to forests and plant life | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 67 | 32 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 67 | 32 | 1 |
| f. Harm to animal wildlife and their habitats | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 69 | 30 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 69 | 30 | 1 |
| g. More frequent wildfires | | | |
| Apr 29-May 5, 2020 | 59 | 41 | 1 |
| Oct 1-13, 2019 | 56 | 43 | 1 |

³ October 2019 survey combines those asked in a series and those asked as the question is shown here.

⁴ Spring 2018 survey asked about climate change affecting your local community as part of a series.

OTHER QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED OR HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE