

Survey: Environmental pessimism abounds

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A Stanford University survey suggests most Americans are pessimistic about the state of the environment and want action taken to improve it.

The survey by Stanford's Woods Institute for the Environment showed 55 percent of those surveyed expect the world's natural environment to be in worse shape in 10 years than it is now, and an additional 5 percent said the environment is in "poor" or "very poor" shape and will not improve.

"We refer to this group of 60 percent of Americans as 'pessimists,'" said Jon Krosnick, professor of humanities and social sciences. But he said the group closely resembles the overall American public in terms of gender, race, and education.

Krosnick said 86 percent of those surveyed want U.S. President George Bush, Congress, and businesses to do "a lot" to improve the environment during the next year. The call to action was bipartisan, with 94 percent of Democrats and 76 percent of Republicans urging environmental improvements.

The telephone survey was conducted in collaboration with ABC News and Time magazine March 9-14 among a random national sample of 1,002 adults. The results have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

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