

Floridians believe global warming will have dangerous impacts on the state

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Residents want government to do more to address climate change

A new survey of Floridians finds that most are convinced that global warming is happening now and that more should be done by key leaders to help Florida deal with climate change. The survey is the first-ever study of Floridians' opinions about global warming and was conducted by researchers at Yale University and the University of Miami, with funding from the U.S. National Science Foundation.

A survey of 1,077 adults in Florida from May 1, 2008 to May 19, 2008 was fielded by Knowledge Networks, using a representative, online research panel. The survey's key findings include:

-- A majority of Floridians are convinced that global warming is happening (71%) and that global warming is caused mainly by human activities (55%), or caused equally by humans and natural changes (13%).

-- 65 percent believe that global warming is already having or will have dangerous impacts on people in Florida within the next 10 years.

-- 69 percent believe that parts of the state's coasts may need to be abandoned due to rising sea levels over the next 50 years.

Likewise, large majorities believe that global warming will cause worse storms, hurricanes and tornadoes (80%), droughts and water shortages (80%), flooding of major cities (68%), food shortages (68%), less

tourism (64%), and increased rates of disease (57%).

"Floridians believe global warming will have serious consequences here at home and are growing increasingly concerned about the issue," said Dr. Kenny Broad, associate professor at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science.

In line with these concerns, large majorities support state policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, even if these policies impact their own pocketbook. For example:

- 65 percent support requiring electric utilities to produce at least 20% of their electricity from wind, solar or other renewable energy sources, even if it costs the average household an extra \$100 per year.

- 65 percent support a state subsidy to encourage building owners to replace old water heaters, air conditioners, light bulbs, and insulation, even if it cost the average household \$5 a month in higher taxes.

- 63 percent support the installation of solar panels on state-owned buildings, even if the electricity generated is significantly more expensive than what state government normally pays for its electricity.

"Large majorities of Floridians want Governor Crist, their state legislators, and their own mayors to do more to address global warming," said Dr. Anthony Leiserowitz, Director of the Yale Project on Climate Change at Yale University. "Many Floridians also say they are willing to act individually to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

Source: University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science

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