

# Anger found to be the primary driver of climate activism

August 25 2023, by Bob Yirka

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A trio of psychologists at the Norwegian Research Center and the University of Bergen's Norway Center for Climate and Energy Transformation has found via survey that the chief motivating factor that

gets people to participate in climate activism is anger. In their study, reported in the journal *Global Environmental Change*, Thea Gregersen, Gisle Andersen and Endre Tvinnereim, surveyed more than 2,000 Norwegian adults about their feelings regarding climate activism related to slowing climate change.

Prior research has shown that [climate](#) change could be slowed, stopped, or even reversed by the cessation of greenhouse gas emissions and implementation of technology that removes [greenhouse gases](#) from the atmosphere. Unfortunately, little progress is being made on either front.

In this new study, the researchers sought to better understand why so little is being done to save the planet considering the magnitude of future repercussions. More specifically, they wondered what it takes to motivate people from merely thinking about climate change to actively engaging in activities that might result in pressuring governments and industry to take appropriate action.

The researchers sent a [survey](#) to thousands of Norwegian adults, receiving 2,046 responses. The goal of the survey was to determine the motivations for people to engage in climate [activism](#). To that end, the survey asked about whether a respondent engaged in climate activism and what they thought might make them do so if they were not active.

They also asked about specific emotions related to climate activism, such as whether they felt fear about changes to come, anger at their government and others for not enacting laws banning [greenhouse gas emissions](#), or simply hopelessness.

In looking at their data, the researchers found that just under half of the respondents felt angry about climate change. And those who were angry said it was mostly due to human actions leading to climate change. Many were also angry about the prioritization of funding toward activities that

they deemed less important than [climate change](#).

When respondents were asked which emotion was most likely to drive them to engage in climate activism, anger was cited most often, seven times as often as hope, which came in second.

**More information:** Thea Gregersen et al, The strength and content of climate anger, *Global Environmental Change* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2023.102738](#)

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