

# Communicating Climate Change: Implications for Engaging Forest Owners

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National Academies of Science

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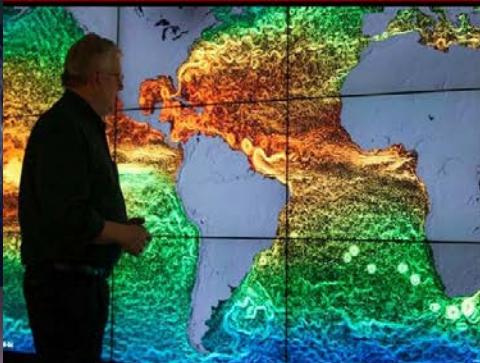




## EXTREME WEATHER AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN MIND

APRIL 2013

YALE PROJECT ON CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION  
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION



# Climate Change & Energy

Public Attitudes, Behaviors & Policy Support

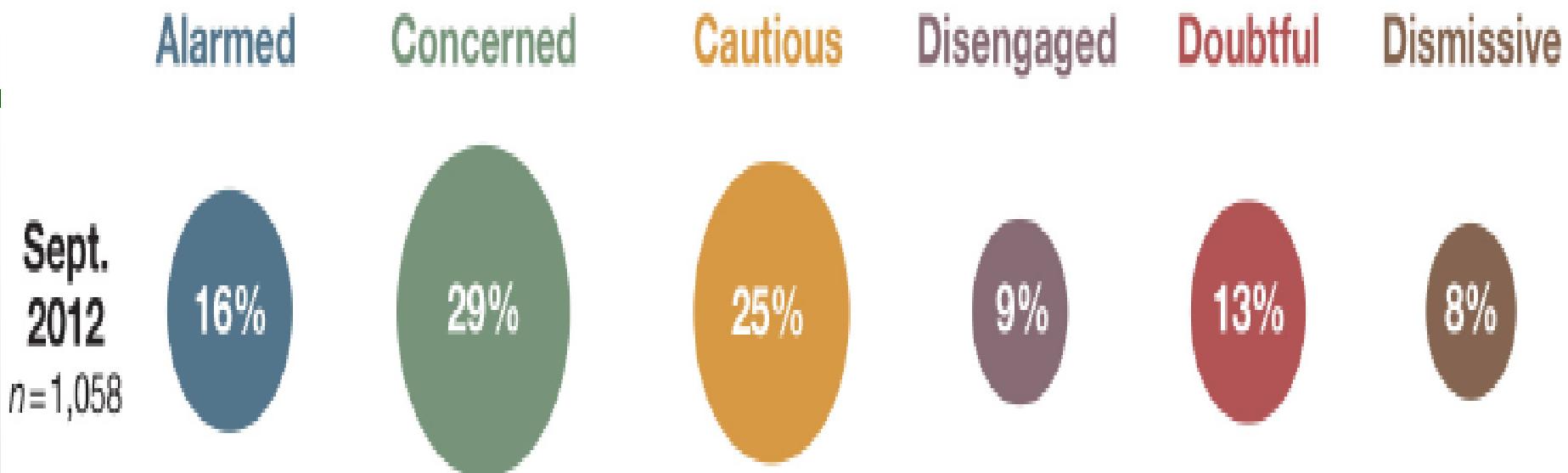
*A Survey of Maryland Residents | Summer 2013*

# What We've Learned

- Cognitive engagement – ex: knowledge of scientific consensus....
- Affective engagement – perceived risk; worry; optimism/hope....
- Behavioral engagement – behavior change; policy support....
- “*We don't see things as they are; we see things as we are*”

1. Audience research, segmentation
2. Message testing
3. Trusted sources





Highest Belief in Global Warming  
Most Concerned  
Most Motivated

Lowest Belief in Global Warming  
Least Concerned  
Least Motivated

*Proportion represented by area*

Source: Yale / George Mason University

Figure 2: Certainty of Belief about the Reality of Global Warming, March 2012

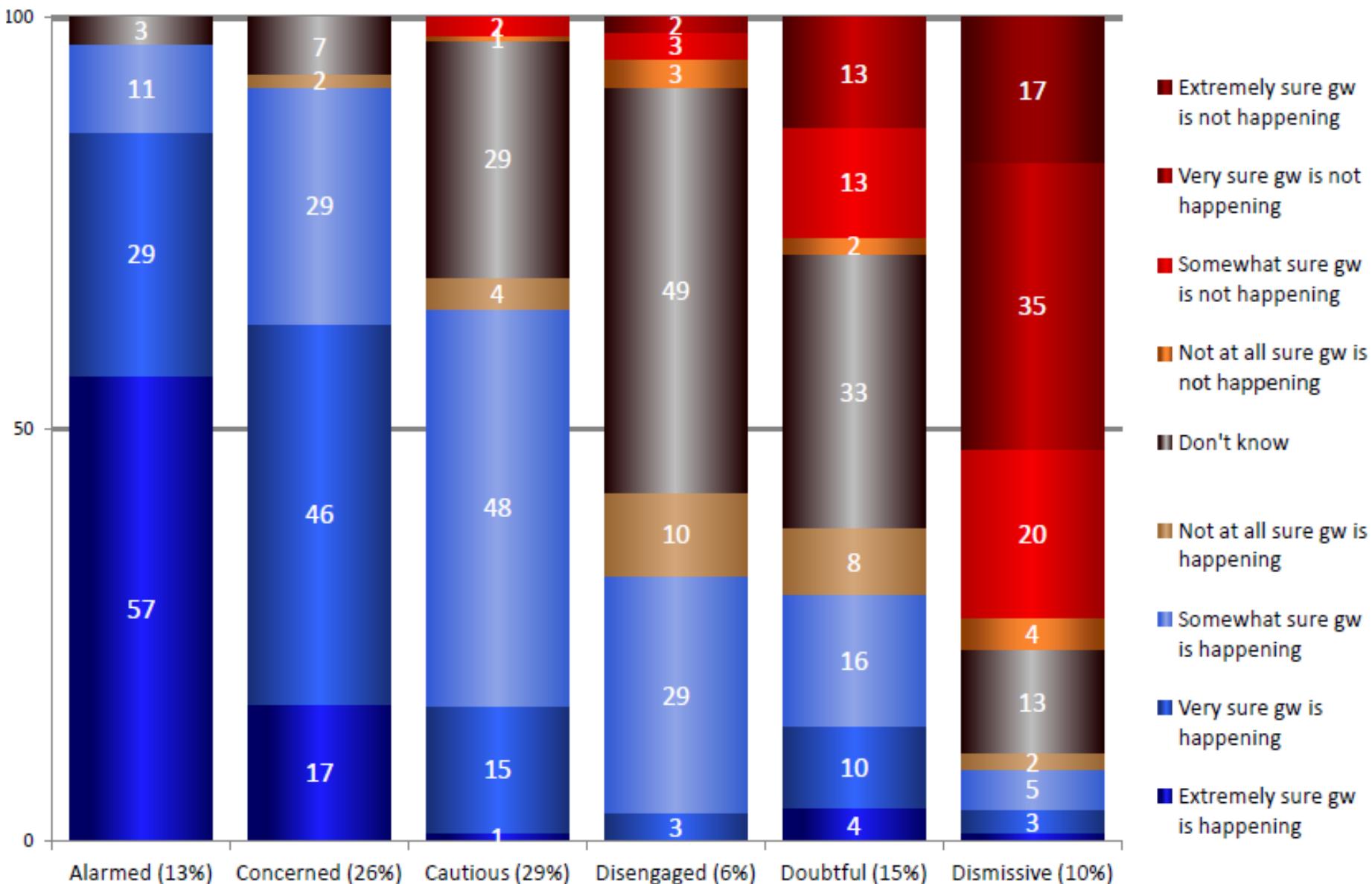


Figure 4: Perceived Cause of Global Warming, March 2012  
"Assuming global warming is happening, do you think it is..."

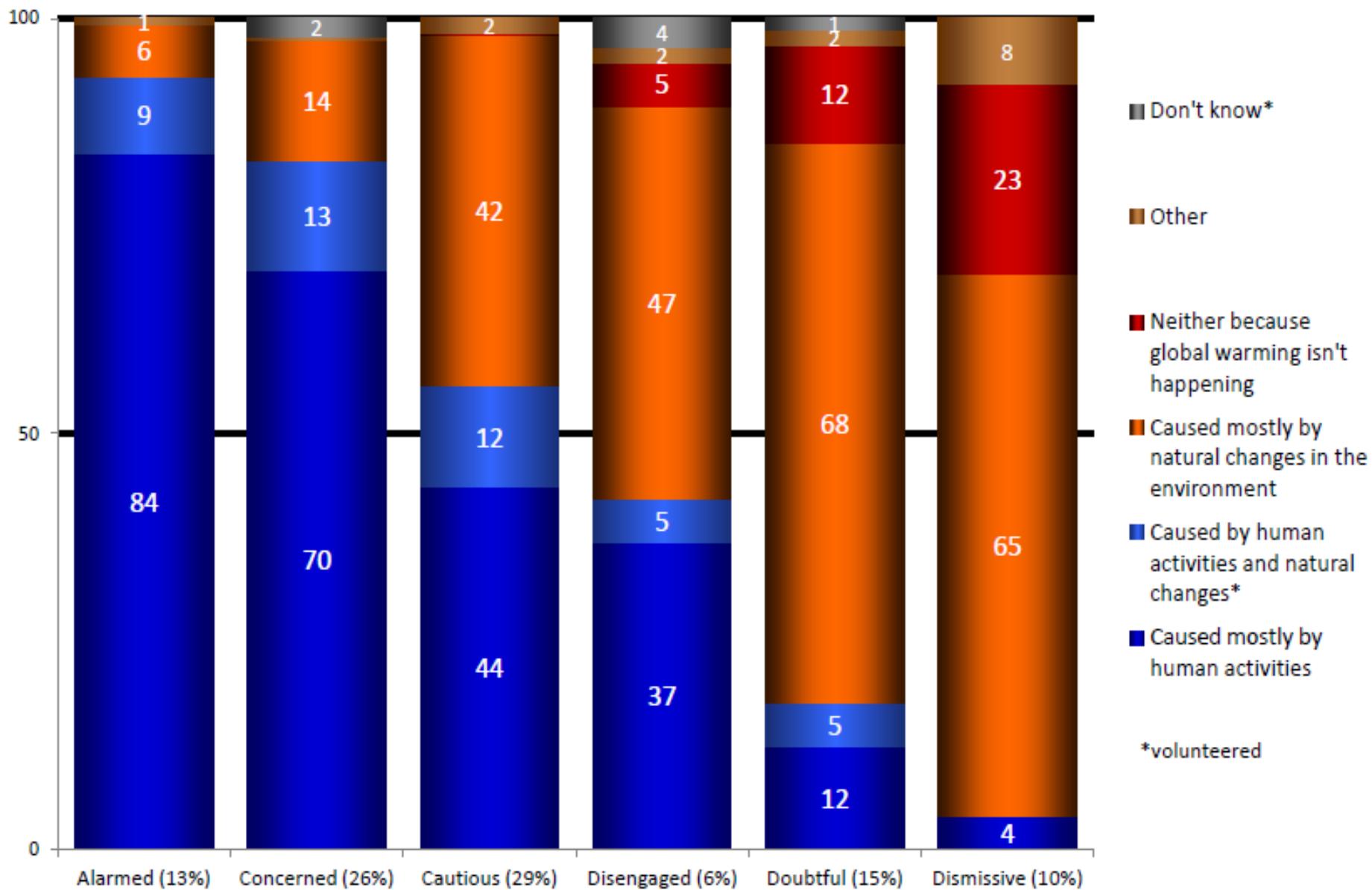
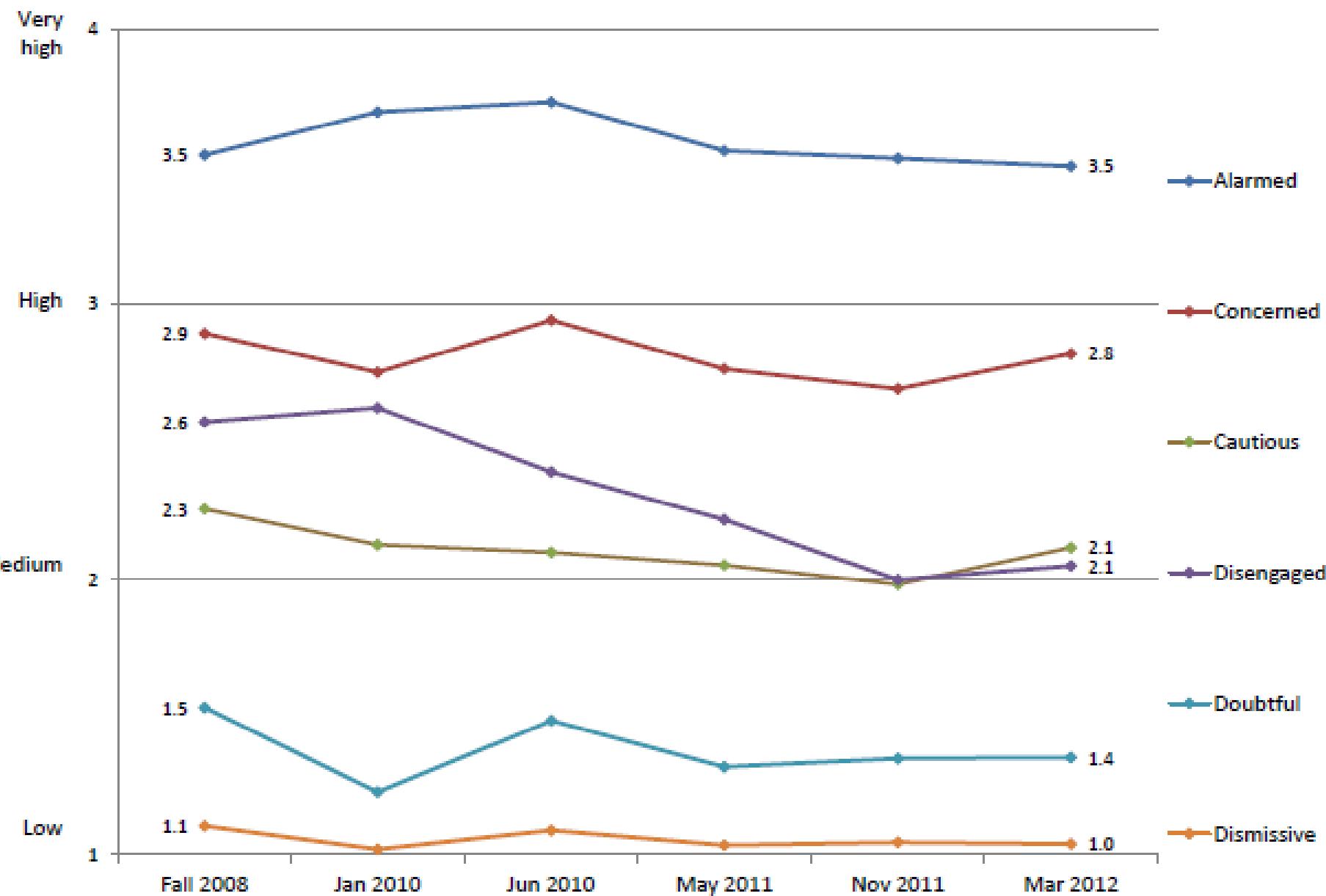
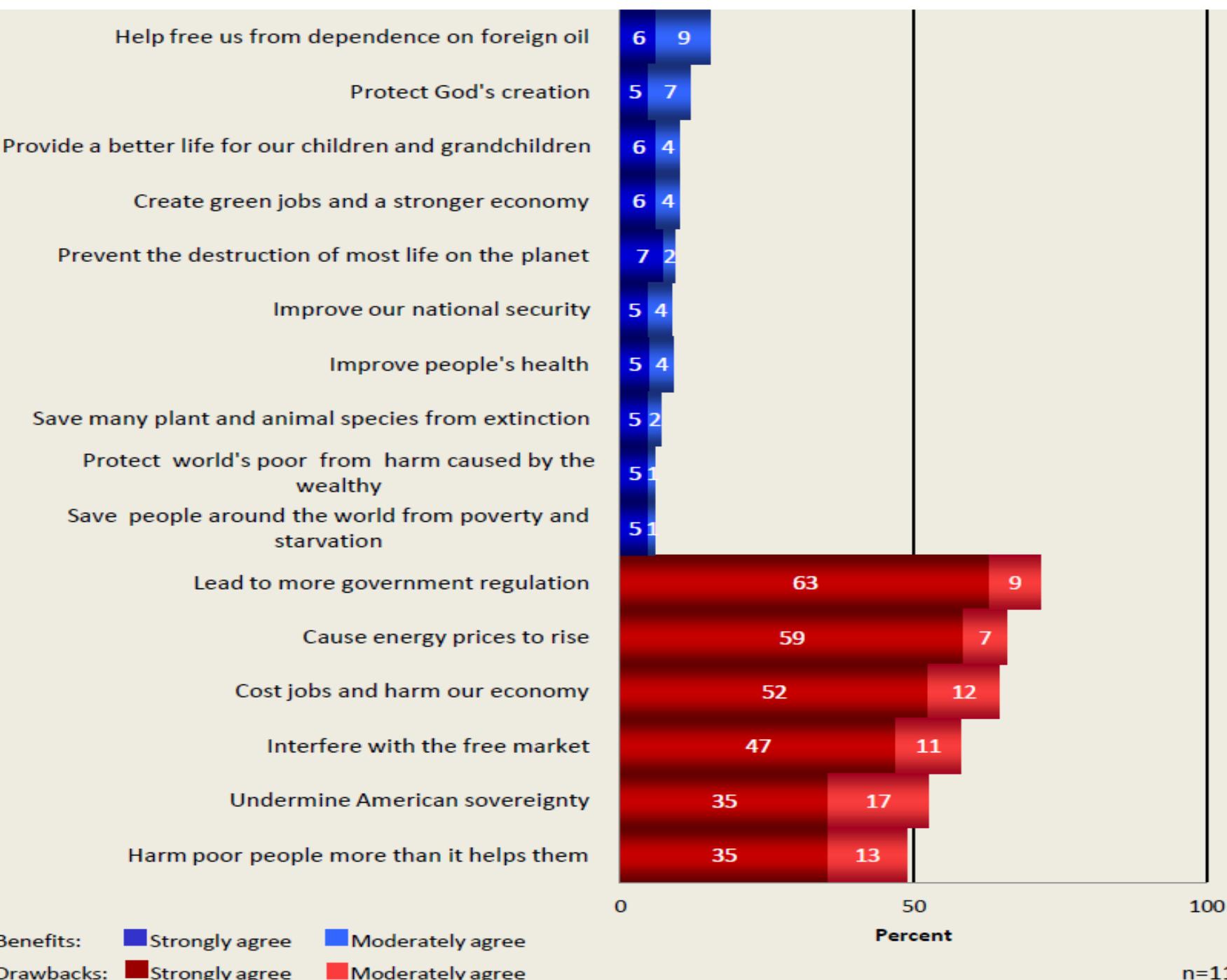


Figure 7: Global Warming Issue Priority, 2008-2012: "Do you think global warming should be a low, medium, high or very high priority for the president and Congress?"





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## Global warming key beliefs:

Belief certainty  
Human causation  
Collective efficacy  
Harm timing  
Harm extent

Perceived scientific  
agreement

Policy support

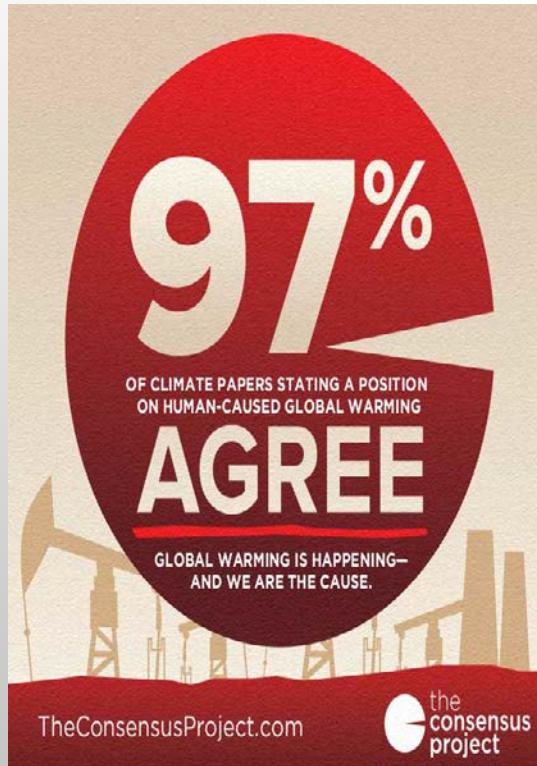
Injunctive beliefs



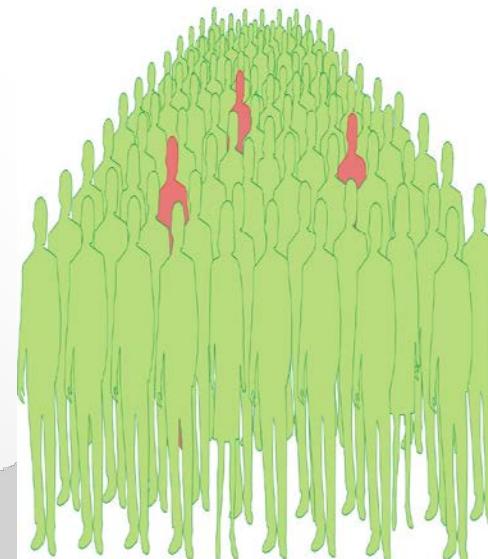
# Stressing the Scientific Consensus

- Scientific consensus on climate change as key message ([The Consensus Project](#))

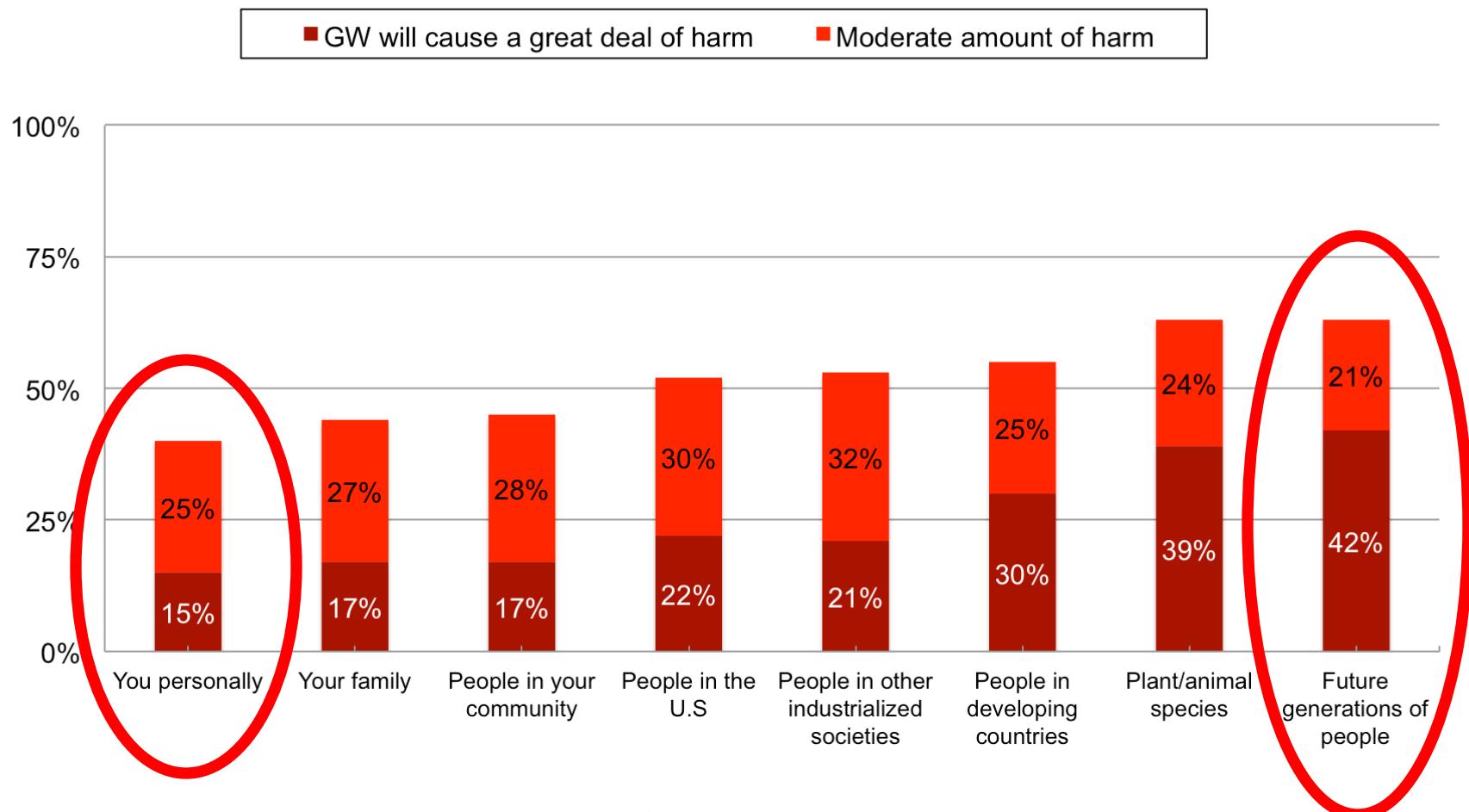
**Question:** Would it be persuasive to different segments of 6 Americas?



97 out of 100 climate experts think  
humans are changing global temperature



# Global Warming Still Seen as a Relatively Distant Threat



How much do you think global warming will harm...?

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,045)

# Climate Change “Framing”

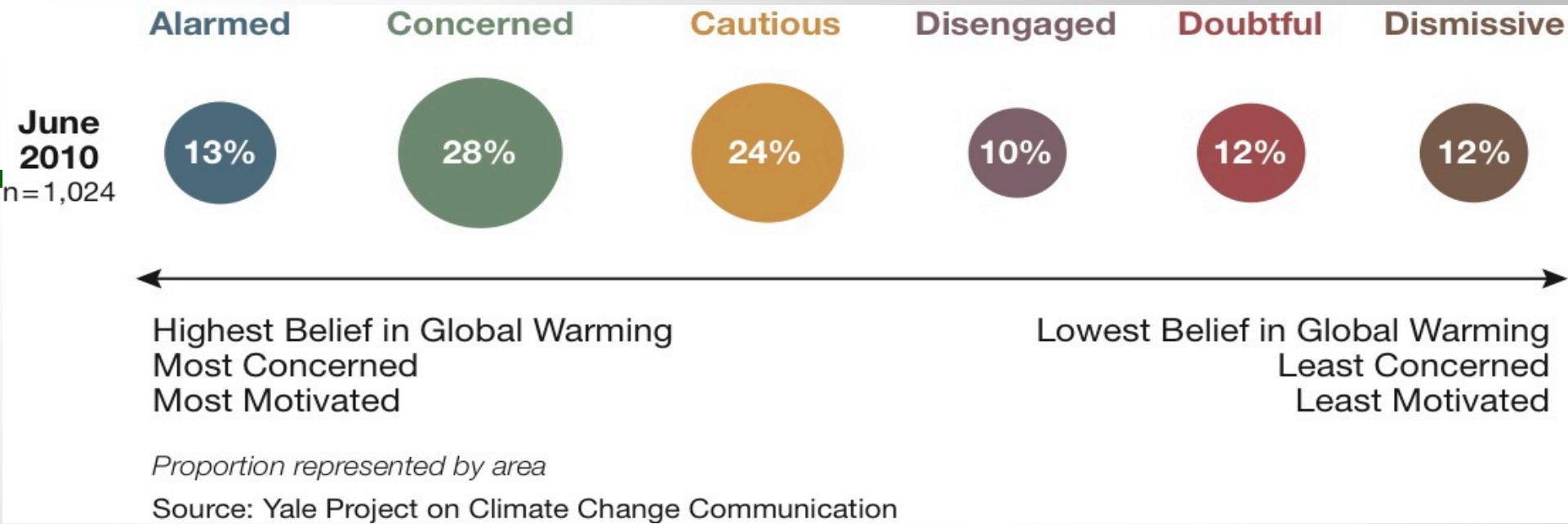
- **Frame** – an “interpretive package” of information that emphasizes issue causes and solutions
- Climate change impacts and benefits of taking action
- **A public health frame**

Makes climate change a more **proximate threat**?

Makes the **benefits** of taking **action** more **tangible**?







- **Alarmed, Concerned, and Cautious** – most favorable responses to public health threats and benefits of taking action
- **Disengaged, Doubtful, and Dismissive** – less favorable responses to public health threats; responses to benefits of taking action still positive.
- Public health frame - help make climate change **more tractable**

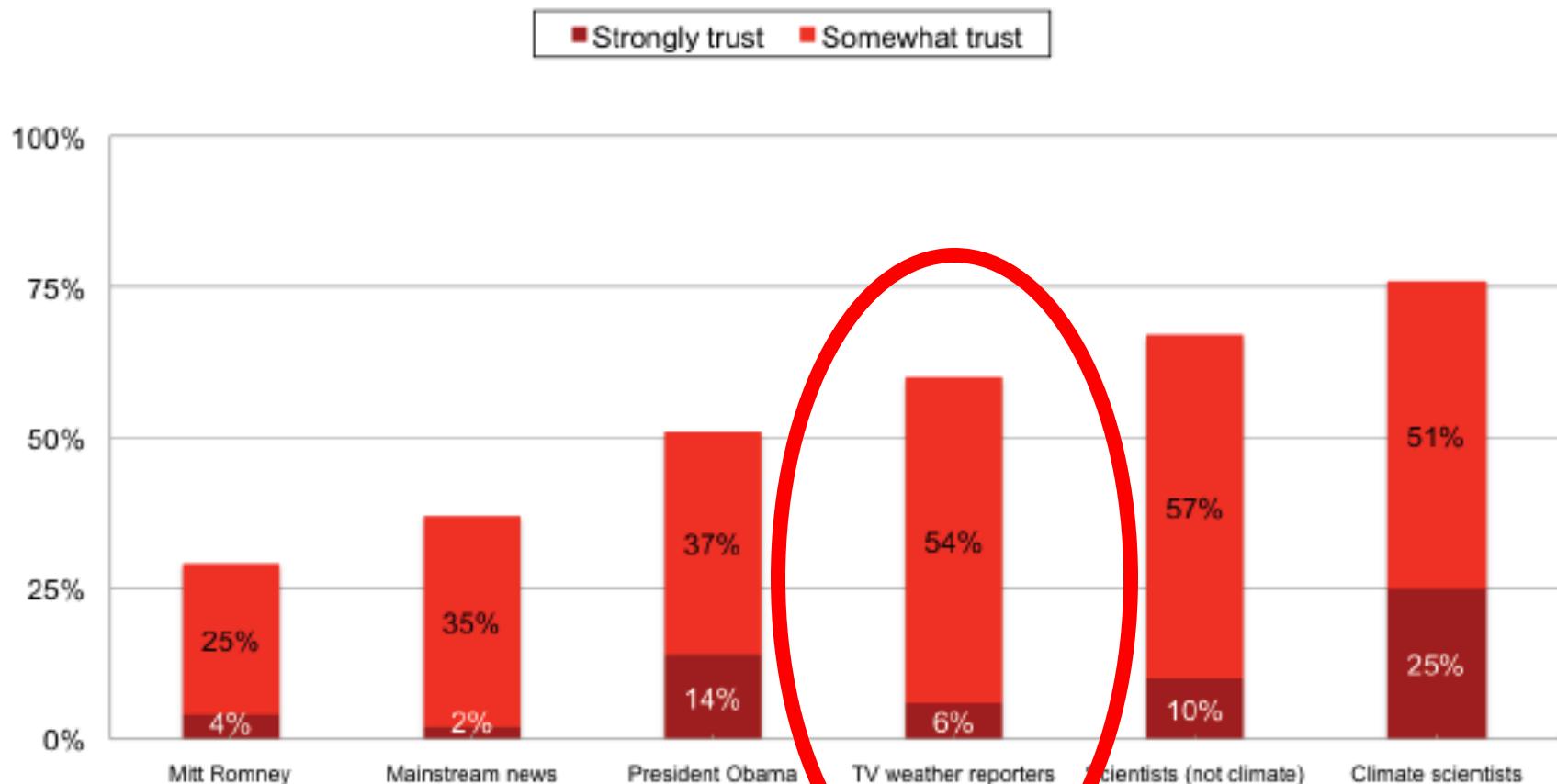
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# Climate Scientists Are Americans' Most Trusted Source of Information



How much do you trust or distrust the following as a source of information about global warming...?

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,061)

Source: Yale/George Mason

# Deepen Understanding, Explain Complexities



**SETTING THE WEATHER STRAIGHT**

JIM GANDY, CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

WLTX HOME WEATHER NEWS JIM'S BIO P

**Global Warming = More Rain? Not Exactly**

5 October 2009

The idea for this blog came from two sources. The first source was a comment on an earlier story posted in the Earth, Science, and Technology section (to see the story click [here](#)).

In the comment section, [donnielex](#) wrote:

"By the way, the article above does not inform you that global warming does not cause droughts or dry weather. Global warming would mean **MORE RAIN**. I would defer to Mr. Gandy on that though. Am I correct Mr. Gandy, wouldn't global warming mean more evaporation of surface water and snow

All of Jim's Blogs:

- Global Warming = More Rain? Not Exactly
- Hugo: Twenty Years Later
- Weather Now
- SNOW OR BUST
- THE SPRING 2009 OUTLOOK
- A WINTER AND DROUGHT UPDATE
- WILL IT BE A COLD WINTER?
- CLIMATE CHANGE: THE GREATEST CHALLENGE OF OUR AGE
- FEAST OR FAMINE
- THE CHANGING FACE OF BROADCAST METEOROLOGY
- WILL IT BE A HOT SUMMER?
- CLIMATE CHANGE: A PROPOSAL
- CLIMATE CHANGE: A RESPONSE
- NEW ORLEANS: THE BATTERED CITY RECOVERS
- HURRICANE SEASON 2008: 25 YEARS OF FORECASTING
- CLIMATE CHANGE: LIBERALS ARE MORONS, BUT CONSERVATIVES ARE IDIOTS
- THE TORNADO OUTBREAK OF SATURDAY, MARCH 15
- PIGS CAN'T FLY, BUT MOBILE HOMES CAN
- THE THRILL OF THE CHASE
- IN PURSUIT OF A TORNADO



Mr. Maibach goes on NPR...



# In Summary

- Engaging hearts and minds – knowledge, emotions, and support

## **(1) Audience research, segmentation – the 6 Americas protocol**

- <http://www.climatechangecommunication.org/global-warmings-six-americas-screening-tools>
- [http://www.climatechangecommunication.org/images/files/Six\\_Americas\\_Screening\\_Tool\\_Manual\\_July2011.pdf](http://www.climatechangecommunication.org/images/files/Six_Americas_Screening_Tool_Manual_July2011.pdf)

## **(2) Messages that fit your goal(s) – behavior change vs. policy support**

## **(3) Trusted sources – “Only Nixon can go to China”**



# Thanks!

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