

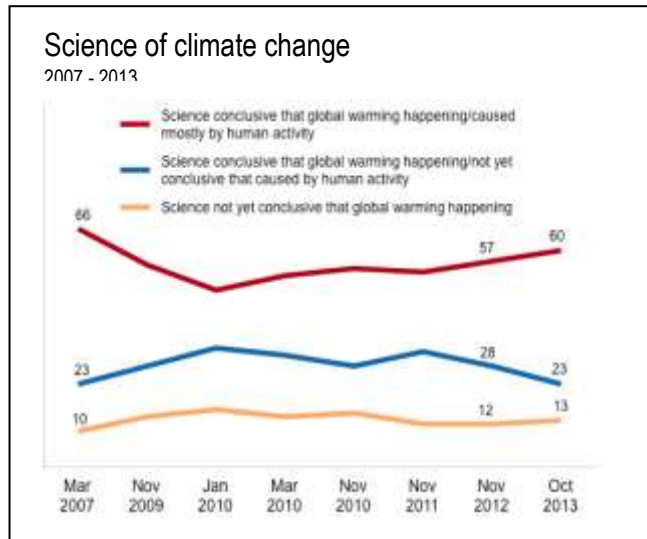
Science on climate change

Six in ten Canadians now believe that climate change is real and caused by human activity, up marginally over the past year and continuing an upward trend dating back to 2010. Those not yet certain about the science remain divided on whether it is best to take action now or wait until we know more.

Is climate change happening? As has been the case since tracking began in 2007, a majority (60%) of Canadians believe that the scientific evidence about the existence of climate change is conclusive and that it is primarily caused by human activity. This proportion has increased marginally over the past 12 months and is now at its highest point since Spring 2007).

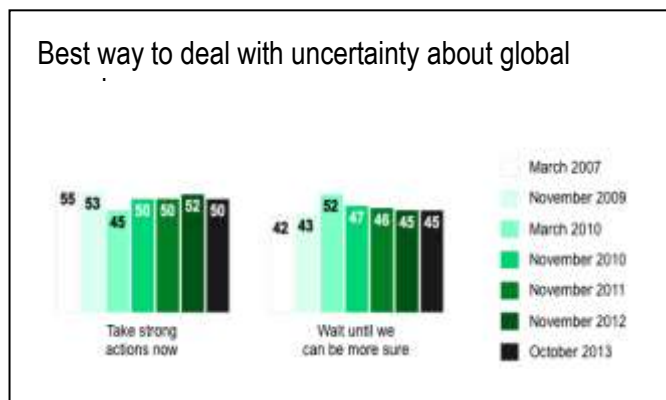
One in four (23%) now say climate change is real but do not feel the science proves humans are the main cause (down 5 points since 2012), while one in ten (12%) continue to be skeptical about the scientific evidence (largely unchanged since 2007).

As before, opinions differ somewhat across the country. Belief in the science of climate change is most widespread in Quebec (66%) and Atlantic Canada (65%), followed by Ontario (61%) and B.C. (59%). This view is least apt to be shared in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (52%) and Alberta (47%), where 17 percent are skeptical about the reality of climate change. Since 2012, belief in the conclusiveness of the science has increased noticeably in Ontario, Atlantic Canada, while declining in Quebec.



Education continues to be the strongest predictor of belief in climate change, although the gap has narrowed over the past 12 months as this view has strengthened among Canadians without post-secondary education. Opinions also vary in a predictable pattern based on Federal political party affiliation: Belief in the science is most widespread among those who generally support the NDP (76%) and Green Party (79%), followed by the Bloc Quebecois (70%), Liberals (69%). By comparison, only four in ten (41%) Conservative Party supporters share this view, compared with 24 percent who are not sure that climate change is happening. Among those who do not affiliate with any party, 54 percent believe in the science, versus 12 percent who are skeptics. Over the past year, belief in the science has increased modestly for all groups except those who support the Bloc Quebecois.

Dealing with uncertainty. Canadians who are not convinced of the scientific reality of climate change remain divided on how best to deal with the uncertainty surrounding the issue. Half (50%) of this group continue to say we should take strong actions now to reduce the chances of a worst case scenario (versus 52% in 2012), while 45 percent think it is best to hold off taking action until stronger evidence emerges of what may happen in the future (unchanged).



A preference for acting now is more prevalent among Quebecers, women, younger Canadians and Green Party supporters, in comparison with residents in Saskatchewan and Alberta, Canadians without a high school diploma, and Conservative Party supporters.