

#ClimateOptimist: A majority of people globally are optimistic about solving climate change – two thirds of people across the world agree we can solve climate change if we take action now

Climate Week NYC Opening Ceremony, New York, September 18, 2017:

A new survey finds that a majority of people globally are optimistic about our ability to address climate change, with 64 percent of global citizens believing we can address climate change if we take action now. Overall, 33% strongly agree this is the case, and 32% tend to agree. Only 11 percent disagree that we can address climate change if we take action now.

The survey, conducted by global market research firm Ipsos on behalf of non-profit organization [The Climate Group](#) and change agency [Futerra](#), polled online adults aged 16-64 in 26 countries and is at the heart of a new campaign, [#ClimateOptimist](#), launched today to change the dominant narrative on climate change. The campaign's partners include [Mars](#), [VF Corp](#), [Interface](#), [Ashden](#) and the [DivestInvest](#) movement.

The survey found that people in emerging economies are especially likely to feel positive about solving climate change, with 71 percent of these respondents believing we can address it if we take action now, compared to only 59 percent in established economies. Countries with high numbers of optimists include Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Mexico, India, Peru and South Africa.

Only 4% of people globally believe that the Earth's climate is not changing, so there is no need to do anything about it.

However, 61 percent of survey respondents said they hear much more about the negative impacts of climate change than they do about progress on reducing it.

This may be contributing to the belief that although the climate is changing, humanity can do nothing to stop it, a mindset the campaign team has dubbed 'Climate Fatalism'. 14 percent of people globally fall into this category, believing that while the climate is changing, humanity can do nothing to stop it.

Young people are especially likely to agree with some fatalistic statements; for example, 22 percent of those aged 16-35 agree that it is now too late to stop climate change, so there is no point in trying, compared with 18 percent of 35-49 year olds and 16 percent of 50-64 year olds. 39 percent of under-35s in India, 30 percent in Brazil, 27 percent in Spain and Sweden, and 29 percent in the United States believe this is the case.

"Solving climate change starts with the belief that we can, so on the one hand it is thrilling to learn that Climate Optimists already far outweigh Pessimists globally," said Solitaire Townsend, Co-founder of Futerra, speaking at the launch. "However, the dangerous levels of fatalism,

especially among young people, give cause for alarm. There are many reasons to believe we'll solve climate change, but doom, fear and guilt dominate media coverage of this issue. The #ClimateOptimist campaign is designed to change that narrative, because science shows that optimism spurs action."

The #ClimateOptimist campaign seeks to raise awareness of the solutions to climate change to shift the dominant narrative around the topic and combat fatalism about our future. The approach is grounded in decades of scientific evidence which show that optimism compels action. Specifically, #ClimateOptimist asks people to:

- **Opt in as a Climate Optimist**, and share your belief that we can solve this.
- **Take climate action** in your own life, by doing things that will make you [healthier and happier](#).
- And **shine a light on solutions**. [Find out about](#) the amazing progress already happening.

"Those of us working on climate change every day encounter many exciting solutions that are emerging through policy, business and new technology – but the general public doesn't always hear this good news," said Helen Clarkson, CEO of The Climate Group. "This survey sends a promising signal that the world is ready to hear more about the solutions, and work together to solve climate change."

Find out more at www.ClimateOptimist.org

Other findings from the survey reveal:

- **People are hearing more negative climate stories than stories of progress.** Across the globe, 61 percent of respondents said they hear much more about the negative impacts of climate change than they do about progress on reducing it.
- **Across the world climate change is seen as personally important, but people tend to underestimate how important climate change is to their fellow citizens.** 81 percent say that the issue of climate change is "very" or "fairly" important to them, while 63 percent believe it is important to the average person in their country.
- **Women are slightly more likely to believe that we can solve climate change** if we take action now: 66 percent agreed with this statement, compared to 63 percent of men.
- **China has the most optimists of any country**, with 79 percent believing it is within humanity's power to reduce climate change
- **Countries with higher levels of 'climate fatalism'** (believing that humanity cannot reduce climate change) include Japan (32%) and Russia (24%).
- **Twice as many people believe in the power of new technologies to solve climate change as believe business or regional government are leading the way.** 65 percent of people agree that new technologies – for example, wind power, solar power, and electric vehicles – are showing that we can reduce climate change, but just 32 and 30 percent agree that business and regional government respectively are leading the effort.

- **People in emerging economies are most positive about the role of new technology.** Colombia leads the way, with 79 percent of people identifying new technologies as proof we can reduce climate change. Other optimistic countries include China, India, South Africa, Mexico, Columbia, Chile, Peru and Brazil.

Find the survey briefing report here: www.ClimateOptimist.org/resources

Quotes in support of the campaign

“We’re optimists because we believe if we set bold science based goals then human ingenuity will find a way to advance solutions,” said **Barry Parkin, Chief Sustainability Officer, Mars**. “We’re already realizing the business case for renewable energy. That’s why we’re fans of wind and other renewable energy sources.”

“We’re optimists because we know we’re not alone,” said **Letitia Webster, VP, Global Corporate Sustainability, VF Corp**. “From the 193 countries that signed The Paris Agreement to the 106 companies globally committed to going 100 percent renewable alongside us, millions of people around the globe are dedicated to innovative solutions to address the challenges. They give us confidence that we can solve this together.”

“We are climate optimists because we know we can address climate change if we have the right mindset and the right plan,” said **Jay D. Gould, CEO of Interface**. “We need to shift our thinking from how we limit our impact on the climate, to how we create a climate fit for life.”

"We're climate optimists at Ashden because we see on a daily basis how our incredible network of Award winners – each and every one a sustainable energy trail blazer - are leading the way to a thriving low-carbon future," said **Giles Bristow, Director of Programmes, Ashden**.

“I’m optimistic because through DivestInvest, you can avoid the risks facing the fossil fuel sector, limit the wider climate risks, and make attractive returns from the clean economy,” said **Sarah Butler-Sloss, Chairman of the Ashden Trust and Founder, Ashden**.

About the campaign organizers

About The Climate Group

The Climate Group works internationally with leading businesses, states and regions to deliver a world of net zero greenhouse gas emissions and greater prosperity for all. Our focus is on collaborative programs with corporate and government partners that deliver impact on a global scale. The Climate Group is an international non-profit with offices in Beijing, London, New Delhi and New York.

www.theclimategroup.org

About Futerra

Futerra is a global change agency with offices in New York, London, Stockholm and Mexico City. Established in 2001, Futerra works with the world's largest brands, breakthrough entrepreneurs and national governments to change the world for the better. We join the logic of sustainability strategy with the magic of powerful creative.

www.wearefuterra.com

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Technical note on the survey

- Interviews were conducted using the Ipsos Online Panel system, among 21,030 online adults aged 16-64 in 26 countries (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States).
- Fieldwork was conducted between 25 August and 8 September 2017. Data is weighted to match the profile of each population.
- In countries where internet penetration is approximately 60% or higher, the data output generally reflects the overall population. Of the 26 countries surveyed online, 15 yield results that are balanced to reflect the general population: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and United States. The 11 remaining countries surveyed – Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, India, Mexico, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Peru, Russia and Turkey – have lower levels of internet connectivity and reflect online populations that tend to be more urban and have higher education/income than the general population.