

ENVIRONMENT

Canadians and Americans Call for More Action on the Environment

Climate change takes a backseat, as issues such as the pollution of rivers lakes and reservoirs, air pollution, and the contamination of soil and water by toxic waste are regarded as more troubling for respondents.

[NEW YORK – Jul. 19, 2010] – Most people in Canada and the United States believe their respective federal administrations are not paying enough attention to the environment, while Britons are more likely to endorse the way their government is handling this file, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of representative samples of 1,002 Americans, 1,009 Canadians and 2,011 Britons also finds that global warming is not one of the most important environmental problems for respondents in the United States and Britain.

Governments

In Canada, two-thirds of respondents (66%) think their federal government is paying too little attention to the environment, while one-in-five (21%) believe it has taken the right approach, and just five per cent say it is paying too much attention to the this issue.

In the United States, a majority of respondents (53%) feel that their federal administration is not paying enough attention to the environment, while 19 per cent agree with the way this file has been handled, and 15 per cent claim that too much attention is being paid to the environment at this time.

KEY FINDINGS

- **66% of Canadians and 53% of Americans think their federal governments are paying too little attention to the environment; 40% of Britons concur.**
- **The pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs is the top environmental concern for Canadians (80%) and Americans (72%); deforestation of the biggest worry for Britons (67%).**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From July 1 to July 9, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,009 Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists, 1,002 American adults who are Springboard America panellists, and 2,011 British adults who are Springboard UK panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1% for Canada and the United States, and 2.2 per cent for Great Britain. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Canada, the US and Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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In Britain, a third of respondents (34%) believe the government has taken the correct course of action on the environment, 11 per cent think too much attention has been paid to this topic, and 40 per cent believe more should be done.

Environmental Concerns

Respondents in the three countries were presented with a list of ten environmental problems, and asked to state whether they are personally concerned about each one of them.

Canadians and Americans place the same four issues as their biggest environmental concerns: the pollution of rivers lakes and reservoirs (Can. 80%, U.S. 72%), the contamination of soil and water by toxic waste (Can. 76%, U.S. 66%), the pollution of drinking water (Can. 72%, U.S. 70%), and air pollution (Can. 70%, U.S. 65%).

In Britain, a large proportion of respondents are also worried about the pollution of rivers lakes and reservoirs (62%) and air pollution (60%), but four different issues emerge as concerns for Britons: deforestation (67%), the loss of tropical rain forests (66%), the extinction of plant and animal species (61%), and the depletion of fish stocks due to overfishing (60%).

A majority of respondents in the three countries are worried about the maintenance of the supply of fresh water for household needs (Can. 60%, U.S. 56%. Bri. 54%).

Global warming or climate change is last on the list of environmental concerns for Britons (52%) and next-to-last for Americans (50%, slightly above the depletion of fish stocks through overfishing). Three-in-five Canadians (61%) are personally concerned about global warming.

While only three per cent of Canadians say they are not personally worried about any of the ten environmental problems reviewed on the survey, the proportion stands at nine per cent in Britain and 10 per cent in the United States.

Country-by-Country

In Canada, British Columbians (63%) and Quebecers (63%) are more likely to voice concerns over global warming than Ontarians (41%) and Albertans (40%). BC residents are particularly troubled by the depletion of fish stocks due to overfishing (76%) and deforestation (71%), while Ontarians are more concerned over the pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs (87%).

In the United States, respondents in the Northeast are more troubled by each one of the ten environmental problems than the national average. Only half of respondents in the Midwest, South and West are personally concerned about global warming and the extinction of plant and animal species.

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In Britain, nine of the ten environmental problems are particularly important in the South of England. Global warming is the exception, and only half of respondents in the Midlands and Wales and the North are worried about this issue.

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Environment

People sometimes cite “the environment” as a concern. Would you say you are personally concerned about the following environmental problems? Select all that apply.

	CANADA 	UNITED STATES 	GREAT BRITAIN 
Pollution of drinking water	72%	70%	56%
Pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs	80%	72%	62%
Contamination of soil and water by toxic waste	76%	66%	57%
Maintenance of the supply of fresh water for household needs	60%	56%	54%
Air pollution	70%	65%	60%
The loss of tropical rain forests	58%	56%	66%
Extinction of plant and animal species	61%	52%	61%
Global warming or Climate change	61%	50%	52%
Depletion of fish stocks through overfishing	65%	47%	60%
Deforestation, the clearance of naturally occurring forests	64%	54%	67%
None of these	3%	10%	9%

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Environment

CANADA



People sometimes cite “the environment” as a concern. Would you say you are personally concerned about the following environmental problems? Select all that apply.

	Region						
	Canada	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Pollution of drinking water	72%	71%	54%	89%	83%	73%	73%
Pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs	80%	83%	80%	89%	87%	80%	79%
Contamination of soil and water by toxic waste	76%	83%	73%	77%	74%	77%	75%
Maintenance of the supply of fresh water for household needs	60%	62%	53%	59%	50%	63%	53%
Air pollution	70%	67%	55%	79%	61%	74%	71%
The loss of tropical rain forests	58%	61%	48%	60%	62%	64%	50%
Extinction of plant and animal species	61%	59%	49%	66%	59%	67%	57%
Global warming or climate change	61%	63%	40%	68%	41%	63%	70%
Depletion of fish stocks through overfishing	65%	76%	59%	45%	53%	72%	53%
Deforestation, the clearance of naturally occurring forests	64%	71%	56%	70%	53%	67%	64%
None of these	3%	7%	7%	1%	4%	4%	1%

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Environment

UNITED STATES



People sometimes cite “the environment” as a concern. Would you say you are personally concerned about the following environmental problems? Select all that apply.

	Region				
	U.S.	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Pollution of drinking water	70%	72%	68%	72%	65%
Pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs	72%	75%	75%	70%	68%
Contamination of soil and water by toxic waste	66%	73%	65%	66%	64%
Maintenance of the supply of fresh water for household needs	56%	59%	54%	57%	55%
Air pollution	65%	67%	68%	64%	62%
The loss of tropical rain forests	56%	61%	59%	55%	52%
Extinction of plant and animal species	52%	59%	51%	50%	50%
Global warming or climate change	50%	53%	48%	50%	50%
Depletion of fish stocks through overfishing	47%	49%	45%	48%	47%
Deforestation, the clearance of naturally occurring forests	54%	61%	56%	54%	47%
None of these	10%	7%	12%	9%	12%

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Environment

GREAT BRITAIN



People sometimes cite “the environment” as a concern. Would you say you are personally concerned about the following environmental problems? Select all that apply.

	Region					
	Great Britain	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Pollution of drinking water	56%	57%	58%	58%	54%	50%
Pollution of rivers, lakes and reservoirs	62%	59%	66%	61%	59%	62%
Contamination of soil and water by toxic waste	57%	56%	60%	60%	51%	55%
Maintenance of the supply of fresh water for household needs	54%	54%	57%	55%	51%	48%
Air pollution	60%	61%	63%	60%	58%	54%
The loss of tropical rain forests	66%	67%	69%	65%	62%	67%
Extinction of plant and animal species	61%	56%	65%	62%	57%	62%
Global warming or Climate change	52%	57%	51%	50%	50%	55%
Depletion of fish stocks through overfishing	60%	53%	65%	58%	58%	63%
Deforestation, the clearance of naturally occurring forests	67%	59%	71%	66%	64%	70%
None of these	9%	9%	7%	10%	11%	9%

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CANADA: Overall, do you think the federal government is paying too much attention, the right amount of attention, or too little attention to the environment?

UNITED STATES: Overall, do you think the federal government is paying too much attention, the right amount of attention, or too little attention to the environment?

BRITAIN: Overall, do you think the Government is paying too much attention, the right amount of attention, or too little attention to the environment?

	CANADA 	UNITED STATES 	GREAT BRITAIN 
The government is paying too much attention to the environment	5%	15%	11%
The government is paying the right amount of attention to the environment	21%	19%	34%
The government is paying too little attention to the environment	66%	53%	40%
None of these	8%	13%	5%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is the public affairs practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at

<http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:

<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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