



# Climate Change Increases in Importance to Citizens Around the World

## Most are more willing to take personal actions to cut down waste, but are skeptical of policy actions

**Washington, DC, April 19, 2019** — A new global study by Ipsos, carried out online among adults across 28 countries between February 22 and March 8, 2019, finds that while people worldwide have a myriad of concerns when it comes to environmental issues, climate change has climbed in importance since last year. Among the top findings are:

- Over a third of people around the world think that global warming/climate change (37%), air pollution, (35%), and dealing with the amount of waste we generate (34%) are among the top three environmental issues facing their country. Concern for these issues has widened since last year.
- Americans share these concerns about global warming/climate change (47%) and dealing with the amount of waste we generate (40%), but think future energy sources and supplies (28%) is a bigger concern than air pollution (21%).
- The U.S. is sixth worldwide in thinking that global warming/climate change is a top issue, surpassed by Japan (52%), Spain (51%), Germany (50%), Canada (48%), and South Korea (48%).
- Most would prefer making individual-level lifestyle changes such as re-using disposable products, rather than either avoiding purchases of disposables altogether or paying extra taxes and recycling fees.

The world agrees about its concern of disposable, non-recyclable products.

- Globally, four out of every five people (81%) are concerned about such products, compared to only 15% who are not concerned about them.

Of the six governmental policy proposals surveyed, none found a global majority believing in their effectiveness.

- The best-performing policies worldwide are forcing government spending to improve the range of recyclable items (46%), taxing shops that use non-recyclable products (33%), and taxing these products to increase their price (30%). For each of the surveyed policies, a lower percentage of Americans think it would be effective than the global population.
- People around the world have not moved significantly in their beliefs regarding potential policy actions since last year.

People are willing to take some specific actions to reduce waste, but are not willing to take many changes to their shopping habits.

- Most people around the world are willing to re-use disposable items (56%) and buy products made from recycled materials (51%).
- However, fewer than three in twenty people are willing to pay more tax so recycling facilities can be improved (12%) or pay extra for goods without non-recyclable packaging (14%).

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- Globally, people are more willing this year than last to take some kind of personal action to reduce packaging waste – most drastically in their willingness to buy products made from recycled materials (51%, compared to 47% last year).

Most people believe someone or something has a responsibility for reducing unnecessary packaging, but are heavily divided over who or what that is.

- A majority think that companies that produce packaged goods (23%), companies that sell packaged goods (10%), the government (6%), consumers (5%), or all of the above (47%) should take responsibility. Only 1% believe nobody has a responsibility to do this, and 6% have no opinion or don't know.
- The U.S. (5%) is among the last of all countries surveyed in thinking that consumers should take responsibility for reducing unnecessary packaging, ahead of only Argentina (4%), Great Britain (3%), Russia (2%), and Serbia (2%).

Globally, people are more concerned about environmental issues, have more belief in the efficacy of government action, and are willing to take more personal actions to help solve the problems – but are much less willing to assign responsibility for finding a solution – than last year.

- The world is more concerned about what it perceives to be the top three environmental issues – global warming/climate change (37%, up from 30%), air pollution (35%, up from 30%), and dealing with the amount of waste we generate (34%, up from 30%) – than it was in 2018.
- Globally, more people think every policy surveyed would be more effective that thought so in 2018, with the biggest movers being a public information campaign (27%, up from 23%) and the government “naming and shaming” shops that use a lot of non-recyclable packaging (26%, up from 23%).
- People are more willing to take action to reduce problems caused by non-recyclable packaging, including re-using disposable items (56%, up from 53%). A majority now is willing to buy products from recycled materials (51%, up from 47%).

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### Technical Note

- These are the findings of Global Advisor, an Ipsos survey conducted between February 22 to March 8, 2019. The survey was conducted in 28 countries around the world, via the Ipsos Online Panel system in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Great Britain, and the USA.
- For the results of the survey presented herein, an international sample of 19,519 adults ages 19-74 in South Korea, 18-74 in the US, Canada, China, Malaysia, South Africa and Turkey, and ages 16-74 in all other countries, were interviewed. Approximately 1000+ individuals participated on a country by country basis via the Ipsos Online Panel, with the exception of Argentina, Belgium, Colombia, Chile, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden and Turkey, where each have a sample approximately 500+.
- 15 of the 28 countries surveyed online generate nationally representative samples in their countries (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and United States). Brazil, China, Colombia, Chile, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey produce a national sample that is more urban & educated, and with higher incomes than their fellow citizens. We refer to these respondents as “Upper Deck Consumer Citizens”. They are not nationally representative of their country.
- Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to the most recent country Census data, and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points for a sample of 1,000 and an estimated margin of error of +/- 4.5 percentage points 19 times out of 20 per country of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in that country had been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

For more information about conducting research intended for public release or Ipsos' online polling methodology, please visit our [Public Opinion Polling and Communication](#) page where you can download our brochure, see our public release protocol, or contact us.

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