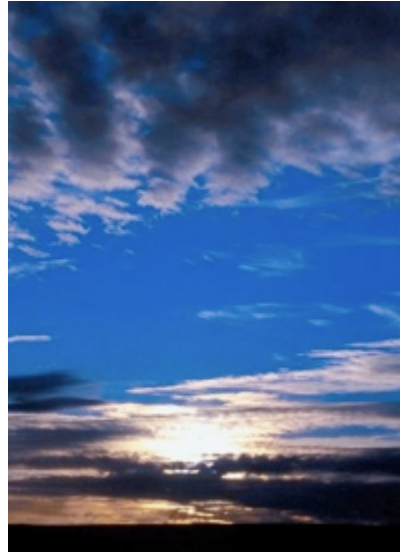




Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on October 25, 2009

More Americans Skeptical of Global Warming

Americans have become much more skeptical of global warming prognoses over the past year, according to a study by The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press released October 23. The percentage of Americans who believe there's solid evidence that the Earth is warming has plummeted from 77 percent to 57 percent since April 2008, the study revealed. And those who believe that global warming is a very serious problem fell during the same period from 44 percent to 35 percent.



The Pew [study](#) also noted that the increased skepticism crossed party lines (though Republicans remain the most skeptical) and geographical location. The Earth has not warmed over the past 10 years, and [some have reported slight global cooling](#) over the same period.

Yet President Obama was on the stump at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology October 23, [retailing](#) the old line about the undeniable inevitability of global warming:

So we are seeing a convergence. The naysayers, the folks who would pretend that this is not an issue, they are being marginalized. But I think it's important to understand that the closer we get, the harder the opposition will fight and the more we'll hear from those whose interest or ideology run counter to the much needed action that we're engaged in. There are those who will suggest that moving toward clean energy will destroy our economy — when it's the system we currently have that endangers our prosperity and prevents us from creating millions of new jobs. There are going to be those who cynically claim — make cynical claims that contradict the overwhelming scientific evidence when it comes to climate change, claims whose only purpose is to defeat or delay the change that we know is necessary.

Perhaps most importantly for leftists seeking dramatic government-mandated behavioral changes for Americans, many Americans who once viewed global warming as a serious problem no longer do so. Only 35 percent of Americans (down from 44 percent in April 2008) believe global warming is a "very serious" problem. Moreover, the [data](#) from the Pew study says that only 36 percent of Americans say global warming is being caused by human activity, while the rest do not believe there is solid evidence that global warming is occurring, attribute global warming to natural causes, or are unsure.

Marginalized? Obama is clearly out of touch, unless he was talking about himself.

Statists should be troubled that many of those who accept global warming as fact don't regard it in terms of an end-of-times apocalypse, but free-market adherents should be encouraged. Few changes in climate are all bad; most contain measures of good and bad. The leftist and alarmist Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) claimed in its 2007 report that the average global temperature had



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gone up nearly three-quarters of a degree in the last century. But that report also [noted](#), “Average arctic temperatures increased at almost twice the global average rate in the past 100 years.” More land in the north has become livable to humans, and arable, in the past century. What’s so bad about that? It means more liveable land for people. It also means less habitat for polar bears, though the polar bear population has increased in recent years.

That same IPCC report [said](#) regarding global sea levels: “The total 20th-century rise is estimated to be 0.17 [0.12 to 0.22] m,” which is about half a foot. Even if this prediction turns out to be true, the fact remains that the sea level has been rising for at least 7,000 years without causing great and incurable calamities. Any fan of the Discovery Channel knows that the English Channel was a land bridge for Mammoths during the last ice age. And humanity has not only failed to call that global climate change of rising seas “catastrophic” (as environmental leftists invariably call it), we have thrived in that 7,000-year process.

Even if the Earth were to warm significantly, humanity would both survive and thrive. After all, the Earth was both warmer and cooler in the past, and when it was warmer more land was habitable and arable — a boon for civilization.

Massive government intervention, however, has inevitably become catastrophic for humanity throughout history. Big government can quickly turn any green space into a barren blight. As Thomas Jefferson said, “If we were directed from Washington when to sow and when to reap, we would soon want for bread.”

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