



Written by [James Heiser](#) on December 14, 2009

Poll Shows Drop in Belief in Global Warming

A new CBS News/New York Times poll shows that a clear majority of the American people do not believe global warming should be a high priority for government action. What they do believe should be the priority is the economy.



According to a [story](#) at CBSNews.com,

With world leaders debating how to address climate change in Copenhagen and the U.S. Senate poised to take up a climate bill in the coming months, a new CBS News/*New York Times* poll finds that just 37 percent of Americans believe the issue should be a priority for government leaders.

That's a significant drop from April of 2007, when 52 percent of those surveyed said the issue should be a high priority.

The Tiger Woods and [Salahi](#) distractions have dominated the media since the "[Climategate](#)" e-mails surfaced and have crowded out attention that might otherwise have been devoted to [breaking news](#) regarding the scientists responsible for the climate-change theory. Nevertheless, a long-term trend in public opinion appears to demonstrate a steady decline in support for the theory that human activity is responsible for global warming.

The [complete poll results](#) demonstrate the consistent nature of the shift in public opinion since 2007. In April 2007, only eight percent of the public believed that global warming was "not serious" as a priority for government leaders, but today that figure has soared to 23 percent. At the same time, when people are asked whether "stimulating the economy" or "protecting the environment" is more important, the emphasis on the environment has eroded from 52 percent in April 2007 to 29 percent today, while the economy has gone from 36 percent to 61 percent in the same period.

The question that was not asked was whether the public believed global warming should be a serious priority if the proposed solutions would mean further economic troubles. Given the trends in public opinion, it is hard to believe that the substantial shift from environmental to economic concerns would not be pushed even further if the public becomes more aware of the radical nature of the [proposals](#) being presented at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. The radical deindustrialization of the developed world, as well as massive transfers of wealth from the First World to the Third World that are part of the Copenhagen plan could cripple what remains of the economies of the developed world, at the same time that the science that is being used to justify such radical plans has come into doubt.

What is not in doubt is that public opinion concerning global warming is clearly shifting in the direction of heightened skepticism. For politicians already concerned for their reelection prospects, the implications of rising public concern over the on-going economic crisis should be immediately apparent.



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