

A DIVIDED PLANET? WORLD OPINION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Obs'COP 2023

Climate and Public Opinions International Observatory

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Obs'COP 2023

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

n 2019, EDF created the international Observatory on Climate and Public Opinion (Obs'COP), a brand new, large-scale public opinion survey entrusted to Ipsos and conducted in 30 countries across five continents, counting two-thirds of the world's population, and including some of the biggest CO₂ emitters. As a result, EDF now produces an annual international report on opinions, knowledge, expectations and levels of commitment in relation to climate change.

During the 2022 wave, within a context marked by inflation, the arrival of the climate issue at the top of the list of environmental concerns, and also the growth of climate skepticism, we suggested to around twenty social science and political researchers that they analyze the themes of the survey or the findings for one country in particular. The results of their work are presented together in the book Une planète mobilisée? L'opinion mondiale face au changement climatique.

This year, we are providing a summary document of the key findings of this 2023 wave, which notably includes a new theme: climate migrations.

More than ever, our aim is to fuel the debate by providing useful materials for all those defending the climate cause.



Didier Witkowski **Research Director** EDF - DirCom Groupe







Methodology

29 countries questioned in all 5 continents, representing 2/3 of the world's population.

Selection of countries based on their CO₂ emissions, geographic location or exemplariness in fighting climate change

Sample

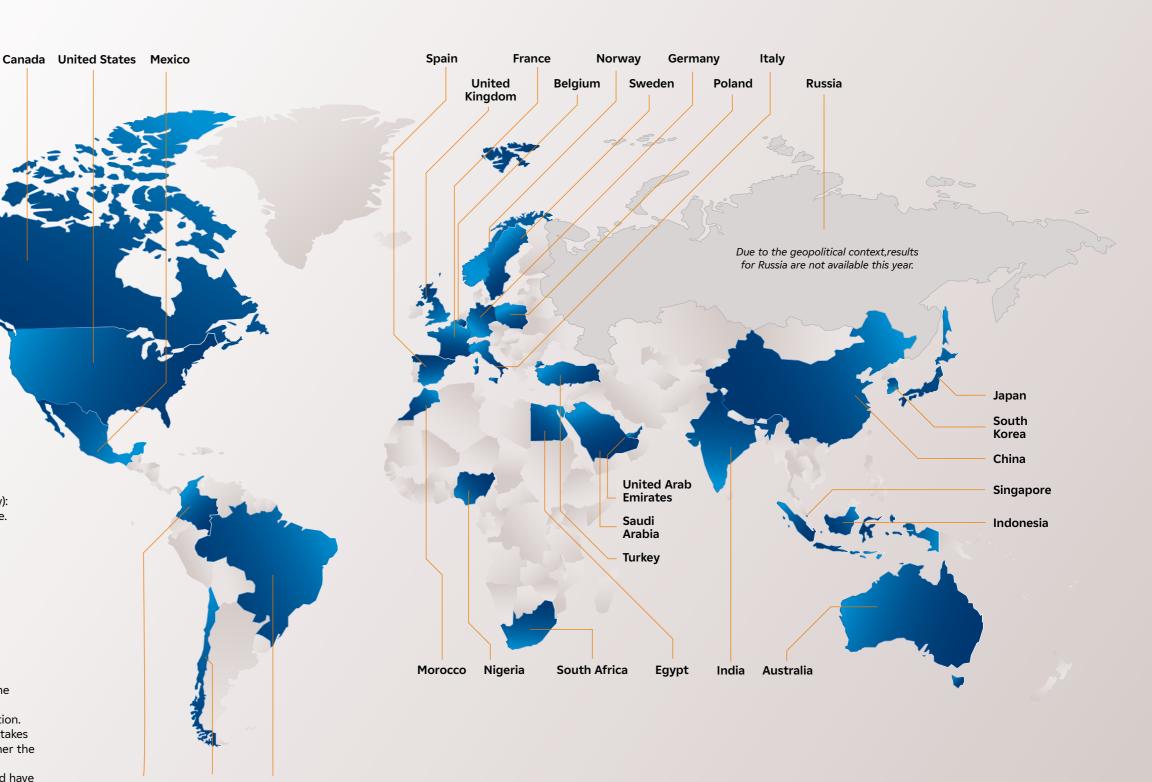
- Target : Male/female aged 16 y.o and older.
- 23,433 individuals (500 or 1,000 according to countries)
- Sample selection: sample selected by random draw from the base of panelists eligible for the study. IIS panel.
- Criteria and sources of representativeness (depending on country): gender, age, region, occupation, social category or status, city size.

Data collection

- Fieldwork dates : 16th August to 2nd October 2023.
- Data collection: online.

Global average

In the survey, the global average used in presenting a result for the entire sample of 29 countries questioned is an arithmetic mean. Each country counts as one in this mean, regardless of its population. We did have the option of presenting a weighted average, which takes into account the population of each country: in this case, the higher the population, the more "weight" it has in the average. However, by choosing this option, the overall results of the whole survey would have largely reflected the results for China and India, the most populated countries in the Obs'COP sample. We are therefore providing a general arithmetic mean of national public opinions.



Colombia Chile Brazil



Climate change: world opinion confronts its own contradictions

saw a further increase in global warming. With droughts in Europe, heatwaves in Asia or mega-wildfires in Canada, the surge was confirmed by a scientific study published in Earth System Science Data in June 2023¹ by an international group of around fifty renowned scientists. The acceleration of the phenomenon surprised even these specialists, which should have prompted an unprecedented uptick in mobilization. And yet...

Those same climate specialists frequently take exception at what they view as willful blindness on the part of political leaders, even to the point of "double-dealing,"² whereas their calculations keep proving the urgency of the situation. Cop 28 will provide the opportunity for the first international review of climate action, but Valérie Masson-Delmotte has already warned that "the pace and scope of action for the climate are not enough to date to limit the intensification of risk linked to climate change."3

However, scientists doubtless under-estimated the resistance that measures to reduce carbon emissions would generate among populations themselves, sometimes paralyzing governments, as was the case with the gilet jaune movement in France. So isn't it tempting to also accuse populations of a sort of "double-dealing" by wanting to protect their own lifestyle? Or even putting ecology behind other issues? Not placing any blame on their governments in relation to the climate issue?

Of course, it is this very complexity of human societies that this study attempts to shed light on, describing international public opinion that is torn more than ever between the anxious and the optimists, the activists and the wait-and-sees, the North and the South, not to mention the contradictions inherent in each individual.

1. FORSTER Piers M. et al. "Indicators of Global Climate Change 2022: annual update of large-scale indicators of the state of the climate system and human influence". Earth System Science Data. 2023, vol. 15: 2295-2327. Online: https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-15-2295-2023

2. GRANDJEAN Alain, HENRY Claude and JOUZEL Jean. "La planification écologique vue par Jean Jouzel, Alain Grandjean et Claude Henry", Le Monde. loin-d-etre-coherents-nos-dirigeants-politiques-pratiquent-sans-complexe-l-art-du-double-jeu_6191898_3232.html>

3. GARRIC Audrey. "Le réchauffement planétaire s'accroît à un rythme sans précédent", Le Monde. 2023. Online: https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/ article/2023/06/08/le-rechauffement-planetaire-resultant-des-activites-humaines-atteint-un-nouveau-record_6176706_3244.html>

The environment: concern and priority don't necessarily coincide

There are two classic ways to measure the importance of a problem: in absolute terms, the degree of concern that it generates; in relative terms, the place it occupies among other concerns.

If we start by examining the level of concern among the public regarding "the state of the environment" using a graduated scale from 0 to 10, we can see that 39% of the world's population are on the two highest levels. But in reality, the considerable fragmentation of responses by country expresses very different degrees of concern between the countries of the South, over 50% of which express this very great concern (Colombia: 65%, Indonesia: 62%, Mexico: 60%...), and the Northern countries, which almost all fall under the 35% bar. These scores have evolved very little since 2022.

Now when we examine the place that the environment holds among other priorities, once again we find an average close to 40% (42% to be exact) of the population who count this theme among their priorities, admittedly far behind inflation, which clearly dominates (63%), but a level that places it above crime, education or immigration.

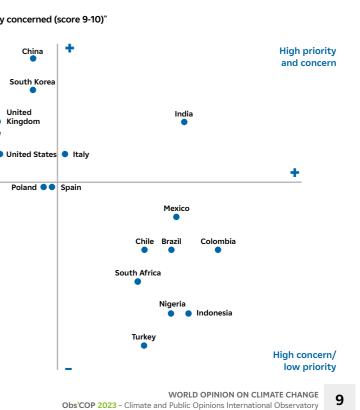
Fig. 1. The environmental question : concern and priority according to countries

Q. From this list, which topics worry you the most ? (several answers possible) Q. To what extent are you concerned about the environmental situation? "Very concerned (score 9-10)" 2023 (IN %) Low concern/ high priority



IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD GRAPPLING WITH INFLATION,

- What is striking here is the lack of consistency between the two indicators: in this case, it is the Northern countries (Europe and America) and a part of Asia that place the environment in their Top 5 concerns, and not the Southern countries. In other words, you can be very concerned about the environmental situation while believing that there are other priorities (in the South), or on the other hand, rank the environmental priority very high without being extremely concerned (in the North) (Fig. 1). Only one exception can be observed: India, which is at the same time very concerned while making the environment its third priority (after unemployment and corruption).
- Note that in Europe however, the environment has dropped back from 3rd to 5th place, now facing competition from up-and-coming themes: health, crime and armed conflict. This is notably the case in France where crime, health and immigration have gained around 7 points. In contrast, we see a progression in Asia (42%, +3 points), but essentially because the Coronavirus no longer tops the list (from 51% to 32%).



Inflation is the main concern in the world. But the environment is still a major theme, especially in the West.

■ The environmental priority reinforces its domination over economic growth

The dilemma between the environmental priority and giving priority to growth and jobs is very much present in the public debate in developed societies. The idea that there is incompatibility between growth and environment is raising questions today well beyond ecologist circles. Confronted with this dilemma, a majority of respondents (55%) choose the environment as opposed to 31% prioritizing growth (*Fig. 2*). This is a real reversal of

the previous trend in favor of the environment since this choice had been consistently dropping since 2019 in favor of growth. It even surpasses its highest score attained in 2019. Perhaps jobs and growth have less weight in 2023 than the prospect of a drop in prices, which is what everyone really wants, thus giving a boost to choosing the environment. At the very least, it is another sign that the environment is resisting as a societal issue.

Fig. 2. Evolution in priority given to the environment or to growth

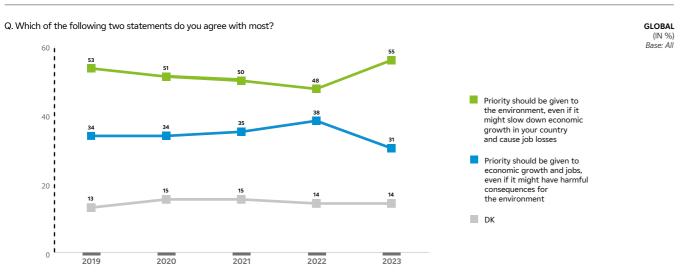
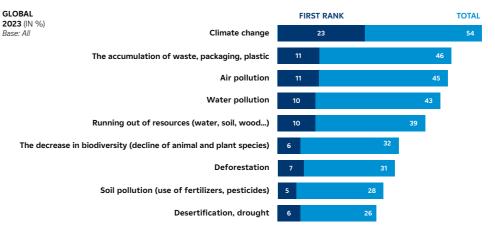


Fig. 3. Ranking of environmental concerns

Q. From the following list, which environmental problems do you think are the most concerning in your country? (four answers possible)



However, if we examine the responses by country — and especially the first response given, which is more indicative of what people view as the environmental priority —, we see that climate change has two different types of status:

- The status of main environmental priority, essentially in the Western countries and in Asia. The climate is mentioned at a high level, notably as first mention. If we arbitrarily select a minimum level of 25%, we find within that group: Japan (45%), South Korea (37%), the United Kingdom (35%) and Canada (35%). Some are even known to be relatively climate-skeptical (Australia, Norway, Sweden, USA). France and Belgium just miss featuring in the list.
- The status of one of several priorities, essentially in South America, Africa and the Middle East. The climate never reaches 20% first mention, and the various types of pollution (air, water, waste) appear to represent threats that are just as important in the eyes of the inhabitants of these countries.

While facing competition from other environmental threats in the South, the climate is establishing itself as the priority in Western countries

The gaps between the different environmental priorities are decreasing, thus showing strong competition from other environmental threats, but the climate still ranks first (54%), ahead of three pollution-related subjects:

waste, air, and water (between 43% and 46%) (*Fig. 3*). Most countries quote the climate in proportions that vary between 40% and 60%, which clearly shows the level of consensus around the subject⁴.

4. Note that due to a modification of the list of proposed items, it is not possible to measure an evolution for this question. However, with the previous wording, the climate items had clearly progressed between 2019 and 2022 and already ranked first in the list of priorities.

In the West and in Asia, the climate is the mother of all ecological battles.



This geography of environmental threats, as we will see, does not correspond to the geography of perception of the effects of climate change. Indeed, the countries of the South, and notably South America, claim to be witnessing the effects of climate change more intensely than in the North. And yet the climate struggles to emerge alongside major pollution problems, even if these have been exacerbated by the worsening climate. It has failed to mobilize a group of citizens focused on this theme and of sufficient critical size.

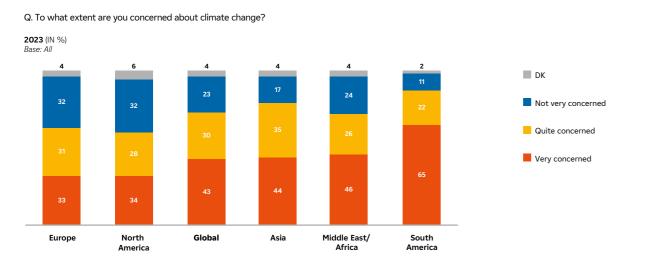
In the West and in Asia, the situation is quite different. Not only does the environment feature more clearly among people's priorities, but more than a quarter of them believe that the climate is the mother of all ecological battles. Contrary to common preconceptions, this pro-climate avant-garde are no younger than the average, nor are they more female. They are not particularly in favor of a radical change in society, but tend to be more reformist. On the other hand, they have a higher level of education, and in Europe and North America they take part in public life more, whether by voting or by actions such as boycotts, petitions or protests.

Concern about climate change is not progressing however

Concern is measured in the study through a question with scoring from 0 to 10, for which the responses are divided into three groups: very concerned (9-10), fairly concerned (7-8) not very concerned (0-6). This year, 43% of the world's population claim to be very concerned, 30% fairly and 23% not very (Fig. 4), i.e. a result equivalent to the 2022 result, the first year in which the question was asked. So concern has not increased since last vear.

The geographic distribution of concern shows heavy contrasts and corresponds in every respect to the previous wave: concern is peaking in South America, strong in Asia and Africa, and more moderate in Europe and North America. Once again, no evolution by zone comes to light.

Fig. 4. Degree of concern about climate change



TO SUM UP

- The countries of the North, or even Asia, continue to claim that they are paying attention to the environment given the level of development of their economy and despite the inflation crisis and pressure from security- or migration-related themes, especially in Europe. In these countries, the fight against climate change is viewed as the absolute priority. But economic growth is still something that people do not want to give up on, seeking to reconcile it with environmental issues.
- In the countries of the South, where the environment doubtless has a more negative impact on everyday life than it does in the North, given the level of infrastructures and the lower standard of living of their populations. However, unemployment, crime and corruption are wearing these countries down to such an extent that the environment is having to take a back seat. Likewise for the climate, whose consequences can be dramatic but which faces competition from pollution which, for now, seems to require more urgent action.
- The level of individual concern about the climate is high since 43% are to be found on the two highest levels of the concern scale. But no changes can be measured in the past year on this indicator, which still shows South America as the most concerned, contrasting with Europe and North America.

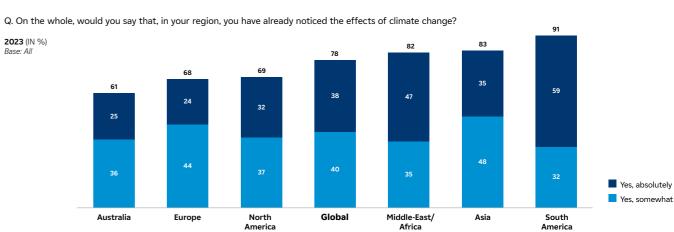
WITH DISASTERS MOUNTING, CLIMATE CHANGE IS BECOMING A REALITY

Noted by 80% of the world's population, climate change is not viewed with the same intensity in the countries of the North and South

Since the start of our survey, almost 80% of the wor-What is more surprising is the intensity of the observa-Id's population (78% in 2023) have claimed to be obtion - those who can "absolutely" see these effects, 38% serving the effects of climate change in their region - an increase of only three points since 2019 (from 35% (Fig. 5). This observation is very evident in the countries to 38%), which is hardly consistent with the actual acof the South, a bit less so in the Northern one, and it celeration in climate-change-related events worldwide. has not evolved in five years, which is hardly surprising From this viewpoint, the Northern hemisphere is clearly less sensitive to the effects of the change than the for such a high score. Southern hemisphere, with the intensity of feeling doubling, for example, between Europe (24%) and South America (59%).

Fig. 5. The observed effects of climate change in the region

2023 (IN %) Base: All



High temperatures have become the universal sign of climate change.





High temperatures have had an impact across the planet

This is even more surprising for the fact that, when the climate phenomena that the respondents have witnessed are listed in detail, no major difference can be observed between the continents. Whether it is storms, floods or drought, the experience of populations is fairly similar. Generally speaking, heatwaves or high temperatures have had the biggest impact on inhabitants (63%, Fig. 6). The Southern hemisphere and Asia are particularly concerned, with climate change mainly manifesting itself through an increase in temperatures.

To a lesser extent, the feeling of a lack of differentiation between the seasons is another idea that is guite broadly shared (41%), which may be the consequence of warmer winters. The other phenomena seem less frequent or more localized since they are actually experienced by less than a third of respondents.

Note the preponderance of certain phenomena in some countries: the major wildfires in Canada, Chile and Turkey (but not in France, although it was hit badly in 2022); the drying up of rivers in Poland, India, South Africa, Morocco and Turkey; flooding in Norway and Nigeria...

Fig. 6. The environmental events experienced

Q. Where you live, have you experienced any of the following phenomena in recent years? (several answers possible)								2023 Base : All
	Global	Africa/ Middle- East	North America	South America	Asia	Australia	Europe	Of which: France
Heatwaves	63%	68%	57%	73%	67%	47%	56%	72%
Disruption of the seasons	41%	45%	34%	43%	38%	36%	41%	44%
Storms	32%	33%	38%	28%	33%	34%	30%	24%
Drought	30%	31%	22%	34%	25%	28%	34%	50%
Floods	29%	32%	24%	29%	35%	34%	24%	15 %
Lower water levels in rivers	29%	34%	23%	35%	24%	21%	30%	38%
Major forest fires	20%	23%	31%	29%	17%	29%	13 %	13 %

The French are just as impacted by heatwaves and drought as the Moroccans, Spanish or Turks

Europe is not very different from the world average and other geographic zones. France, on the other hand, seems very atypical, heavily impacted by heatwaves and drought: respectively 72% and 50% of French people claim to have observed them where they live (as opposed to 56% and 34% of Europeans), in other words an experience that brings them closer to the Moroccans, Spanish or Turks. In fact, France is the country that experienced the biggest increase in land temperature in 2022. In Europe, it is the country that has experienced the most consecutive years of temperature increase (36 years), behind Italy and Malta (38)⁵.

The study shows another phenomenon: the capacity for populations to forget. Whereas the question asked emphasizes listing phenomena experienced "in recent years", the answers were in reality influenced by the most recent year. Hence for France (although the same thing can be observed in other countries), experience of floods went from 22% to 15% between 2022 and 2023, the drop in river water levels from 51% to 38%. Indeed, with the rainfall in the spring and parts of the summer this year, rivers in France have not experienced the low water levels of 2022. So their own personal experience does not have obvious educational value. Unless it happens again?

5. LIMB Lottie and YANATMA Servet. "2023, année record: à quelle vitesse les pays européens se réchauffent-ils?", euronews. 2023. Online: https:// fr.euronews.com/green/2023/09/12/2023-annee-record-a-quelle-vitesse-les-pays-europeens-se-rechauffent-ils>

The accumulation of facts, more than the facts themselves, is forcing the evidence of climate change

Are there any phenomena that symbolize climate change more in the eyes of populations and that stimulate the feeling of being "absolutely" confronted with this phenomenon more? Not really: the people who have witnessed the various events think that they have been confronted with the consequences of warming in the same way. On the other hand, the accumulation of events is a real factor in developing awareness. Indeed, people claiming to have witnessed two events (and especially three, four or more) feel climate change more intensely ("absolutely"): 4% when they have not observed any events, 27% for just one, 32% for two, 44% for three and 61% for four and more (Fig. 7). The geographic variable does not come into play: this relationship can be found everywhere, as much in the North as in the South. It is clearly the accumulation of disasters that creates the feeling of being confronted with climate change.

What is more, there is no further doubt as to the link between natural disasters and climate change. The world's population, when they have witnessed these events, are nearly unanimous (89%) in viewing heatwaves, fires or flooding as having been caused or aggravated by climate change. In no country does this score dip below 75%.

TO SUM UP

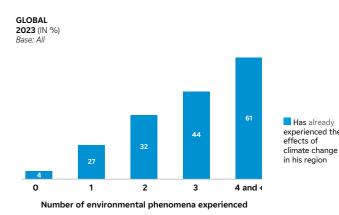
- Although these effects can be felt across the planet, climate change does not seem to be impacting the inhabitants of the Northern hemisphere with as much intensity as it is in the Southern countries. However, perceptions of climate events are very similar: high temperatures are being felt everywhere.
- The French are particularly impacted by heatwaves and drought. But their memory seems to be fairly selective and they only recall the most recent disasters.
- ly, one thing has been achieved: these disasters are now being attributed to climate change everywhere.





Fig. 7. The observed effects of climate change according to the number of environmental phenomena experienced

Q. On the whole, would you say that, in your region, you have already noticed the effects of climate change? "Yes, absolutely" Q. Where you live, have you experienced any of the following phenomena in recent years? (several answers possible)



Given the above, confrontation with an increasingly catastrophic reality should stimulate a fear of climate change across the planet. Yet that is not quite what is happening.

On a global level, it is more the accumulation of disasters than their nature that is giving cause for concern. Final-



FACED WITH THE CURRENT DISASTERS, A WHOLE RANGE OF REACTIONS, FROM ANXIETY TO RELATIVIZATION

Despite the status individuals accord to the environment and the climate, and also actual observation of climate

disasters, there is more than one way of reacting to the evidence of warming.

■ Future consequences of climate change: 40% of the world's population are still relativizing

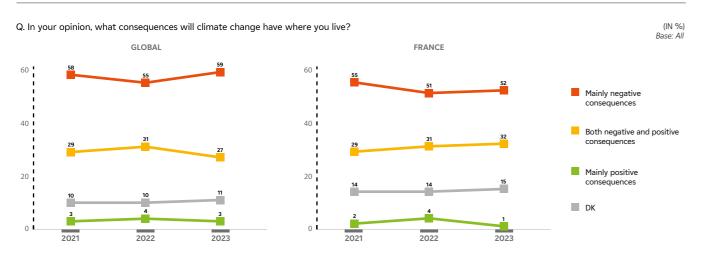
One of the results that has consistently surprised us since the start of this survey is the fact that for around 40% of the planet's inhabitants, climate change will not just have negative consequences: in 2023, 27% think that we can expect as many good consequences as we can bad, 3% even anticipate only positive effects, and 11% do not know how to respond. 59% in contrast think that warming will mainly have negative effects (Fig. 8).

It is in Europe, North America and Australia that people relativize these effects the most. In some countries, doubt even prevails among a majority: Sweden, Norway, USA, Germany and Belgium. In France, scaremongering predominates, but not by much: 52% (+1 point). On the

other hand, in South America, Japan, Africa, Turkey and Spain, the cause has been heard by over 65%: nothing good is expected from climate change.

On the global scale, relativism has dropped 4 points this year, but in reality this represents a return to the 2021 results and not a real trend⁶. In other words, despite the intensification of signs of climate change, there is not always agreement about its negative consequences among a part of the world's population (under 60% in 17 out of 29 countries). However concern is growing considerably (8 points and more) in Turkey, Brazil, Egypt, China, the United Arab emirates, Japan and Norway.

Fig. 8. The evolution in anticipated consequences of climate change on the place where they live



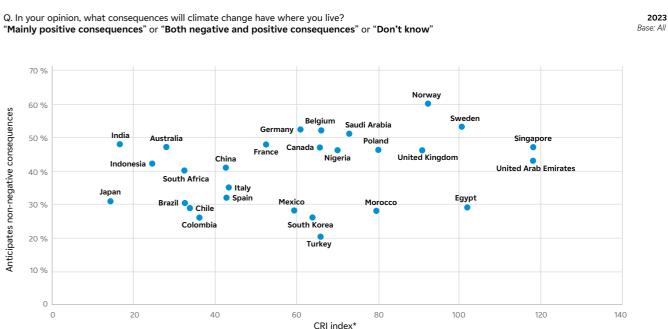
6. Prior to 2021, the items proposed were more exclusive: they had to choose between "only" positive consequences, "only" negative consequences (compared to "mainly" today) or "both positive and negative" consequences. But the responses were at a comparable level: non-negative expectations reached 47% in 2019 and 49% in 2020

Vulnerability doesn't bring greater insight

Nevertheless one might wonder if the more negative link between the two factors. We had observed this evaluation on the part of inhabitants of the Southern same phenomenon with the number of disasters expecountries is not based on more frequent exposure to clirienced, but even when using an indicator like the CRI, mate-driven disasters, whereas the European or Norwhich provides information on their economic and huth-American countries feel more protected. To test this man consequences, we see almost no correlation (0.28, Fig. 9). Hence, Japan and India, which have been among hypothesis, we consulted the Germanwatch CRI7 (Global Climate Risk Index), which analyses and classifies to what the countries most affected by disasters in the past 10 extent countries and regions were affected by the imyears, react very differently: Japan is very pessimistic pacts of extreme weather events linked to the climate about the future consequences of climate change (69%), between 2000 and 20198. whereas Indians are more divided (52%). Where vulnerability levels are equal, as in the case of Norway and Egypt When we study the correlation by country between neor Turkey and Belgium, the expected consequences are clearly different.

gative anticipations of climate change declared by the population with the CRI index, we note the absence of a

Fig. 9. Correlation between vulnerability to climate change and its expected consequences



* The CRI index gives the highest values to the countries most resistant to climatic catastrophes. Thus, Japan and India are highly vulnerable; Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, on the other hand, are highly resilient.

In other words, vulnerability to disasters experienced in ring the effects of climate change today either: the corthe past 10 years does not incite populations to be more relation between the CRI and the feeling of "absolutely" afraid of their effects in the future. And for good reason, suffering the effects of the climate is very weak (-0.29). this vulnerability does not create the impression of suffe-

7. The CRI indicator doesn't just list these events: it evaluates their impact in human and economic terms for each country (the number of total losses caused by weather phenomena, the number of deaths, the insured damage and the total economic damage). While this is not an exhaustive indicator of countries' vulnerability in the sense determined by the IPCC (It determines vulnerability [2014] as "the propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected. Vulnerability encompasses a variety of concepts and elements including sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt"), since it does not take events into account over a long period (rise in sea level, for example), it clearly reflects what a population perceives about the concrete effects of climate events on the scale of a country or a region. "Global Climate Risk Index 2021: Who suffers Most from Extreme Weather Events?", Germanwatch. 2021. Online: <https://www.germanwatch.org/fr/19777> 8. The collection and analysis of international data are carried out by the NatCatSERVICE at MunichRe, the world's leading insurance company.



36% of the world's inhabitants are climate skeptics, a proportion that is stagnating rather than regressing.

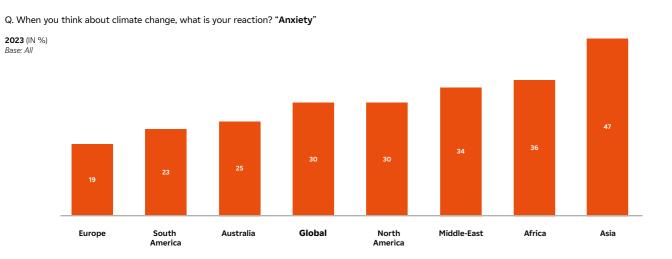
Eco-anxiety affects 30% of the world's inhabitants

Globally, worry is the feeling most widely shared on the planet in relation to climate change: 63% claim to feel worried, 33% feel afraid and 30% anxious, whereas 16% feel doubt, 7% indifference and 6% peace of mind (respondents could choose several feelings).

On a global scale, climate anxiety therefore concerns 30% of the population. Let's start by examining the geographic distribution by major areas. This feeling is experienced most broadly in Asia: almost one out of two people. In contrast, Europe and South America are the regions with the fewest anxious people.

Younger generations are often described as being subject to eco-anxiety, especially in France. In our survey, on a global scale, young people do not appear to be

Fig. 10. Anxiety felt about climate change



gative.

Climate-skepticism persists among a part of the population

In 2022, we warned about the continued rise of climate skepticism in a "soft" version, in other words more freguent attribution of climate change to nature rather than human activity (with actual denial remaining more marginal). Advocates of the human explanation still represented a large majority (63%), but their share had dropped by 6 points in four years, and the skeptics had

progressed by as much. In 2023, that trend has halted and skepticism has dropped back (modestly: 1 point, Fig. 11). We can either welcome this decline, despite the intense climate-skeptic propaganda on increasingly radicalized social media, or worry at not seeing a sharper drop in denial of scientific evidence.

the most anxiety-ridden, it is more the case that the

oldest people experience the least anxiety. In other

words, the level of anxiety does not vary between the

ages of 16 and 65 (32%), and decreases subsequently

(24%). Now if we try to determine where the most an-

xious under-25 generation is to be found, it is unde-

niably in Asia (46%), then North America (35%), but

Anxious people stand out from those who are not an-

xious through a sharper awareness of the effects of

climate change (55% compared to 30% have "absolutely" observed them) and they are more convinced

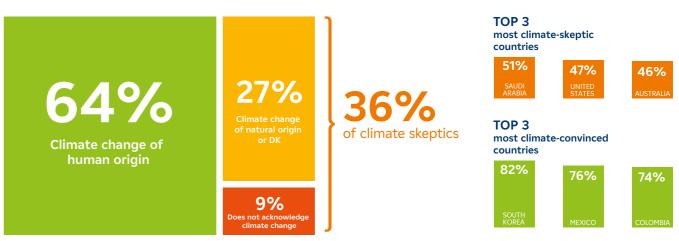
(79% compared to 51%) that these effects will be ne-

much less in Europe (23%, Fig. 10).

Fig. 11. The origins of climate change

Q. Would you say that we are experiencing a change in climate? Q. And concerning this climate change that we hear about, would you say:





Once again this year, we observe the absence of a link between the number of disasters experienced locally over the past ten years or the vulnerability of countries, and their resistance to climate skepticism. Perhaps – but this is merely a hypothesis – because as the number of disasters increases, the human causes appear more distant, with no direct link to what might seem like a deregulation of nature itself⁹. Yet it is still

TO SUM UP

- The intensification of climate disasters has caused a few changes in indicators relating to anxiety about the future, but not in proportions that reverse the ratios:
- consequences of climate change;
- of its future consequences, as though relativizing them served as a defense mechanism.
- Climate skepticism is stagnating rather than regressing. Here again, it is holding up just as well in the vulnerable on people's attitudes.
- Eco-anxiety affects 30% of the world's inhabitants. It impacts Asians and Americans more than Europeans.



surprising to note that in poorer countries with a high level of vulnerability to climate change like India, Nigeria or South Africa, a fairly high level of climate skepticism (respectively 35%, 42% and 36%) clashes from a logical viewpoint with these countries' requests for support and reparation from Western countries, blaming CO_2 emissions dating back to the start of the industrial age.

- 40% of the world's population, especially in the Northern countries, continue to be divided over the future

- 43% are very concerned, especially in the Southern countries, but this level has not progressed in the past year.

The vulnerability of countries to the consequences of climate disasters is felt deeply by inhabitants since it stimulates their level of concern about the phenomenon. Nevertheless, vulnerability to climate change does not influence fear

countries as it is in the more resilient ones. It may no longer be such a cause for alarm given that it has little influence

FEAR OF HAVING TO LEAVE HOME AND OF BEING CONFRONTED WITH CLIMATE MIGRATIONS

Despite the relativism among a part of the population, question about climate migrations. fears came to light when respondents were asked the

Being forced to leave because of the climate

In answer to the question "do you think you will be forced, as a result of climate change, to move from where you currently live in the next 10 years?", one out of ten inhabitants of the planet (11%) claim that this will definitely happen. The scope of the response is surprising, because even if it is not synonymous with emigration, it nevertheless implies being forced to change where they live. Add 24% who think this is a probability and almost one third of the world's population (35%) think that a forced departure is possible.

where only 18% envision this prospect, or North America (23%), and the countries of the Southern hemisphere, where 50% envision a forced departure. Certain populations feel particularly vulnerable: two-thirds of Indians fear having to leave home in the next 10 years and one third are even certain that it will happen. In Egypt, Brazil, Colombia and Turkey, 20% of inhabitants are also certain of this.

In France, without reaching such dramatic levels, 8% of the population are still certain that they will have to leave in the next 10 years, and 15% view it as a probabi-This percentage conceals huge disparities, and therefore a very different sense of vulnerability between Europe, lity (That is a substantial number).

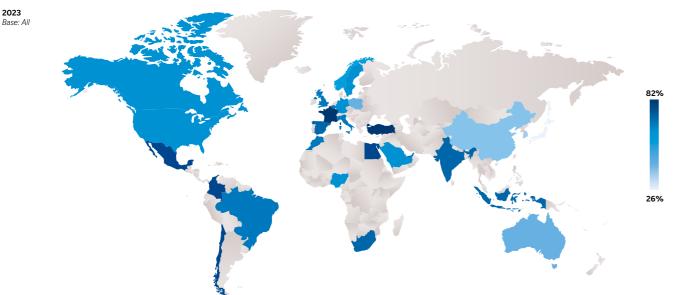
Climate migrations: the prospects are somewhat gloomy

In the years to come, the prospect of "dealing with a large number of migrants fleeing the consequences of climate change in their country" is a certainty for 21% of the planet's inhabitants and a probability for 43%, in other words a serious risk for 64%. No country thinks it is sheltered from this, apart from Japan (26%), traditionally closed to immigration, or South Korea (40%). In

contrast, France is among the countries that most definitely expect the arrival of climate migrants on their soil (32%), behind Turkey (42%), but ahead of Italy (25%) or the USA (22%), and on a par with India, which will mainly be confronted with domestic migrations moving from coastal areas to the country's inland regions (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12. Climate immigration in their country: the prognosis

Q. Do you think that in the coming years, your country will have to cope with large numbers of migrants fleeing the consequences of climate change in their own countries? "Definitely" or "Probably



Future climate migrants could find the doors closed to doubtless be compatriots forced to change region, facithem. Indeed, most of the countries questioned did not litating a positive response. express a strong desire to take them in. 39% of respondents are willing to take in all of them, or a large number In Europe, despite the migration pressure it is already of them, but 30% would prefer only a small number, and experiencing, Italy is the most open (42%). France is 13% want none (18% did not answer the question). Only among the most closed countries (26% would accept six countries show a majority of people in favor of welmigrants), alongside countries that have either already coming migrants: Brazil, Egypt, the United Arab Emiwelcomed many (Germany, Turkey), or are opposed to rates, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and India (Fig. 13). For some immigration on their soil (Japan, Poland). of them (Brazil, India), the migrants to be taken in will

Fig. 13. Propensity to refuse entry into their country to future climate migrants

Q. If this were to happen, what policy should be adopted to deal with these migrants fleeing the consequences of climate change? "Welcoming a small number of them" or "Not welcoming them

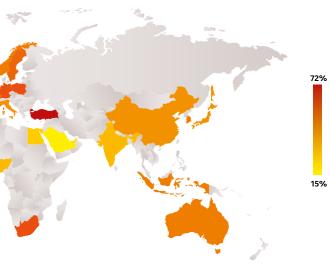
2023 Rase: Al

TO SUM UP

- There is also apprehension in certain Northern countries.
- However, it is the fear of seeing an influx of large numbers of climate migrants that is causing great concern, particularly in countries already coping with migration pressure (including France) or that expect many people to be displaced domestically (India).
- In the majority of countries questioned, the idea of welcoming refugees prompts a very clear rejection of populations coming from foreign countries.







In the Southern countries, the fear of being forced to move somewhere else due to climate change is very real.



DESPITE INCREASINGLY HEAVY RELUCTANCE TO ABANDON THEIR LIFESTYLE, CITIZEN-CONSUMERS ARE **TRYING TO CHANGE THEIR HABITS**

Changing lifestyle: a demand that is losing effectiveness

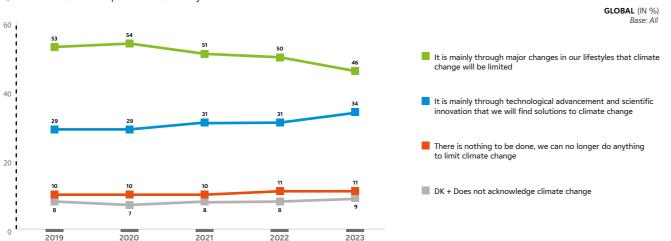
Five years ago, 53% of the planet's inhabitants were of the opinion that, evidently, the climate would be saved mainly by changing our lifestyles, rather than by trusting technology (29%). Five years later, people are much less willing to buy into this injunction to change: 46%, as opposed to 34% supporting the technological option - while the fatalistic answer that climate change "can't be limited" remains stable at 11% (Fig. 14). In the rich countries (depending on their GDP), the results are comparable (45%, 34%, 12%). This hardening stance can be seen on all continents, although the South Ame-

rican countries remain more open (60%). All population categories, and notably the different social categories, are evolving in the same way.

The difficulty in giving up certain habits becomes painfully obvious on examining the attitudes of the people who are specifically calling for a change in lifestyle: 28% eat meat at least once a day (compared to 31% for the global average), and their use of cars and planes is not atypical either.

Fig. 14. Climate equation: change our lifestyle or rely on technology





Without exonerating consumers, it is up to governments to take action

For five years now, governments across the world have generally presented their citizens with signs of taking ecological action. In 2019, 48% described their government as "taking action to fight climate change," in 2023, the figure is 56%. Traditionally more critical of its governing bodies, Europe remains more reserved but has also progressed. This progress made by governments is particularly satisfactory given that fighting climate change is clearly seen as their job: 70% of citizens think that it is up to governments to take action as a priority, far ahead of citizen-consumers (43%) and companies (34%).

While the results are fairly stable on a global scale, they have evolved in France: relieving some of the pressure that has been on the Government since 2019 (from 75% to 66%), this year the French emphasized their expectations of the corporate world (61%, +9 points compared to 2022), in other words for a range of decarbonized products and services, and still only half of them expect consumers to take action. Which clearly shows resistance from a large part of the population to having to bear the burden of change by themselves.

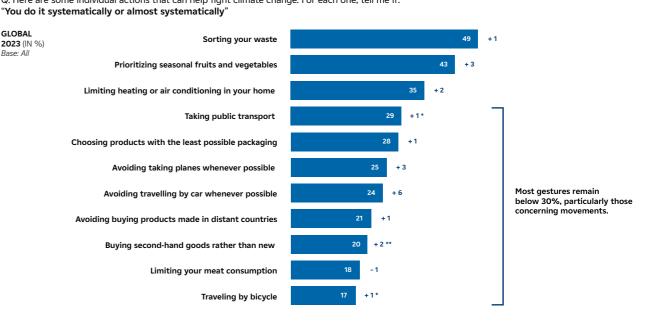
Minority consumption habits, but evolving in the right direction

Figure 15, which illustrates practices that have become paying attention to overpackaging, and prioritizing puestablished over time¹⁰, shows that the gestures carried blic transport. On the other hand, when tackling the out most systematically by the population questioned question of individual travel, meat consumption or are sorting waste¹¹ and prioritizing seasonal fruits and buying second-hand, the levels rarely go above 30% sysvegetables. Next come, to a lesser extent (one third of tematic or very frequent. Whereas these are the very respondents or less), limiting heating or air conditioning, gestures that influence household carbon emissions.

Fig. 15. Individual actions that help fight climate change

Q. Here are some individual actions that can help fight climate change. For each one, tell me if: "You do it systematically or almost systematically"

Base: All



+/- Change since 2019 • * +/- Change since 2020 • ** +/- Change since 2021

When we examine how results have evolved over the more action in relation to cars and planes (+7 points), past five years, we see a very slight increase in most but above all - and this is obviously influenced by the behaviors, although more obviously so for three of them energy crisis since 2022 – by a greater reduction of hea-(Fia. 16): ting (+6 points in five years, from 35% to 41%), which - Avoiding car travel: from 18% to 24% (+6 points comstarted in 2022 (+2) and extended into 2023 (+4). An effort in terms of restraint seen nowhere else.

- pared to 2019)
- Avoiding air travel: from 22% to 25% (+3)
- to 43% (+3)

Caution, however: on a global scale, between 2022 and 2023 we see a sharp fall when it comes to limiting individual transport. Efforts have dropped back in relation to cars, planes, bikes and public transport. Same observation in relation to meat. North America and Asia are the areas where efforts have slackened the most in relation to car and plane use, thus confirming data on increased air traffic this year. It is too early to conclude that we are witnessing a trend reversal, but the 2023 indicators undeniably show that a general effort that was not massive to start with is running out of steam.

- Prioritizing seasonal fruits and vegetables: from 40% The other gestures that would help limit CO₂ emissions, such as eating less meat or decreasing heating or air conditioning use, have increased little or not at all (respectively -1 and +2 points). Most of these changes, and notably reduced use of cars and planes, can be observed on all continents, including North America. However, Europe stands out in claiming





^{10.} In other words, done "systematically or almost systematically" according to respondents. 11. Sorting waste is a very European practice: 73% of Europeans do it systematically compared to 53% of North Americans, 43% of South Americans, 40% of Asians and 26% in Africa and the Middle East.

The French continue to make efforts, which are more obvious than elsewhere

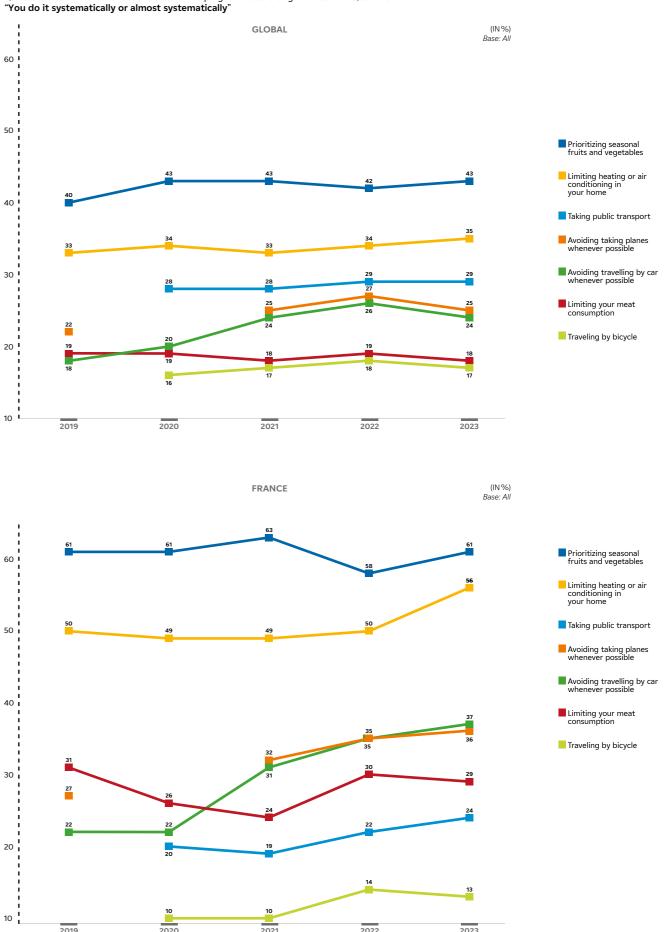
The results for the French are much more encouraging. First because more of them than elsewhere (including in Europe) are prioritizing seasonal vegetables, claiming to limit their use of individual means of transport (plane and car), and limiting heating. But above all, their efforts continued between 2022 and 2023. This is particularly spectacular in relation to car use: 22% claimed to be avoiding this in 2019 as opposed to 37% today (Fig. 16).

There is still a big gap between declared efforts, which express a sort of awareness, and frequency of car and plane use reported by respondents at another point in the questionnaire. So in France and elsewhere in the world, we find no trace of the claimed efforts in the claimed behaviors: in 2023, 45% of French people took their car every day or almost, as opposed to 46% in 2021 (the first year the question was asked). 47% took a plane at least once a year (46% in 2021). That gap raises questions. It may mean that the actual efforts are not yet widespread or frequent enough to change the way consumers view their dependency on cars, for example. Trying to avoid cars, even frequently, does not change the impression of using them every day on average.

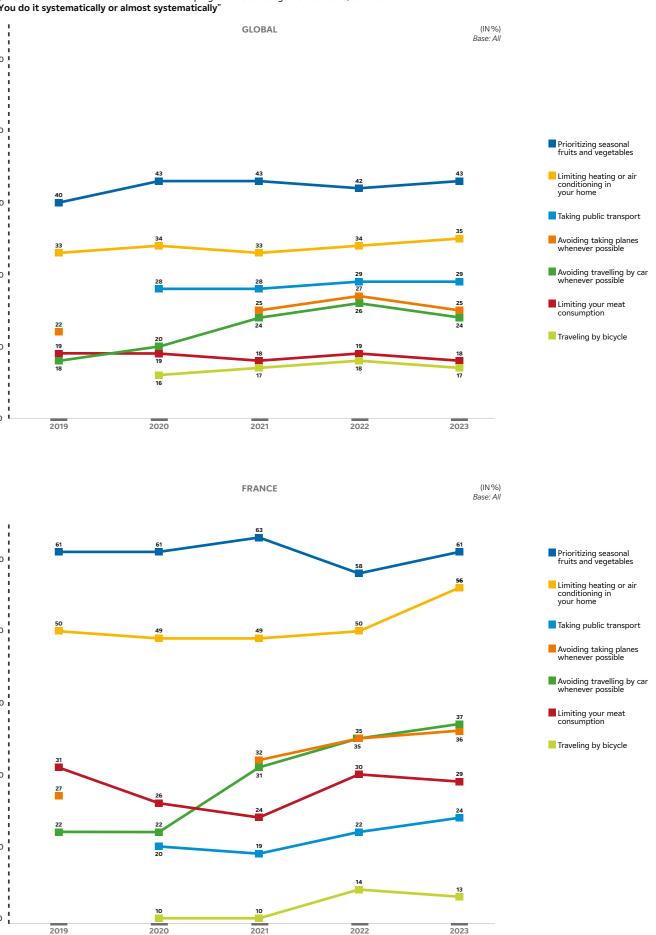
However, there is one area where, in France once again, efforts are on a par with declared consumption: meat consumption, where a fairly clear drop in daily consumption frequency can be observed between 2021 and 2023: 42% in 2021 compared to 35% in 2023, i.e. 7 points in two years. That is guite remarkable. But once again, one might also wonder about the impact inflation has had on food prices over the same period...

Fig. 16. Evolution in individual actions that help fight climate change

Q. Here are some individual actions that can help fight climate change. For each one, tell me if:



4 out of 10 citizens systematically claim to prioritize seasonal fruits and vegetables... but only 2 out of 10 claim to be systematically limiting their meat consumption.







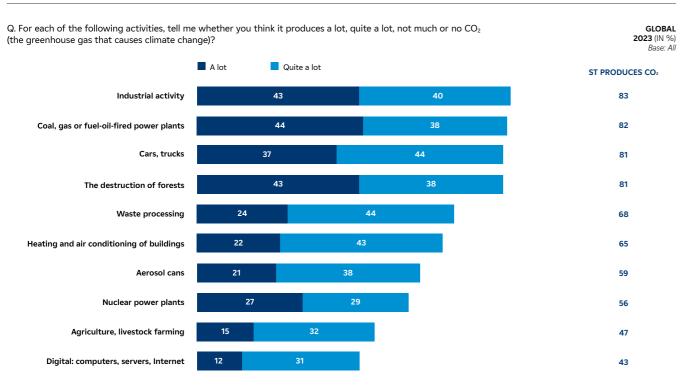
Information is still incomplete

This gap between sense of urgency in relation to the climate and lack of drive to limit individual carbon footprints stems partly from a lack of information about the causes of climate change. In 2023, we see that for the very large majority of the public, the biggest CO_2 emissions primarily come from industry, fossil-fuel power stations, deforestation and transport, in other words for the first three, factors that consumers have

no direct control over. Heating, on the other hand, appears to be of secondary importance (Fig. 17).

But there are sectors in particular that seem greatly underestimated: agriculture and digital tech, whose emissions depend directly, at least partly, on consumption patterns, and which do not appear connected to the climate issue. This perhaps explains the stability of practices in these areas.

Fig. 17. Opinion on CO₂ -producing sectors



TO SUM UP

- The demand for people to change their lifestyle is increasingly reaching its limits. People believe that the key to saving the planet is in the hands of governments, and much less in the hands of citizens.
- Nevertheless, they increasingly claim to be making an effort to switch to more eco-friendly consumption, particularly through less car use.
- Europe has been forced to restrict energy use, but this now seems to be entering into habits. France appears to be at the cutting-edge of this movement, and likewise for limiting car use. However consumers need precise information so that they can focus their efforts on the real levers of decarbonization in their day-to-day usage.

CLIMATE POLICIES: GOVERNMENTS' MARGINS FOR MANEUVER ARE SHRINKING, FRANCE IS UNDER **TENSION**

So governments are being called on to take action, and the population believes that they are actually more active than before. What is their opinion on measures under investigation or already implemented in various parts of the world?

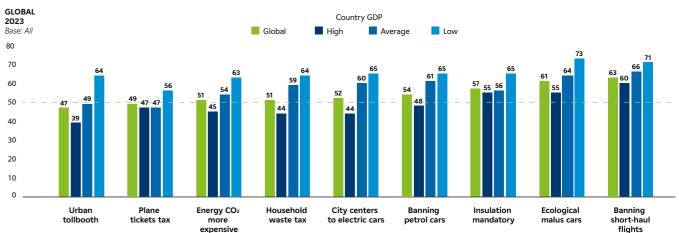
Restrictive measures: problematic acceptability in the developed countries

Given most of the acceptability scores obtained by the But the most surprising thing at first sight is the abyss measures tested, we are evidently guite far from the separating rich countries from poor countries. In the consensus thresholds required to get them adopted by Western countries, the acceptability of measures is governments without objection (Fig. 18). On a global much lower than in the poor countries, particularly scale, restrictions targeting travel are the ones that obwhen car use is involved. One initial reason immediately tain the lowest acceptability scores, admittedly often springs to mind: daily car use is highest in the rich above 50%, but rarely over 60%. Two measures are an countries. But there may be another reason, put forward by Emiliano Grossman and Charlotte Halpern exception to this and seem to be less irritating: a ban on short-haul flights (63%) and the ecological malus in a chapter of our collective work on Obs'COP: "This (61%), measures that have the advantage of not almost systematic difference raises the question of concerning everyone. how the respondents perceive the reality or probability of the proposed measures being implemented. One Likewise, measures that have a financial impact are not can imagine that, in the poorest countries in the sample, these questions are relatively abstract or are unlikely to become restrictive. In the rich countries on the other hand, these measures are on the agenda now or in the process of being rolled out".¹²

welcomed: taxes on air tickets, household waste or CO₂ emissions (carbon tax) are only around 50% acceptable. Obliging homeowners to insulate their home fares better (not everyone is a homeowner...), but without reaching a consensus.

Fig. 18. Acceptability of pro-climate measures according to countries' GDP

Q. Here are some measures that could be adopted in your country to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For each one, tell me whether it seems you to be: "Very acceptable" or "Somewhat acceptable"



12. WITKOWSKI Didier and BOY Daniel. Une planète mobilisée? L'opinion mondiale face au changement climatique. EDF. 2023. pp. 112-119. Online: < https:// www.edf.fr/groupe-edf/observatoire-international-climat-et-opinions-publiques>



- This year we split the measures into two families:
- Those that require action from individuals: these were tested in terms of acceptability;
- Those that concern infrastructures: these were tested in terms of favorability.

On a global scale, unlike eco-friendly behaviors, which are tending to progress, restrictive measures are becoming less and less acceptable. For those that we can track back to at least 2021, acceptability is dropping: limiting access to city centers (-2 points compared to

2019), making home insulation obligatory (-6 points compared to 2019), banning the sale of gasoline cars (-4 points compared to 2021). The leeway for governments is decreasing everywhere.

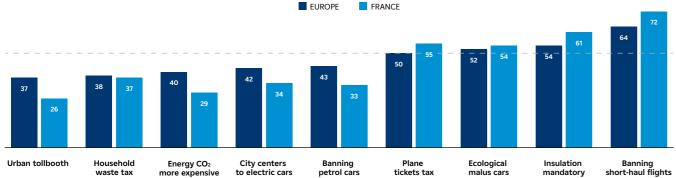
In relation to cars, France is hardening its stance even more than the Europeans

Where is France situated among all nine European countries in our sample? In relation to the plane tax and ecological malus, the French have the same attitude as the European average (Fig. 19). They are even more favorable to restrictive measures on home insulation and eliminating short-haul flights. On the other hand, they appear fiercely opposed to any measure penalizing cars, their cost price, or freedom of circulation. The contrast is startling in fact. Acceptability is over 10

points lower than the other European countries when it comes to urban tollbooths (which clash with France's culture of territorial equality), the carbon tax, limiting access to city centers, or a ban on cars with a combustion engine, although this is on the agenda of the European Green Deal. All these measures incur the wrath of over two-thirds of French people (and three guarters in the case of urban tollbooths).

Fig. 19. Acceptability of pro-climate measures in Europe and France

Q. Here are some measures that could be adopted in your country to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For each one, tell me whether it seems 2023 (IN %) you to be: "Very acceptable" or "Somewhat acceptable



Since 2020, the French have been hardening their stance: there is increasing objection to the obligation to insulate homes (-8 points), the carbon tax (-6 points)

and specifically between 2022 and 2023, the ban on selling cars with combustion engines (-9 points).

Air transport, roads, housing: change model?

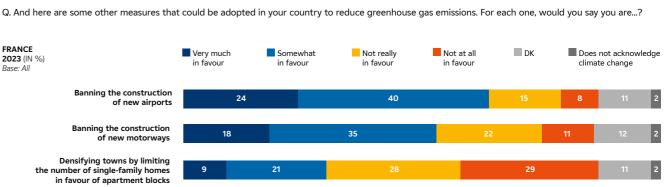
This year, we tested three conceivable measures, that concern infrastructures and that are part of the French public debate, notably at the urging of ecological movements. These involve:

- Ban on building new airports;
- Ban on building new highways;
- Densification of cities, limiting individual homes in favor of apartment buildings.

In France, the results are fairly contrasting, but at least in relation to transport, the debate is guite open (Fig. 20). 64% (compared to 23%) of French people are in favor of a ban on building new airports, with reasonable consensus between generations, social categories and even political preferences. The majority seems less solid when it comes to banning new highways (53% are in favor compared to 33% who are opposed), but the results are surprising in a country that is so

attached to cars. If frequency of car use does not influence responses, although the under-35s are less in favor than 50-64 year-olds (50% compared to 59%), the right is less supportive than the left (50% compared to 66%), and residents of the Paris region, perhaps because they use them more, are also less in favor than the others of a ban on new highways (44%).

Fig. 20. Favorability for certain pro-climate measures



On a global scale, these three measures generate very split reactions: 43% favorable compared to 44% opposed to a densification of cities, 39% compared to 49% to a ban on new highways, 46% compared to 41% to a ban on new airports. But in reality, the countries respond in very contrasting ways: Figure 21 sum-

Fig. 21. The countries most and least favorable to these pro-climate measures

	nat could be adopted in your country to Somewhat in favour; Not really in favou	reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For ea r; Not at all in favour; You don't know.	ch one, would 202: Base: A	
	Banning the construction of new airports	Densifying towns by limiting the number of single-family homes in favour of apartment blocks	Banning the construction of new motorways	
Most favorable countries	India France Turkey Belgium Indonesia	India Indonesia Egypt China Saudi Arabia Nigeria United Arab Emirates Singapore	India Turkey Egypt France Indonesia	
Most unfavorable countries	Morocco Sweden Australia Norway Nigeria	Belgium United Kingdom France South Korea Norway Japan	Canada Germany Australia Sweden Norway Poland Morocco Colombia	



On the other hand, there is a clear and firm rejection of limiting individual homes in favor of apartment buildings: only 30% are in favor, whereas 57% are opposed, and even very opposed for 29%. This measure never receives over 40% support, except among supporters of ecologist groups and Renaissance.

marizes the key national positions for each of these measures. Bear in mind however that these debates are probably not underway in all countries, that they are an expression of the French context, and that the respondents, in some cases, had never thought about the subject before answering the question.

Adaptation policies: little visibility for now, except in Asia

The "adaptation" aspect of climate policies has only attracted attention in recent years, moreover at the urging of the IPCC and the UN. For now, citizens are split over recognizing that their government is tackling the subject head on. In the 25 countries where we asked the question¹³, 47% think that the government or local authorities are working on adapting their country to the consequences of climate change, whereas 41% are of the opposite opinion (Fig. 22). The results are divided in many countries, but some seem ahead of the game, in any case according to their populations, and these tend to be Asian, with the notable exception of Japan. Hence, the authorities in countries like India, Singapore, Indonesia, China, but also Colombia and Nigeria, tend to be praised for their action, even if the level of "abso-

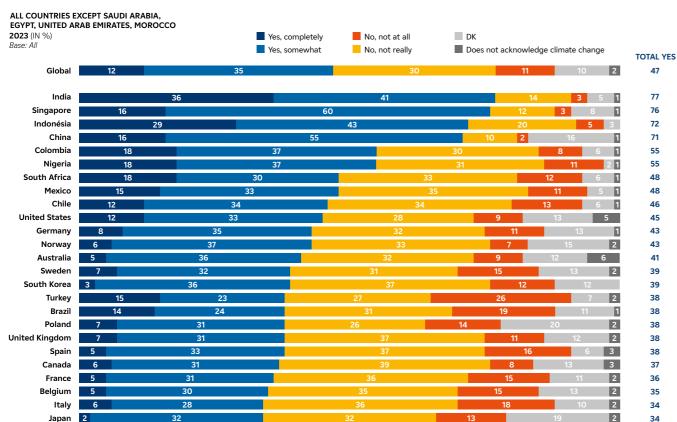
lutely" responses is only high in India and Indonesia, two countries that can be described as avant-garde (in any case, in the eyes of their populations).

Some countries on the other hand stand out through more critical reactions expressed through a higher percentage of the "not at all" response: Turkey, Brazil and Spain. The first two seem more polarized on this question since some of the "absolutely" responses were also stronger.

It is in Central and Southern Europe, Japan and Canada that adaptation policies are the least visible to populations (and/or the least developed).

Fig. 22. Visibility of policies for adapting to the consequences of climate change

Q. Would you say that the government or local authorities are taking steps in your country to adapt to the consequences of climate change (abandoning certain coastal areas, greening towns, changing certain crop species, etc.)?



13. The four countries excluded are Morocco, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

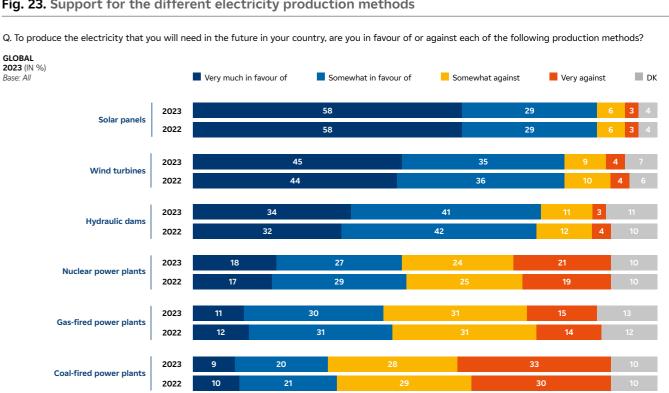
Electricity production: renewables are still consensual, nuclear power confirms its return to grace

Last year, under the effects of the energy crisis folmains basically tripolar: renewables are very largely aclowing the invasion of Ukraine, and specifically for eleccepted (75% and over) whereas coal-fired plants are tricity production, all energy sources gained legitimacy, only supported by 29% of the population questioned. as if they were all worthwhile options. In 2023, the Gas-fired and nuclear power plants are still controverlandscape has not been disrupted, although support sial, having their supporters and detractors in almost for coal and gas has dropped by two points and nuclear equal proportions (Fig. 23). by one point. The hierarchy of energies therefore re-

Fig. 23. Support for the different electricity production methods

GLOBAL

2023 (IN %) Base: All









As concerns nuclear, there has been a very clear progression in the past two years: +6 points, and particularly in Europe (+12). Some historically anti-nuclear countries like Germany and Italy, which had seen respective increases in support of +15 and +17 points, have shown further progress (+3 in Germany) or remained stable (Italy), and so can no longer be described as anti-nuclear (or pro-nuclear). 47% of Germans support civil nuclear power (compared to 43% opposed), and 43% of Italians, compared to 46%.

Seven countries in the world support nuclear at a rate of over 55%: India, China, France, Poland, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Sweden, with most of them having plans for new power stations.

TO SUM UP

- The acceptability of climate policies, notably when they restrict individual freedoms, is the real black spot in this study:
- In countries with a high GDP especially, policies aimed at impacting cost or restricting freedom to circulate in a car are met with categorical rejection.
- The only openings concern a ban on short-haul flights and the ecological malus. But the carbon tax on energies, given the current inflationist context that all economies are experiencing, is out of the question, especially in Europe.
- Another tension point: challenging the existence of individual homes, which is unacceptable, particularly in France.
- Some decisions concerning infrastructures are acceptable in quite a lot of countries, including France: no building of additional airports or highways.
- The other types of climate policy, those focused on adapting to change, are not very visible to the international public, except in a few countries that seem to be pioneers and that tend to be located in Asia.
- In the energy field, the situation has only really changed in relation to nuclear power, which continues to experience a return to favor, especially in Europe.

CONCLUSION

The 2023 wave of Obs'COP has not reproduced the changes that had alarmed us in 2022: increase in climate skepticism and relativizing the consequences of warming, drop in environmental priority given the need for growth. On the contrary, a series of climate events have supported the idea that the changing climate will make life more difficult, make some places uninhabitable, or even cause migrations – which many countries take a dim view of. Despite a new offensive on social media this year, climate skepticism is no longer growing.





However, all that is happening without any great increase in concern among populations. Citizen-consumers feel that they are doing their part, and their efforts have in fact intensified, although sometimes more for economic reasons. Governments are more than ever being urged to take action, adapt some infrastructures, abandon some others, but without reducing the freedom to circulate or live wherever we want, without challenging our life styles, perhaps by wagering on technology. A tug of war, in short, a sort of "yes, but..." applied to the fight for the climate.





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