

What do **women think** about **climate change?**

Summary of a survey
of 6500 women
by the Australian
Conservation
Foundation
and 1 Million Women.



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

1MILLION
women

International studies show climate damage has a **disproportionate impact on women and children.**

In developing countries an unfair distribution of roles, resources and power is the reason climate change impacts women more than men. Traditional roles as primary caregivers and providers of food and fuel make women more vulnerable to flooding, drought and other extreme weather events. United Nations research suggests 80 per cent of the people displaced by climate change are women and children.

In Australia it seems women are more likely than men to recognise climate change. In the Australia Institute's 2018 Climate of the Nation poll, 80 per cent of women said climate change was occurring now, while the figure was 72 per cent for men. In the Lowy Institute's 2018 poll, 52.7 per cent of women agreed that 'global warming is a serious and pressing problem', while only 47.3 per cent of men agreed with that statement.

In the lead up to the next federal election we wanted to dig into this further to find out what aspects of climate damage are of greatest concern to Australian women. How is climate change affecting women in Australia already? Is it influencing the decisions and choices they make? Is it changing their decisions on big issues as well as day-to-day choices? What actions do they want from our next government?

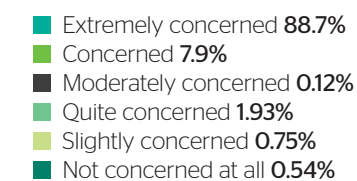
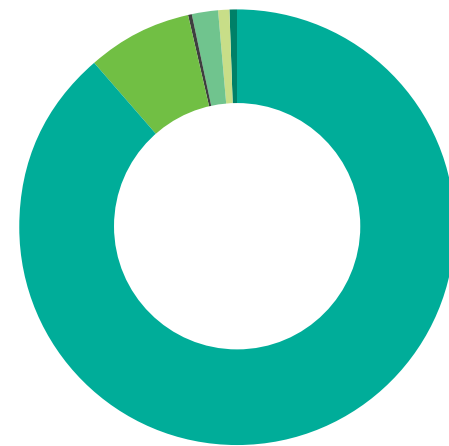
To answer these questions, the Australian Conservation Foundation and 1 Million Women joined forces to survey women across Australia.

We wanted to hear from mothers and sisters, leaders and doers, young and old, from the city to the bush. 1 Million Women sent the online survey to its supporters and ACF sent the survey to all of its female supporters (the first time ACF has reached out to women only).

The survey was completed by 6514 women in September and October 2018.

Nearly 9 in 10 women are 'extremely concerned'

Climate change is a serious worry for Australian women. To the question 'how concerned are you about the impacts of climate change?' a massive majority – 88.7 per cent – said they were 'extremely concerned'.



Anxiety about climate change and the future

When asked 'have you or your family members or friends been affected by any of the following?' the top three responses were:

1. Worry or anxiety about climate change and the future (5163)
2. Discomfort from heatwaves or record-breaking hot temperatures (4342)
3. Rising electricity bills because of increased need for heating and cooling (4142)

Only 2.8 per cent answered 'We/I haven't been impacted in any way'.

The climate is the number one issue that decides my vote, and it is also the reason my partner and I have decided to not have children.

- Ash (18-29 age range, Victoria)

33.4%

of women under 30 said they were reconsidering having children or more children because of concern about an unsafe future from climate change

22.4%

in the 30-39 age range said they were reconsidering having children

45%

in the 30-39 age bracket said they have children or plan to have children, but worry about the dangers of climate change for their kids

Reconsidering having children

One in three (33.4 per cent) of the women under 30 surveyed said they were 'reconsidering having children or more children because I am increasingly worried that if I have children they will face an unsafe future from climate change'. In the 30-39 age range, that figure was still more than one in five (22.4 per cent).

Exactly 45 per cent in the 30-39 age bracket said the following statement represented their views about children and climate change: 'I have children or I plan to have children but am worried about the dangers of climate change for them. I intend to raise them to be environmentally conscious and to have a small footprint on the planet.'

Thinking about the future

When asked about children alive today and the world they and future generations will inherit, nearly 80 per cent strongly agreed with the statement 'I worry for their future and wellbeing in a world increasingly under stress from climate change'. Only 2.5 per cent strongly agreed with the statement 'I am optimistic that they will live in a world where humans have stopped pollution and reduced the risks of climate change'.

Climate impacts happening now

When asked 'which of the following do you believe to be impacts of climate change happening now in Australia?' the top three responses were:

1. Damage to the Great Barrier Reef (6215)
2. More frequent and/or severe droughts (6071)
3. Species extinctions and loss of native habitat (5720)

More than 80 per cent of respondents described 'threats to food availability and rising costs due to changing weather patterns' as a climate impact that is happening now.

Making life changes

To the question, 'which of the following decisions have you made as a result of concern about climate change?' the top three responses were:

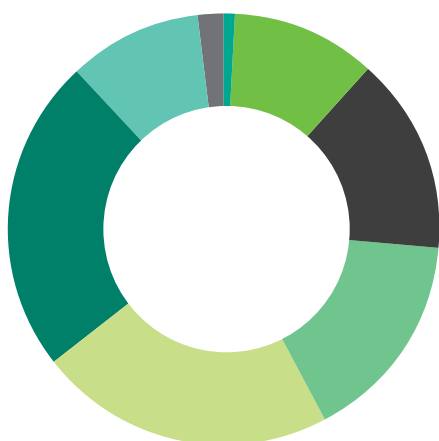
1. Recycled as much as possible (6267)
2. Cut back on food waste (5403)
3. Changed shopping habits to consume less (5105)

More than 45 per cent of respondents said they were driving less because of their concern about climate change. A third of respondents said they had switched banks or moved superannuation or other money into ethical options due to climate concerns.

Voting for climate action

When asked to choose a statement that most accurately reflected their priorities when voting, nearly 7 in 10 (68.8 per cent) said they would vote for 'clear programs to accelerate action on climate change such as ramping up Australia's pollution reduction targets, increasing renewable energy and phasing out the burning of coal, oil and gas'.

Age range of survey respondents



Below 18 x 63	1.0%
18-29 x 711	10.9%
30-39 x 955	14.7%
40-49 x 1031	15.8%
50-59 x 1441	22.1%
60-69 x 1537	23.6%
70-79 x 661	10.1%
80 or over x 115	1.8%

Note: Under 18s were not targeted for this survey.

'The impact of this issue on my children - my teenagers are very despondent about their lives - they know they're inheriting a big problem that we all have to come together to move beyond. They are depressed about it and flippant about their plans.'

- Pollyanna (40-49 age range, Queensland)

I worry about my grandchildren's lives, they will have a tougher time than we have.'

- Jan (70-79 age range, NSW)

'Climate change is one of the defining issues that my generation has grown up with - and we care about it deeply. The longer our leaders fail to listen to our concerns, the more they will alienate us. And they wonder why we seem so apathetic.'

- Courtenay (18-29 age range, NSW)

About 1 Million Women

1 Million Women founder Natalie Isaacs set out to build a global movement of women and empower them to act on climate change through the way they live.

About the Australian Conservation Foundation

ACF is Australia's national environment organisation. We speak out, show up and act for a world where forests, rivers, people and wildlife thrive. We are proudly independent and funded by donations from our community.

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