

Climate change threat underestimated by people in fossil fuel reliant countries

Research in a new global report has highlighted a worrying link between reliance on fossil fuels and climate change perceptions.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, June 22, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A global safety charity has highlighted a worrying link between reliance on fossil fuels and climate change perceptions.

According to Lloyd's Register Foundation, people in countries with a high dependence on fossil fuel production for internal energy needs or exports are less likely to view climate change as a threat. It follows the latest analysis of the latest [World Risk Poll](#), powered by Gallup, which surveyed 125,000 people across 121 countries.

The Poll asked respondents whether they think climate change will be a threat to people in their country in the next 20 years. At a global level, 41% of respondents said climate change is a 'very serious threat', increasing to 67% when people who see it as a 'somewhat serious threat' are included.



CREDIT: iStock/nightman1965 - An oil rig in Norway, where data from Lloyd's Register Foundation highlighted a correlation between regions where fossil fuel industries are prominent and lack of concern regarding climate change



CREDIT: iStock/schwartstock - Data from Lloyd's Register Foundation's World Risk Poll has shown that populations in countries that rely on fossil fuel tend to be less concerned about climate change

Lloyd's Register Foundation also found that in all countries where energy contributes more than

50% of all exports, less than 50% of the population view climate change as a 'very serious threat'. This includes Norway, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which is set to host the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference, COP28, later this year. This compares with numerous countries, especially in Europe and Latin America, where concern is much higher, with as many as 87% of people in the most concerned country, Chile, calling climate change a 'very serious threat'.

This variation can also be seen at a regional level. In Norway – a major fossil fuel producer – for example, 45% of the population view climate change as a 'very serious threat'. However, those in Western Norway and Northern Norway - home to most of the country's offshore oil and gas fields - are considerably less concerned about climate change, with 40% and 31% respectively viewing it as a 'very serious threat'.

The analysis from Lloyd's Register Foundation has been detailed in its latest World Risk Poll Focus On report, [Fossil fuel dependence and perceptions of climate change](#). With evidence that fewer people in regions economically dependent on fossil fuel production see climate change as a threat, the global charity is calling for economic diversification in fossil fuel producing countries, with greater incentivisation of low-carbon technologies and renewable energy.

Tim Slingsby, Director of Skills and Education at Lloyd's Register Foundation, said: "We are reminded of the disastrous impact climate change is having on our world every day. Whether it's the devastation caused by flooding, wildfires or extended heatwaves, there is no denying the imminent threat to our planet. It should therefore be of concern for us all that so many people, particularly those from countries and regions reliant on fossil fuel production, still do not see it as a threat to their safety.

"One of the potential reasons for this is risk psychology. For example, warnings about climate change – which can look like an abstract threat to those who do not see the impact in their daily lives – may be downplayed or discounted when compared to threats that seem more pressing or closer to home, such as the fear of lost economic prosperity or employment as a result of decarbonisation."

Lloyd's Register Foundation is now calling on governments and stakeholders within the fossil fuel industry to work together on workforce transition plans, to ensure industry workers are upskilled in green energy or other sectors where transferrable skills are relevant. The shipping industry is providing an example for how this can be done, led by the [Maritime Just Transition Task Force](#) which, with funding from Lloyd's Register Foundation, is using a people-centred approach to transition to a zero-carbon shipping industry.

Tim Slingsby added: "Fossil fuel producing countries must push forwards efforts to accelerate diversification, implementing clear plans to re-skill workers for the transition to greener technologies. This requires collaborative thinking and communication from both national and local governments, as well as global industry stakeholders.

“Without action, many people may continue to not see climate change as a serious threat, making the transition to greener technologies harder to implement. Time is already running out, and we must use this latest data as a catalyst to make changes that improve lives and minimise risk across the world.”

For more information, please visit <https://wrp.lrfoundation.org.uk/>

To access the entire dataset, please visit: <https://wrp.lrfoundation.org.uk/data-resources/>

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World Risk Poll

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