



Are Americans Ready to *Adapt* to Climate Change?

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2012 BECC Conference

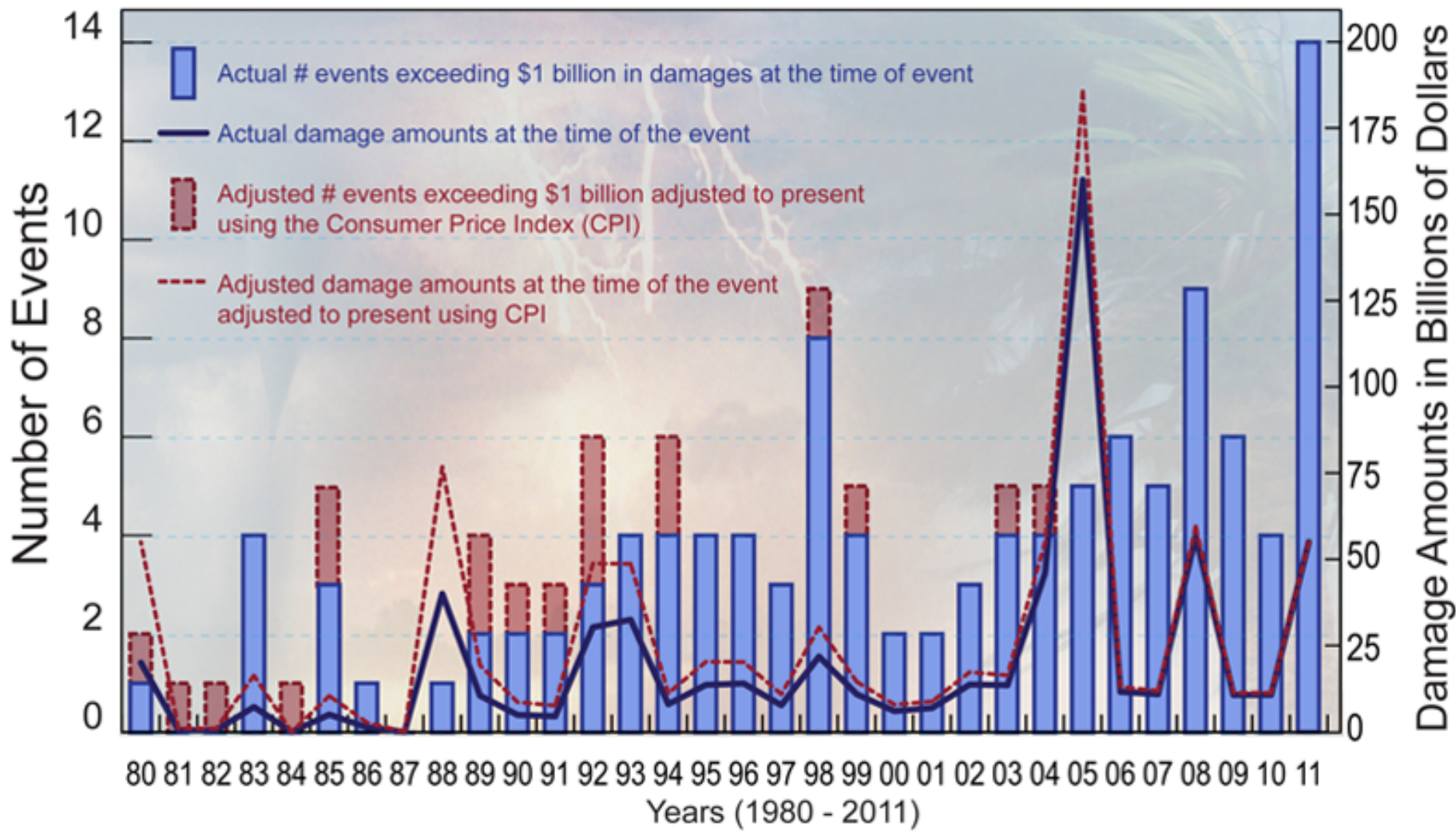
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Billion Dollar Weather/Climate Disasters

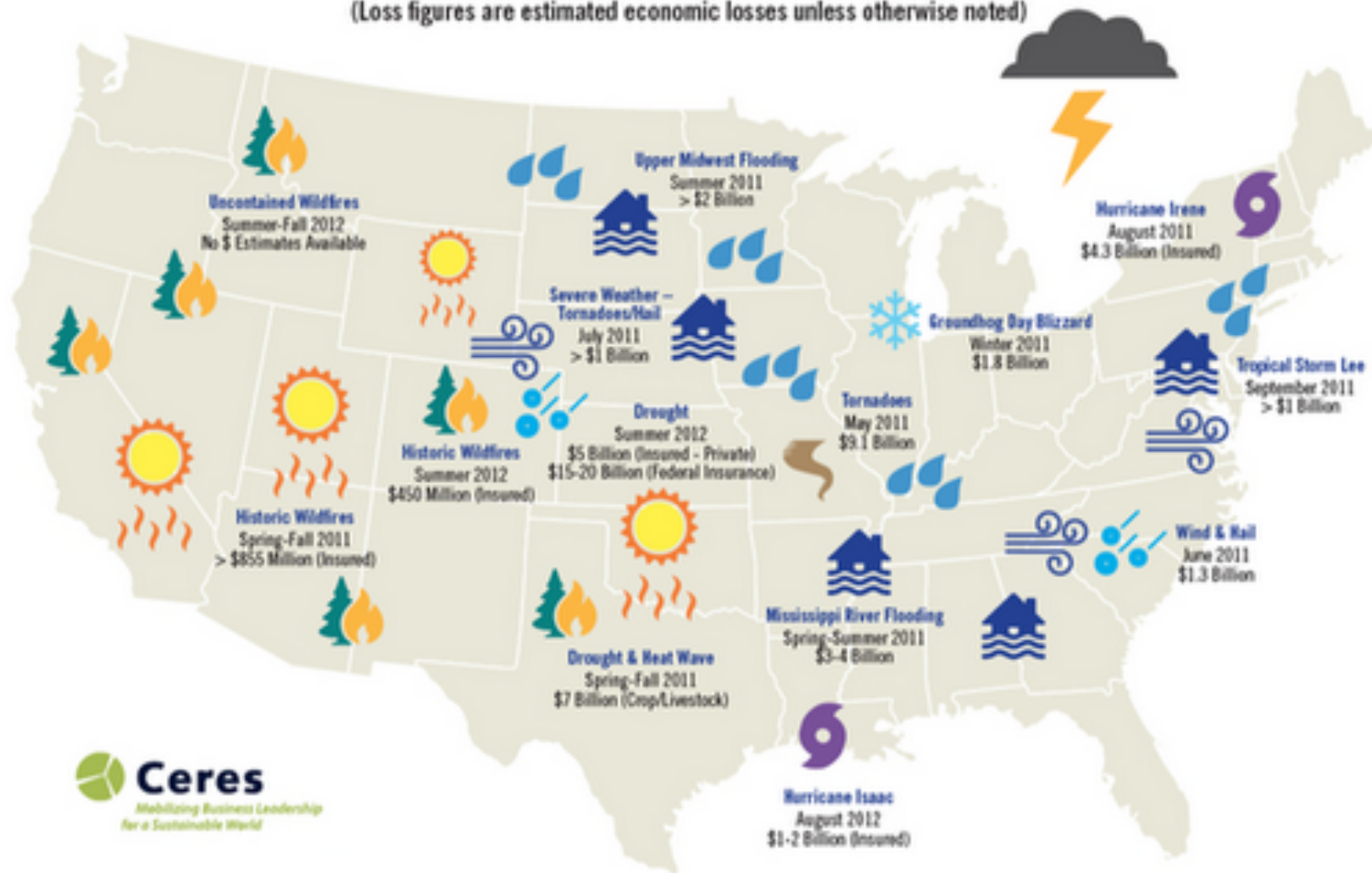
1980 - 2011

NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC



Losses from U.S. Extreme Weather Disasters – 2011-2012

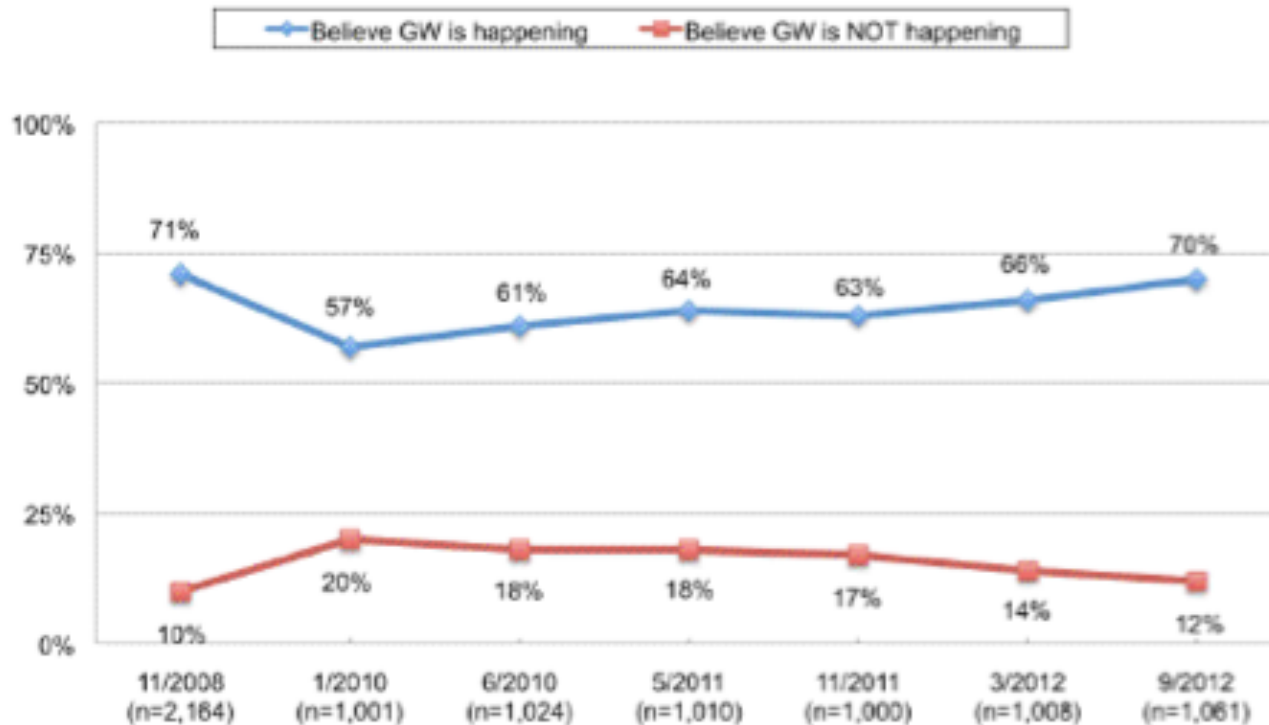
(Loss figures are estimated economic losses unless otherwise noted)



WHAT LOOKS LIKE
A WHISKEY
ATECHUS
CHANGE

Growing Majority of Americans Believe Global Warming Is Happening

- Fewer Believe It Is Not -



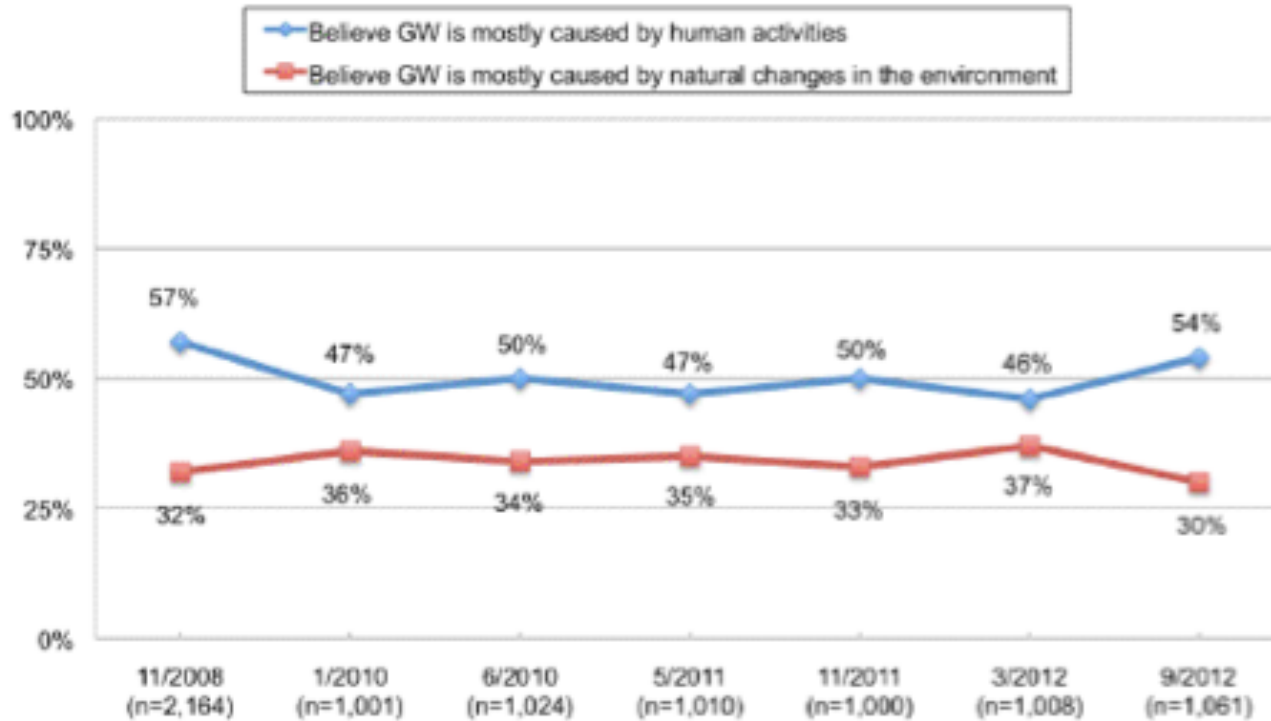
Do you think global warming is happening?

Base: Americans 18+.

Source: Yale/George Mason

A New Majority Believes Global Warming Is Human Caused

- Fewer Believe It Is Due Mostly to Natural Changes -



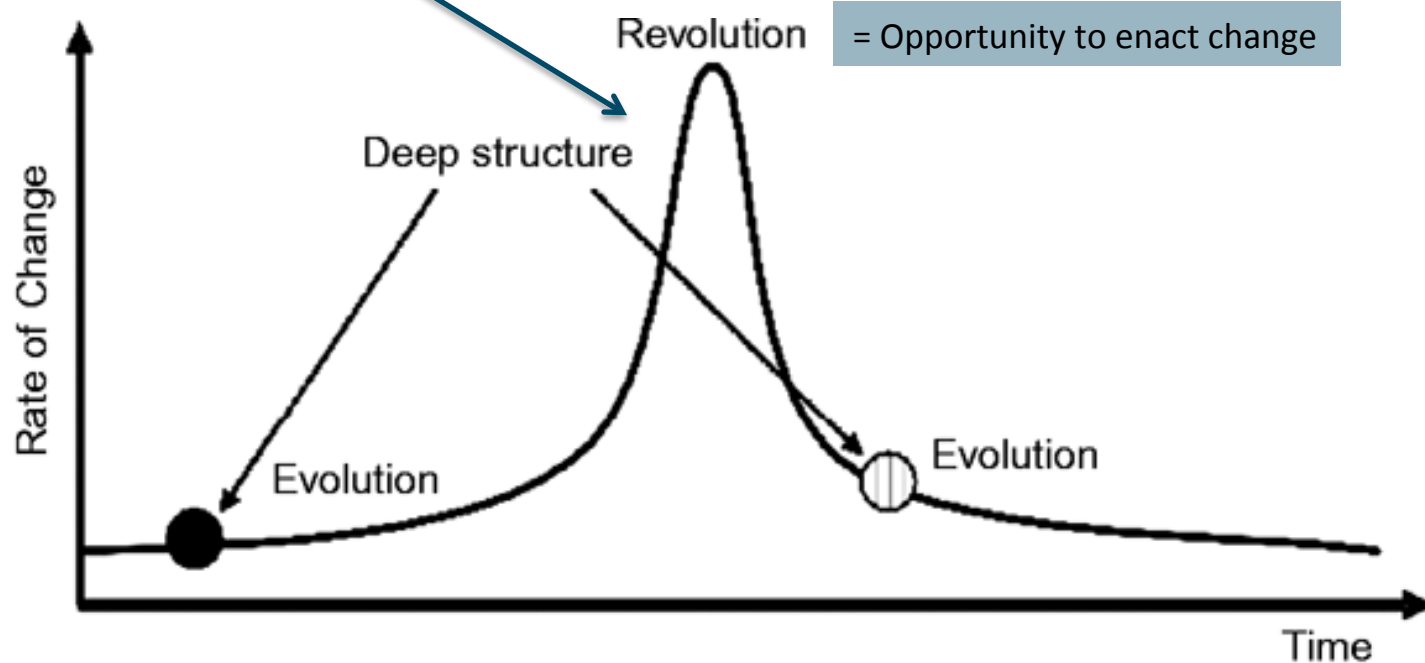
Assuming global warming is happening, do you think it is...

Base: Americans 18+.

Source: Yale/George Mason

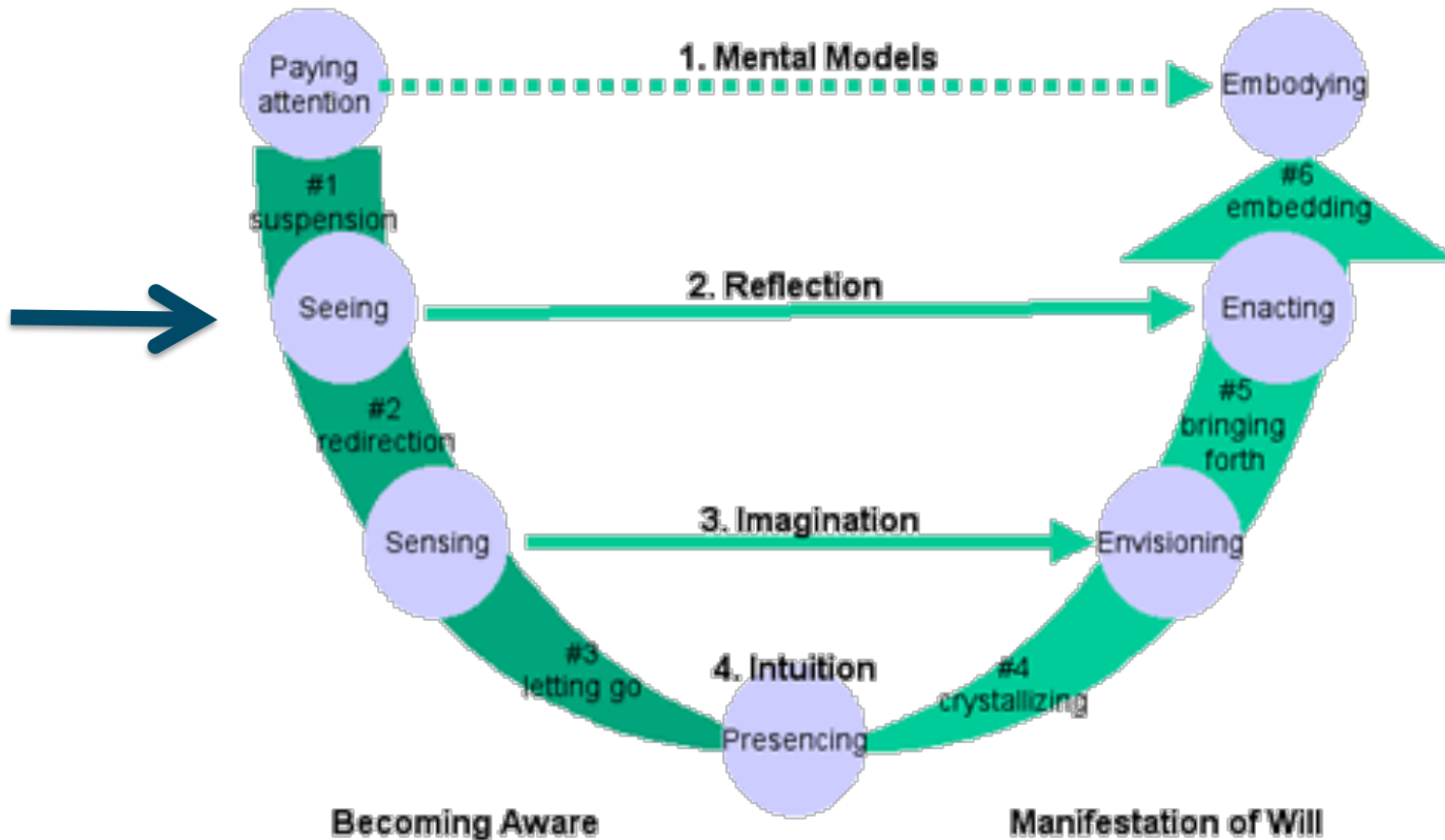
Punctuated Equilibrium of Social Change

Opportunity to influence attitudes and behaviors on climate



Source: Silva and Hirschheim (2007)

Inflection Points of Cognition and Social Reality



Source: Dr. Claus Otto Scharmer, MIT

How Communities Are Responding

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND
COMMUNICATION ON
ADAPTATION:
A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF ADAPTATION PLANS**

White Paper
prepared for *ecoAmerica* by

Susanne C. Moser, Ph.D.

and

Adina Abeles

Susanne Moser Research & Consulting
Santa Cruz, CA

March 11, 2012

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- Climate action **plans w/adaptation**
- Broad recognition of the **importance of public engagement** and communication.
- Lack of detailed communication plans
- Implementation lags intention
- Lack of tested frames, communication guidance

New Opportunity




- Use local and regional impacts to engage in preparation and lead to mitigation
- **Think different**, new
- ~~Adaptation~~ → **Preparation**
- Motivate to prepare and help **prevent further risk** (*mitigation*)

Be Careful



- Still a **polarized** issue
- **Old ways didn't work**
- How Americans **understand**
= **how they respond**

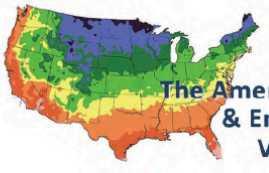
Start With Research



SUMMARY REPORT
**Climate and Energy Truths:
 Our Common Future**
 April 2009
making the necessary connections


Western Strategies, LLC Lake Research Partners ecoAmerica
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SUMMARY REPORT
**The American Climate
 & Environmental
 Values Survey**
 September 2011

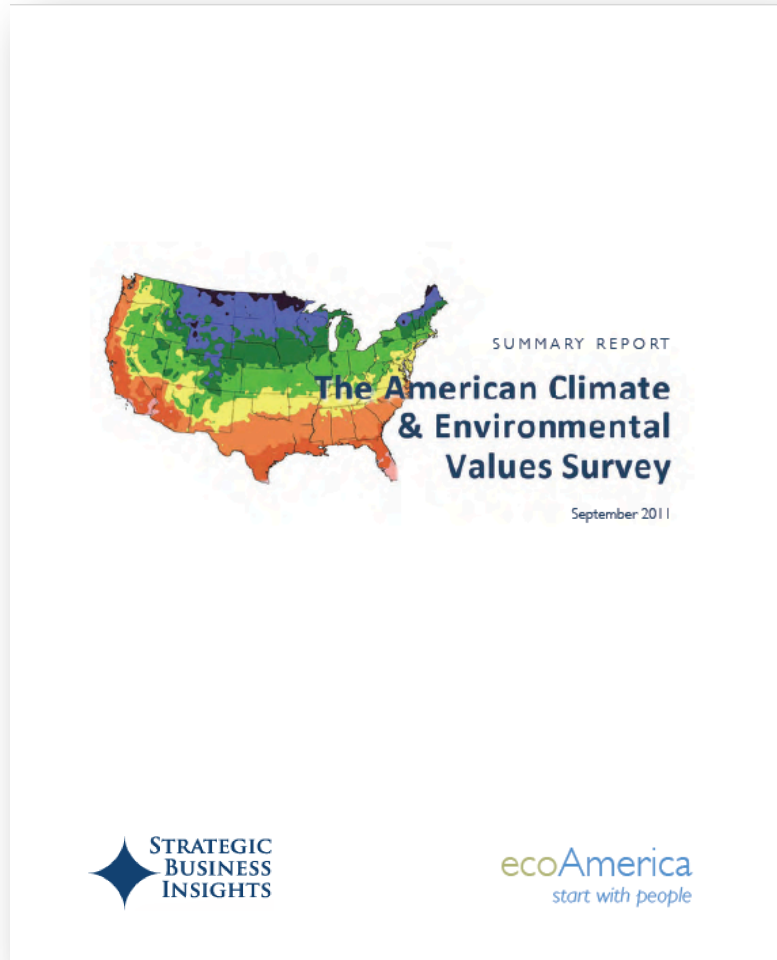
STRATEGIC BUSINESS INSIGHTS ecoAmerica
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SUMMARY REPORT
**Climate Impacts:
 Take Care and Prepare**
focusing Americans on climate action
 August 2012

MacArthur Foundation Lake Research Partners ecoAmerica
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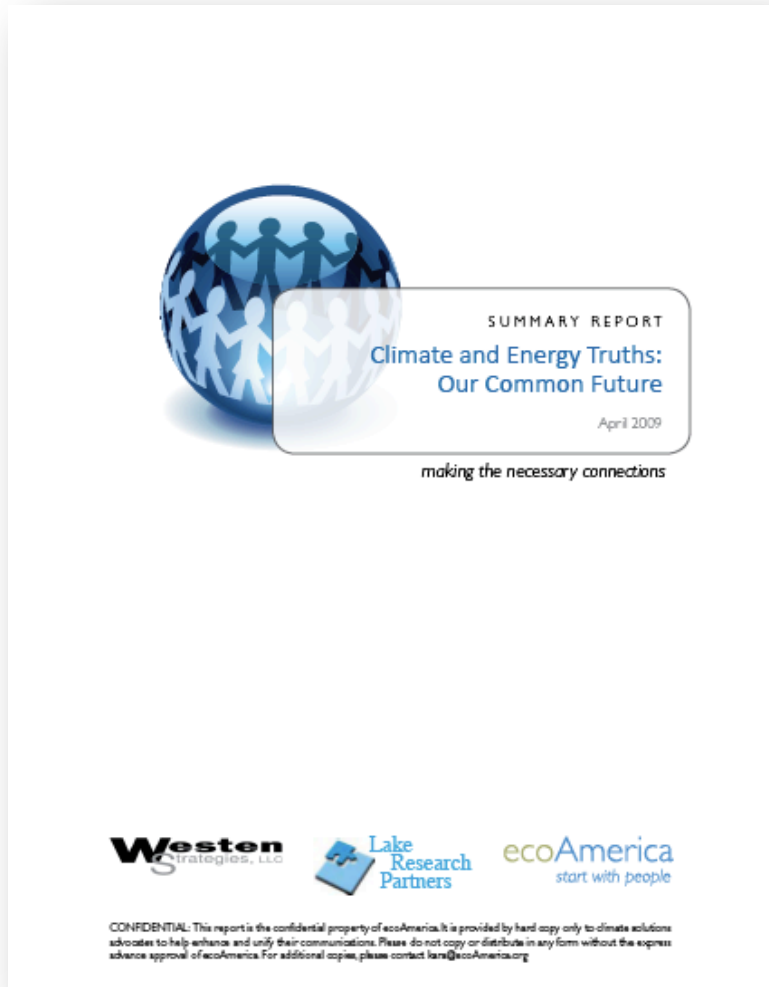
American Climate & Environmental Values Survey



- **Political divide** remains strongest indicator on support for solutions
- **Growing fatalism** and woes impacting motivations and actions
- **Resentment and excuses** growing
- Tapping into **morality** offers opportunity
- A call for **common sense**

Climate Truths

- Don't lead with "climate"
- Use **values** oriented language
- Link climate with **pollution**
- Climate as part of **energy solutions**
- **Clean, safe energy that never runs out**



Climate Impacts

Conducted to learn more effective ways to speak with Americans about the impacts of climate and preparedness.

- Awareness and attitudes on the **impacts**
- Whether “**adaptation**” is a compelling frame
- Which message frame(s) are the **most salient**, which elicit **urgency and motivation** to act



SUMMARY REPORT
**Climate Impacts:
Take Care and Prepare**
focusing Americans on climate action

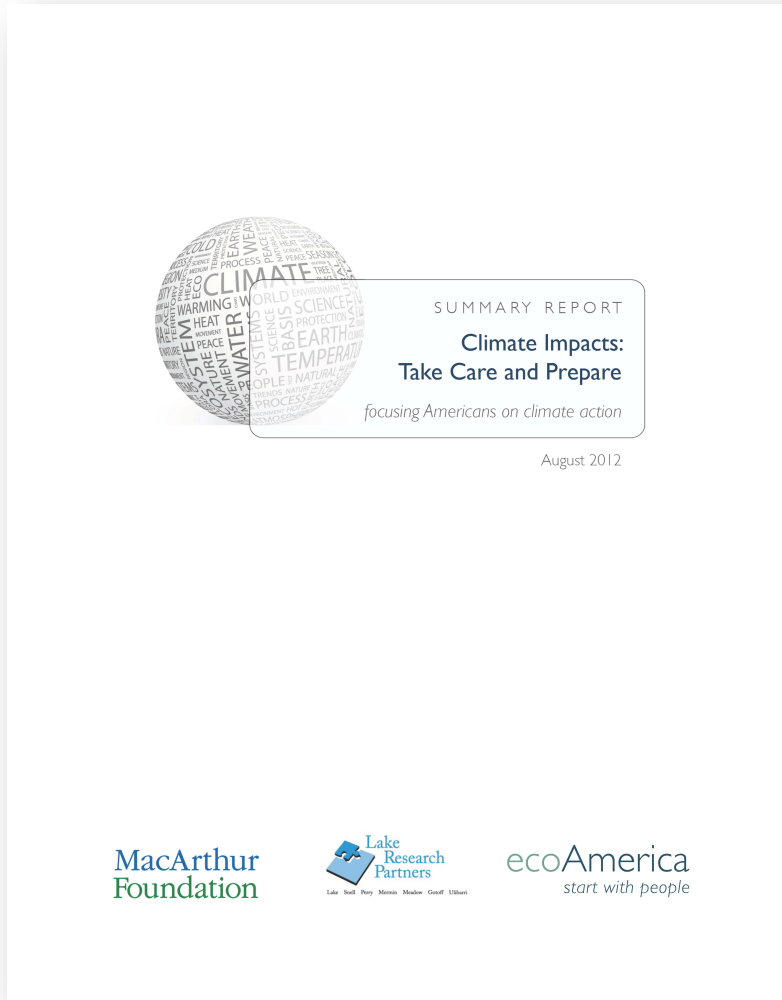
August 2012

MacArthur
Foundation



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Climate Impacts: Awareness and Attitudes



- **70%** believe volatile weather & seasonal weather patterns are **changing**
- **67%** believe human actions **contribute** to changing weather patterns
- Relatively unconcerned about the impacts of climate change
- Most **willing to take action to prepare** for climate change impacts
- More likely to act if believe changes in climate are human-caused

Climate Impacts: Message Frames

- **Preparedness:** most compelling frame to motivate action
- Prepare for and protect from the impacts, *don't adapt*

Message Frames – Convincing		
<i>How convincing is this statement?</i>	Very	Very + Somewhat
Counter Frame	38%	72%
[SSB] Preparedness	37%	79%
[SSF] Prevention	31%	70%
[SSA] Adaptation	28%	64%
[SSD] Stability	26%	51%
[SSC] Health	22%	62%
[SSE] Cost	19%	60%

New Frames Emerge

May be effective to increase action and urgency on climate:

- Preparing for changes in climate and weather that seem to be already happening.
- Taking steps to prevent changes from causing further damage.
- Trying to prevent changes and prepare for those that we can't to help protect our safety.

10 Messaging Guidelines

1. Start with people
2. Sequence matters
 1. Connect on values
 2. Acknowledge ambivalence and uncertainty
 3. Ease into “climate” on personal level with stories
3. Message discipline is critical
4. Describe, don't label
5. Use “facts” not “science”
6. Speak from the mountaintops, and don't argue
7. Be inspirational & empowering
8. Have 1 “killer” fact from trusted messenger
9. Use tangible and personal references
10. Scale from personal to planet

A Window of Opportunity

“What we have before us are some breathtaking opportunities disguised as insoluble problems.” - John Gardner, 1965

- The moral implication – address before we become immune, desensitized¹
- Our responsibility
 - Closest to the people
 - Closest to the impacts
 - Most responsible for servicing
- Our Opportunity
 - Think toward the future, not past
 - To press your agenda and get things done
 - Imbed engaging people in all aspects of preparedness planning
 - Use proven, tested research and communications

We're With You

MomentUs

- Research, Network, Campaign
- 7 Sectors, inc. Municipalities - leadership circles, outreach, national programs
- Join us





Thank you

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2012 BECC Conference

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