

To: Interested Parties
Fr: Lake Research Partners
Re: Media Coverage of Climate Change
Date: August 28, 2020

Americans think it is important for media coverage to mention the connection between climate change and extreme weather.

- A strong majority of Americans think it is important for news coverage of extreme weather events to make the connection between increased extreme weather and climate change. Overall, 57 percent of Americans say it is extremely or very important, and another 18 percent say it is moderately important.
- More than 7 in 10 Americans (72 percent) say if there is a connection between climate change and an extreme weather event, they want to hear about it in the news, including majorities of Democrats (85 percent), Republicans (62 percent), and independents (59 percent).
- Two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans including majorities across party lines agree that coverage of hurricanes and typhoons should mention its relationship to climate change, including 42 percent who strongly agree. By party, 79 percent of Democrats agree as do 60 percent of Republicans and 54 percent of independents.

People think news sources currently cover climate change too little and want them to cover it more.

- A 58 percent majority of Americans say they follow climate change in the news either extremely, very, or moderately closely. These Americans are more likely to say that news outlets cover climate change too little than too much. Thirty-one (31) percent of Americans who follow climate change closely say local TV news covers climate too little, 14 percent say too much, and 39 percent say the right amount.
- More than 3 in 4 Americans (76 percent) have seen coverage of hurricanes or typhoons in the last year. Of these, only half (50%) remember coverage mentioning its relationship to climate change while one third (33%) say it did not and 17 percent do not remember.
- A majority of Americans (54 percent) say they are more likely to use news sources that started covering climate change more, and just 14 percent say they are less likely. Similarly, 55 percent say they are more likely to use news sources that started mentioning climate change when reporting on events impacted by climate change.

Results are based on a survey of 1000 adults nationwide conducted online from August 21-24, 2020 using an opt-in panel of adults. The data were weighed slightly by gender, census region, age, race and ethnicity, and educational attainment to reflect census population estimates. The margin of error for the total sample is +/-3.1% at the 95% confidence interval.