

# CLIMATE ACTION SURVEY

## SUMMARY REPORT

Results from the Climate Action Survey of Australian Christians



Miriam Pepper

Views about climate action  
Actions that Christians and churches are taking  
Barriers to and enablers of action



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## **ABOUT COMMON GRACE**

Common Grace is a movement of individuals, churches and communities pursuing Jesus and justice together for the flourishing of all people and all creation. This includes “Creation and Climate Justice”: caring for God’s beautiful creation, addressing climate change and ensuring the environment and generations to come flourish.



## **NEW RESEARCH ON CHRISTIAN PARTICIPATION IN AND ATTITUDES TO CLIMATE ACTION**

Common Grace engages with Christians on climate change and aims to increase their participation in and support for climate action, including climate solutions such as household electrification, small- and large-scale renewable energy, clean manufacturing and export, and the phase-down of fossil fuels.

Common Grace engaged NCLS Research to conduct a Climate Action Survey to build a research foundation to support this aim.

NCLS Research is a world leader in research focused on connecting churches and their communities.

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# KEY FINDINGS

## Climate solutions

There was majority support for all climate solutions except for reducing animal farming. However, the survey mainly attracted highly educated Christians (Protestants) who were concerned and motivated about climate change.

## Theology and mission

The vast majority of participants agreed that:

- All of Creation is sacred
- God wants humans to take care of the earth
- Care of the environment is crucial to love of neighbour and future generations

There was a diversity in views about whether:

- Humankind was created to rule over nature
- God controls the climate and its changes
- Christians should change society's structures to drive climate action

About a third thought that climate action should be an essential part of the mission of the Church.

## Audience segments

Using the Climate Compass model, four audience segments were identified based on their views about the importance, urgency and impacts of climate change. The differences between them show the importance of segment-specific engagement on climate change.

**The Alarmed** were highly concerned and motivated about climate change. Almost all of them had taken some kind of civic action on the climate. Their top barriers to personally taking

action were other things requiring their attention and already feeling like they do a lot for the environment. Their top enablers were knowing that their action would be effective and taking action with supportive others. Half of them thought that climate action should be an essential part of the mission of the church.

**The Cautious** were less concerned and motivated, with a slim majority thinking that climate change is largely human-caused. A large minority of them had taken civic action, most commonly talking with their friends, family or colleagues in favour of climate action. Their top barriers to action were to do with prioritising other things. Their top enablers were knowing that their action would be effective and having faith-based foundations for action. They tended to think that stopping fossil fuel mining would have a negative economic impact and opposed it.

**The Doubtful and Dismissive** groups rejected human-caused climate change and were resistant to climate action. They agreed that God wants human beings to take good care of the earth. However, most of them thought that God controls the climate and its changes. Pushback was especially strong in the Dismissive group, who saw climate action as unnecessary, misguided, harmful and driven by conspiracies and financial manipulation.

## Church action

Those who were open to climate action thought that stronger leadership, theological grounding, education and practical guidance would encourage their church to take more action. Across the audience segments, concerns about or impacts of the politicisation of climate change was evident.



# RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of the Climate Action Survey was to:

- Develop an understanding of current Christian attitudes to climate action and what underlies these attitudes.
- Identify enablers for and barriers to engagement with Christians on climate action.

## QUESTION DESIGN

The survey consisted of approximately 40 questions covering the following topics:

- Demographics such as age, gender, education and church attendance
- Views about climate change
- Degree of support for various climate solutions
- Participants' own actions to address climate change, barriers to action and enablers of action
- Views about actions by churches

The survey included a number of questions from the Climate Compass Survey, with permission from the Sunrise Project and 89 Degrees East. Several of these questions were used to identify different audience segments.

## THE SAMPLE

The survey was conducted in October 2025, with participants recruited from the networks of NCLS Research and Common Grace. The final number of cases after data cleaning was 1,142.

The sample was highly educated and overwhelmingly Protestant, though with relatively few Pentecostals. The large majority attended church at least weekly. There was a skew towards males, people born in Australia, and more Labor and Greens voters in comparison to the wider churchgoing population.

## SAMPLE DETAILS

**n = 1,142**

### Gender

- 47.9% female
- 51.5% male
- 0.6% other

### Age

- Mean age 66 years
- Standard deviation 15 years

### Education – highest qualification

- 26% bachelor degree
- 51% postgraduate degree

### Denomination

- 7% Catholic
- 55% Mainstream Protestant
- 4% Pentecostal
- 32% Other Christian
- 2% not part of a church

### Church attendance

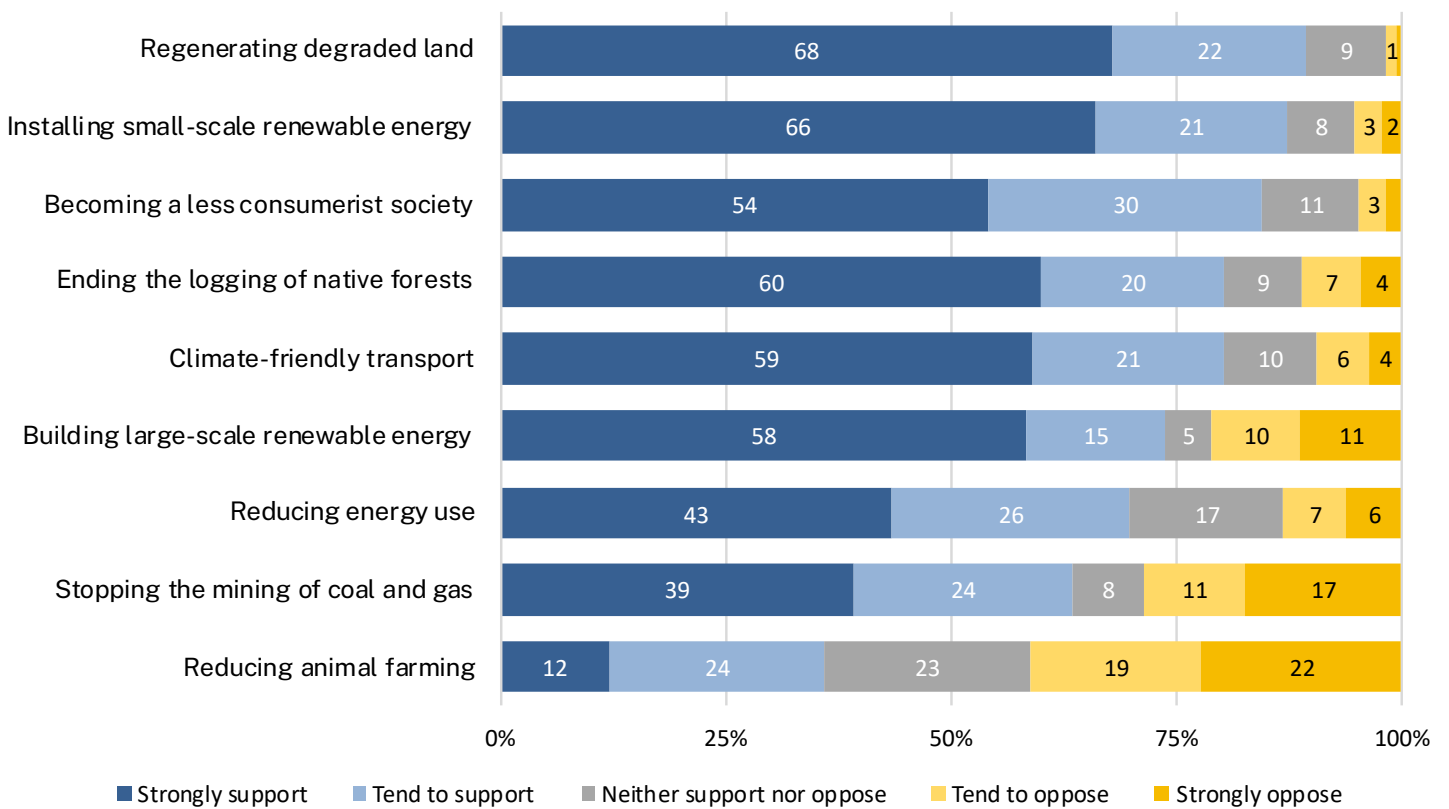
- 84% at least weekly
- 95% at least monthly

### Voting pattern – federal elections

- 33% Labor
- 22% Liberal/National
- 14% Greens
- 32% other and swing voters



# SUPPORT FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS



**74%**  
Climate change is happening and largely human-caused

**79%**  
Climate change is something we need to act on now

**37%**  
Switching from coal and gas would have a negative impact on the Australian economy

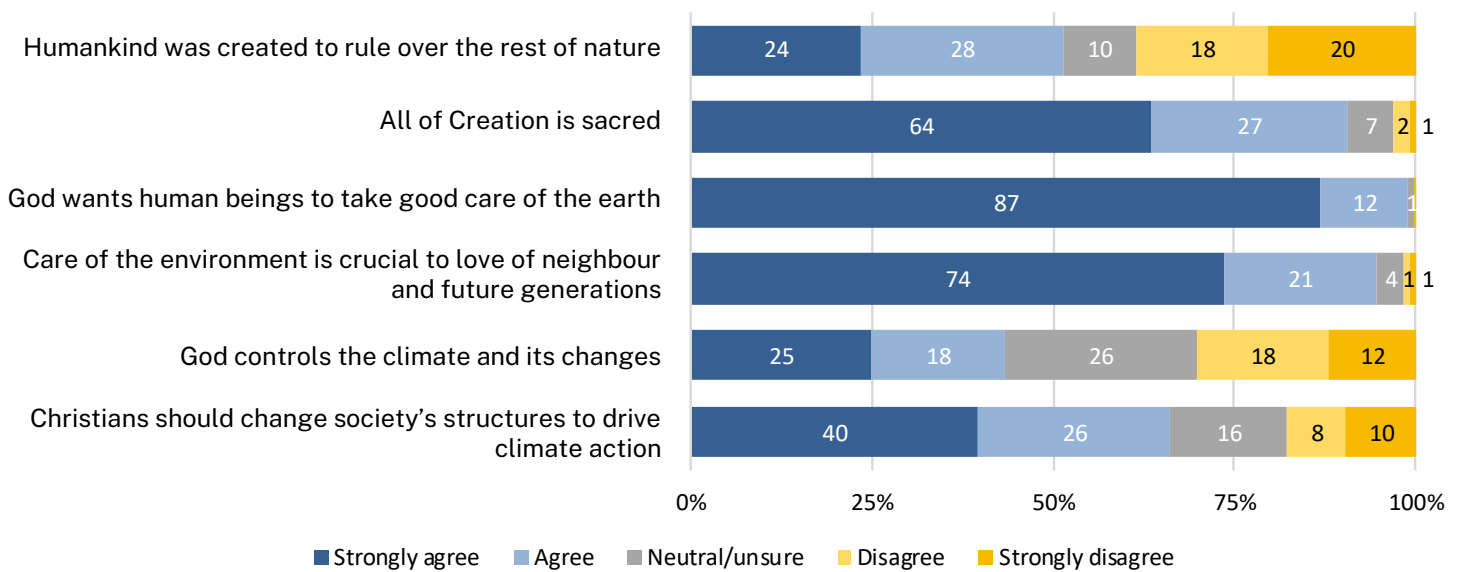
**68%**  
Switching to renewable energy and clean manufacturing is a big opportunity for more jobs

Source: 2026 Climate Action Survey (n=1,131-1,139).

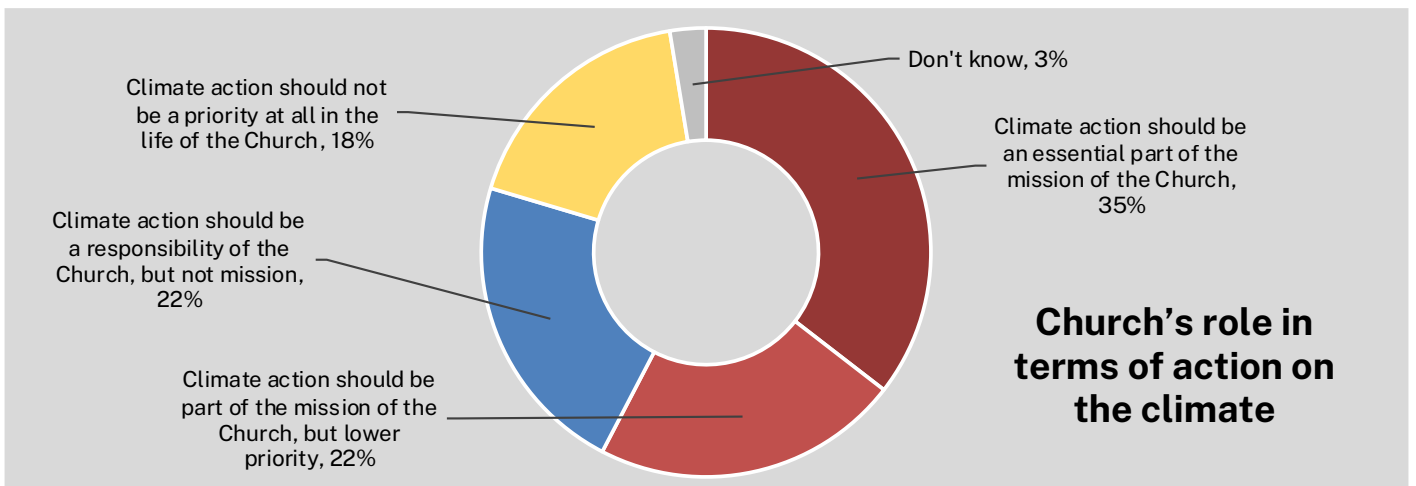
The survey especially attracted Christians who were convinced and concerned about human-caused climate change. Support for climate solutions would be lower in the wider churchgoing population.



# THEOLOGY AND MISSION



Theological beliefs related to support for climate solutions in the expected directions, with relationships particularly strong for belief that Christians should engage structurally to drive climate action and belief that care for the environment is crucial for showing love to others.



Source: 2026 Climate Action Survey (n=1,119-1,124).



# AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

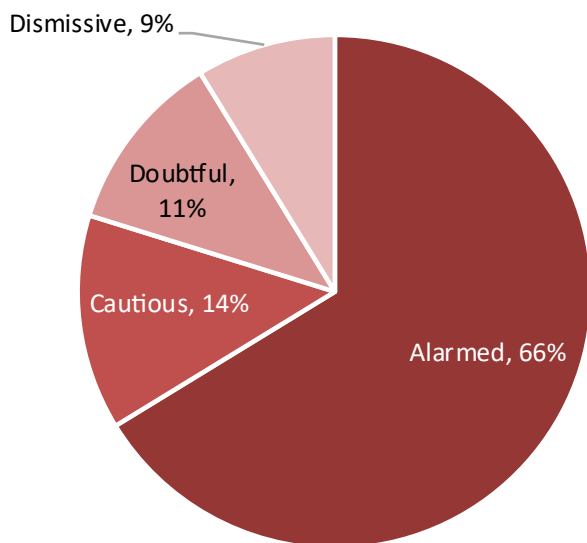
## CONSTRUCTION OF SEGMENTS

The following questions from the Climate Compass Survey (by the Sunrise Project) were used to construct audience segments:

- Personal importance of climate change
- Degree of harm to future generations
- Urgency of acting on climate change now
- Views about whether or not it is too late to do anything about climate change

Four segments were constructed, from most to least concerned and motivated about climate change:

- Alarmed: 66% of the sample
- Cautious: 14% of the sample
- Doubtful: 11% of the sample
- Dismissive: 9% of the sample



Source: 2026 Climate Action Survey (n=1,129).

## SEGMENT CHARACTERISTICS

### Alarmed

- Climate change very important, great deal of harm to future generations, very urgent
- 56% female, 85% degree
- 66% Labor or Greens voters

### Cautious

- Climate change somewhat important, moderate harm to future generations, moderate urgency
- 37% female, 71% degree
- 20% Labor or Greens voters

### Doubtful

- Climate change not very important, little harm to future generations, low urgency
- 31% female, 62% degree
- 3% Labor or Greens voters

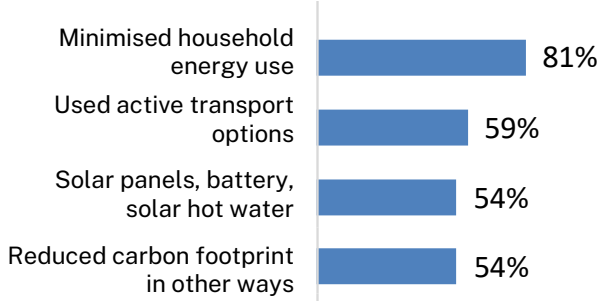
### Dismissive

- Climate change not at all important, no harm to future generations, not urgent
- 31% female, 49% degree
- 2% Labor or Greens voters

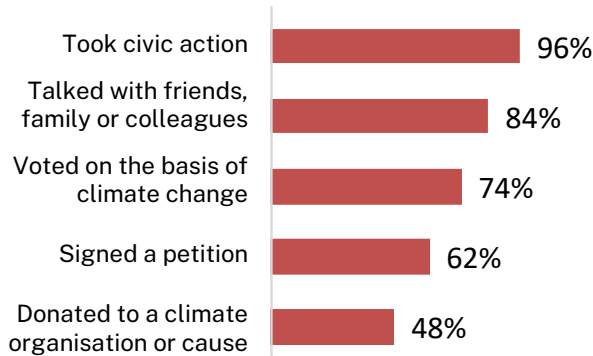
# THE ALARMED

Source: 2025 Climate Action Survey (n=748).

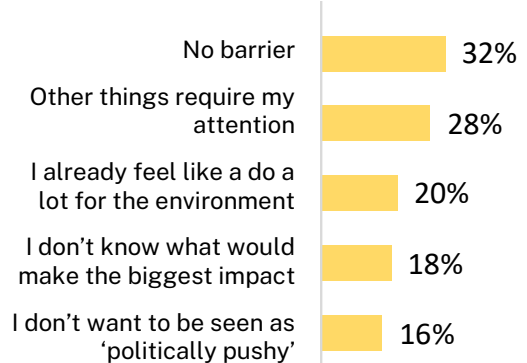
## Most common consumer actions



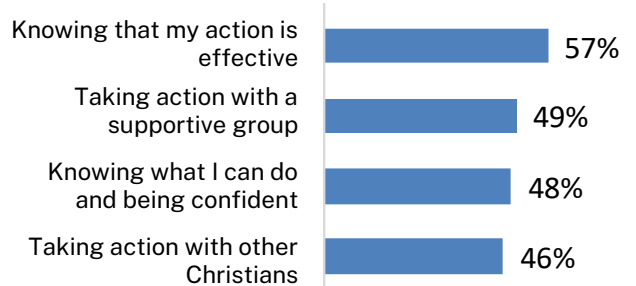
## Most common civic actions



## Top barriers to climate action\*

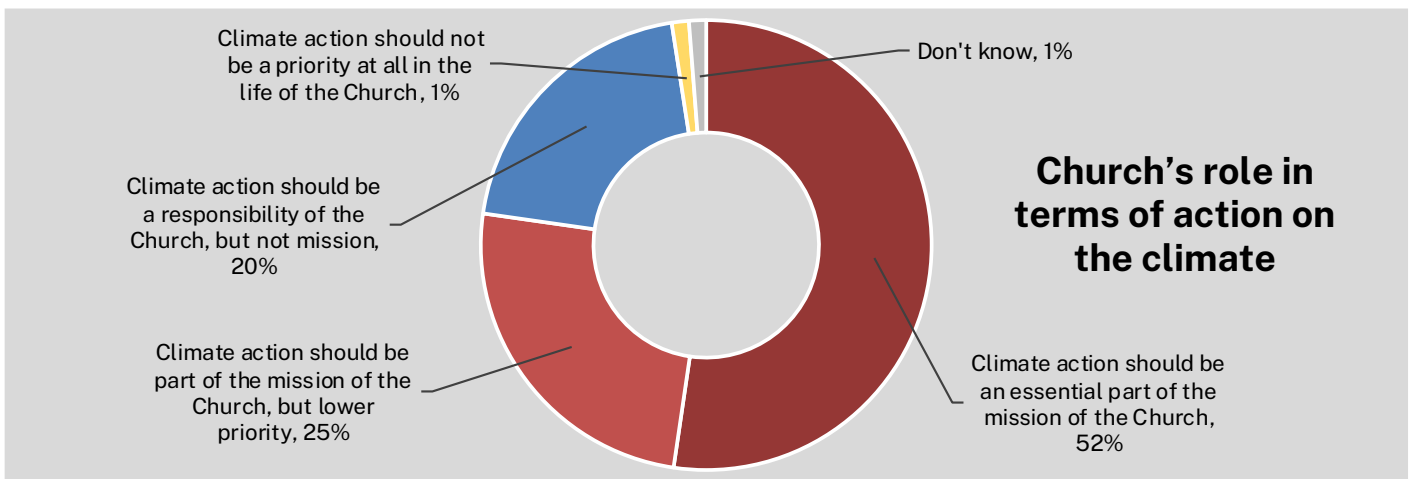


## Top enablers of climate action\*



\*Climate action = speaking to friends and family, pushing for action from business and government, voting for parties with climate policies etc

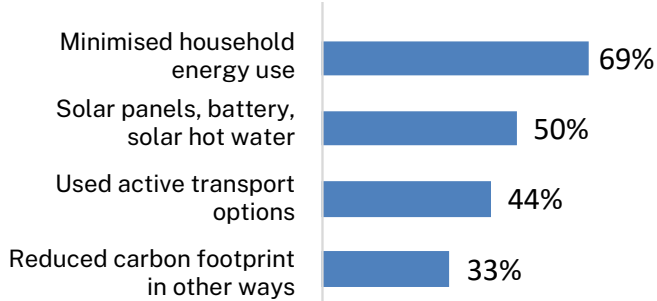
<h1>99%</h1> <p>Climate change is happening and largely human-caused</p>	<h1>27%</h1> <p>God controls the climate and its changes</p>	<h1>92%</h1> <p>Shifting to renewable energy and clean manufacturing is a big opportunity for more jobs</p>	<h1>17%</h1> <p>Switching from coal and gas would have a negative impact on the Australian economy</p>
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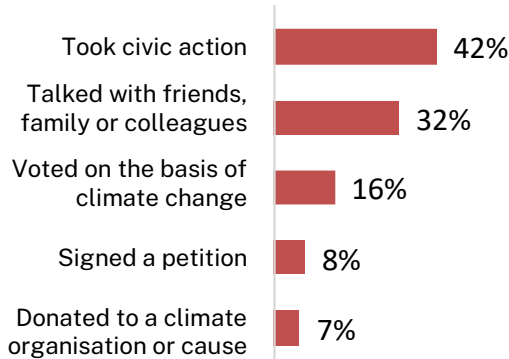
# THE CAUTIOUS

Source: 2025 Climate Action Survey (n=153).

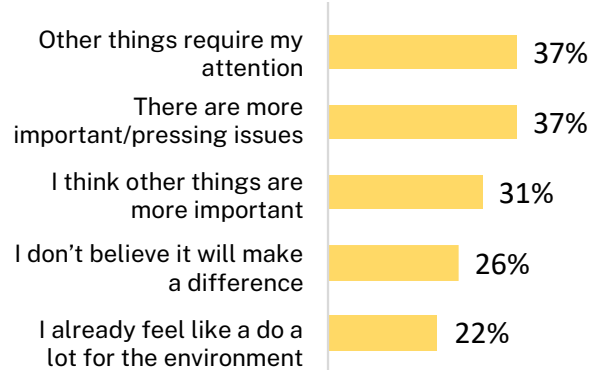
## Most common consumer actions



## Most common civic actions



## Top barriers to climate action\*



## Top enablers of climate action\*



\*Climate action = speaking to friends and family, pushing for action from business and government, voting for parties with climate policies etc

### 58%

Climate change is happening and largely human-caused

### 59%

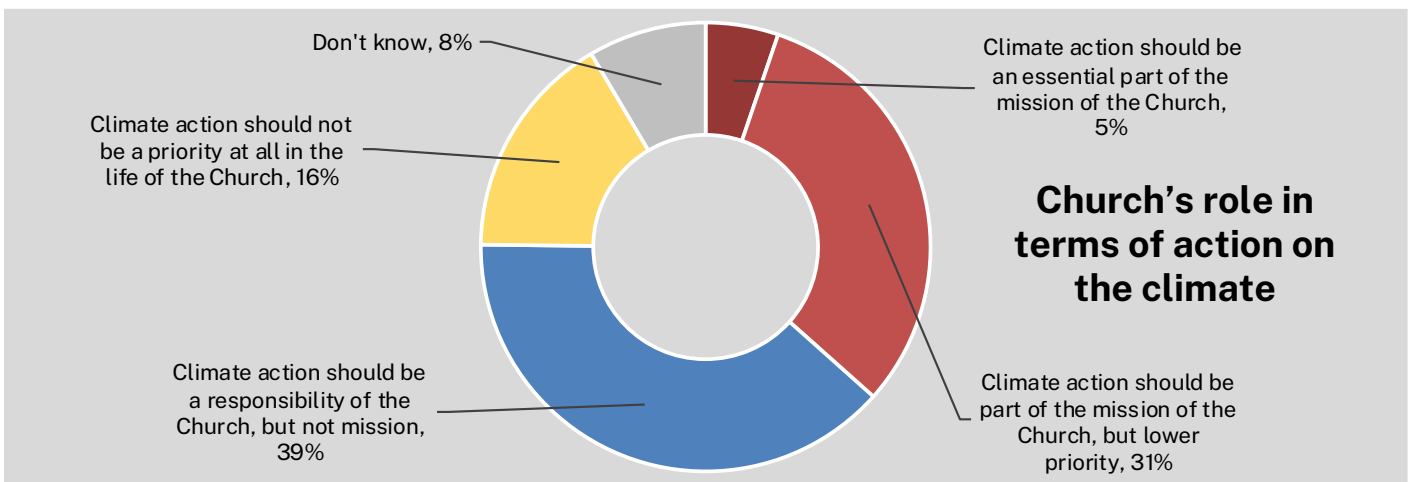
God controls the climate and its changes

### 43%

Shifting to renewable energy and clean manufacturing is a big opportunity for more jobs

### 63%

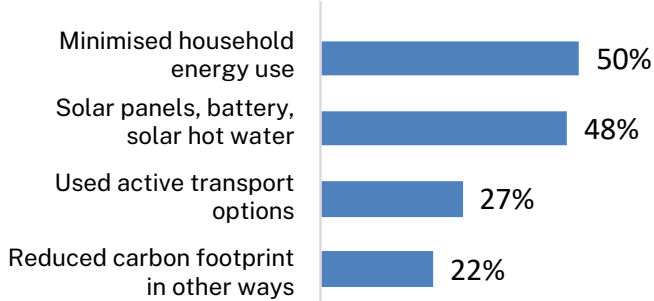
Switching from coal and gas would have a negative impact on the Australian economy



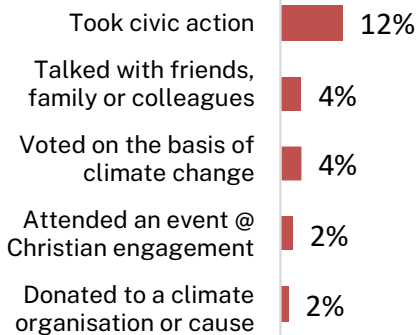
# THE DOUBTFUL

Source: 2025 Climate Action Survey (n=129).

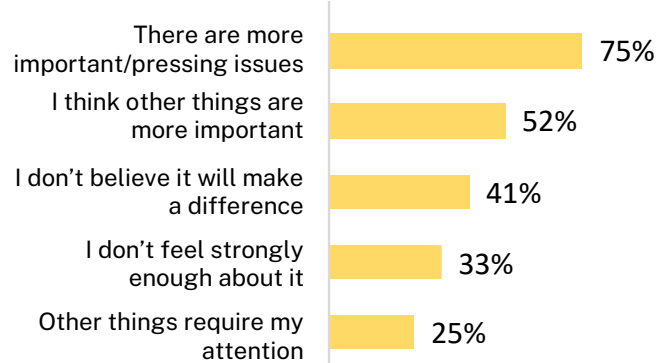
## Most common consumer actions



## Most common civic actions



## Top barriers to climate action\*

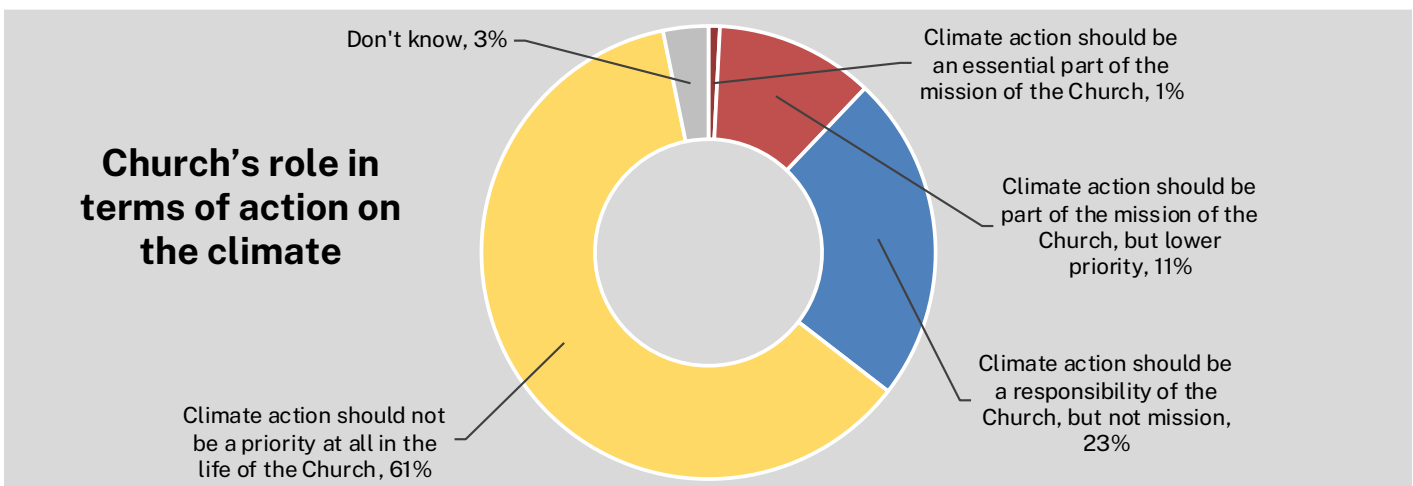


## Top enablers of climate action\*



\*Climate action = speaking to friends and family, pushing for action from business and government, voting for parties with climate policies etc

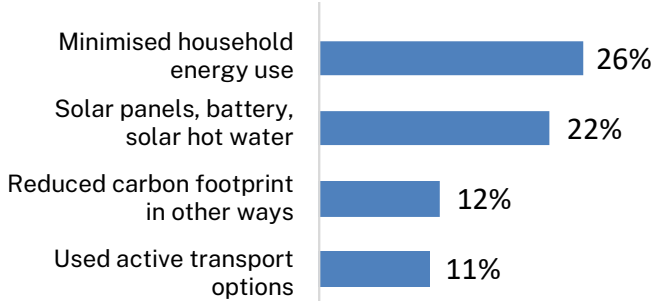
<h1>9%</h1> <p>Climate change is happening and largely human-caused</p>	<h1>82%</h1> <p>God controls the climate and its changes</p>	<h1>8%</h1> <p>Shifting to renewable energy and clean manufacturing is a big opportunity for more jobs</p>	<h1>86%</h1> <p>Switching from coal and gas would have a negative impact on the Australian economy</p>
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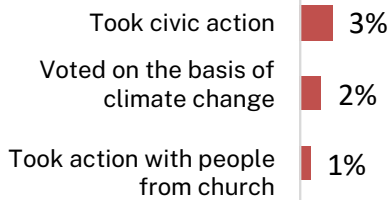
# THE DISMISSIVE

Source: 2025 Climate Action Survey (n=99).

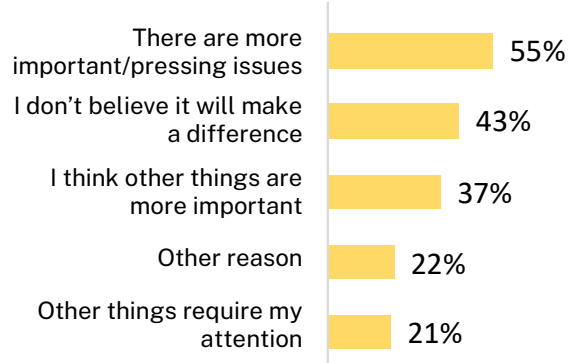
## Most common consumer actions



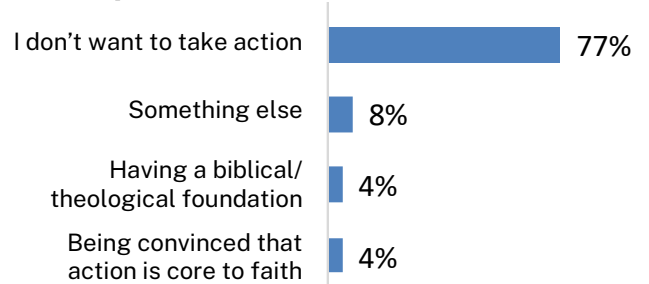
## Most common civic actions



## Top barriers to climate action\*

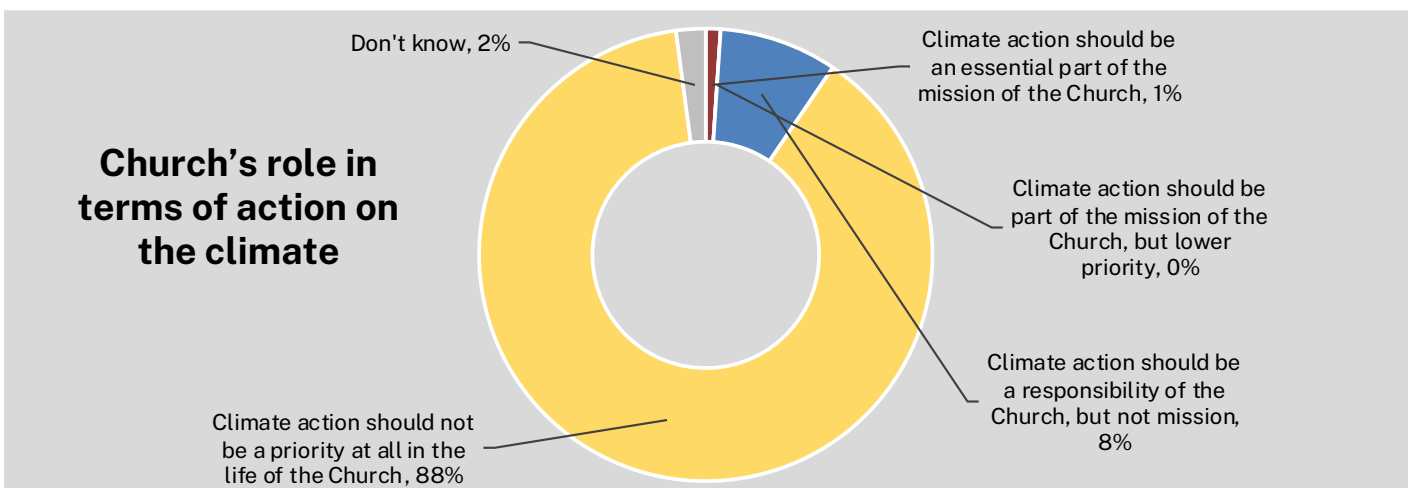


## Top enablers of climate action\*



\*Climate action = speaking to friends and family, pushing for action from business and government, voting for parties with climate policies etc

<h1>0%</h1> <p>Climate change is happening and largely human-caused</p>	<h1>93%</h1> <p>God controls the climate and its changes</p>	<h1>3%</h1> <p>Shifting to renewable energy and clean manufacturing is a big opportunity for more jobs</p>	<h1>88%</h1> <p>Switching from coal and gas would have a negative impact on the Australian economy</p>
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# CHURCH ACTIONS

## PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS ON WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE THEIR CHURCH TO TAKE MORE ACTION ON THE CLIMATE

### Alarmed

- Stronger leadership from clergy and church hierarchies
- Clearer theological grounding in creation care
- Better education on climate and faith
- Practical guidance
- Depoliticised discussion
- Visible examples of collective, faith-based action

### Cautious

- Stronger theological grounding
- Clear and unifying leadership
- Practical and affordable options
- Balanced education on the issue

But many expressed hesitation due to political sensitivities, scepticism about climate science, and a belief that environmental action should be a secondary priority for churches.

### Doubtful

- Pushed back against the question
- Questioned the severity and causes of climate change
- Emphasised God's control
- Were concerned about politicisation
- Wanted practical, non-ideological stewardship

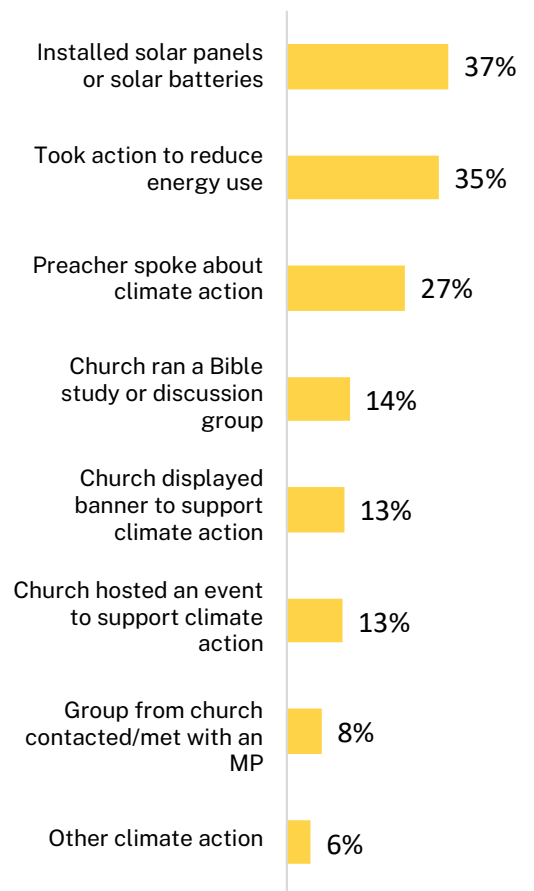
### Dismissive

- Strongly rejecting human-caused climate change
- Asserted that the church should avoid climate activism entirely
- Prioritised gospel mission over environmental concerns

# 65%

of survey participants reported that their church had taken some kind of action on the climate

## ACTIONS TAKEN BY CHURCHES



Source: 2025 Climate Action Survey (n=1,078).



# PARTICIPANTS' FINAL COMMENTS

PARTICIPANTS GAVE FURTHER COMMENTS ABOUT CLIMATE ACTION AT THE END OF THE SURVEY

## Alarmed

The Alarmed segment overwhelmingly emphasised urgency and responsibility regarding climate action. They focused on the need for immediate, science-based interventions, the moral imperative to reduce emissions, and the importance of collective action through government, community, and church initiatives. They expressed concern about environmental degradation, social justice, and intergenerational equity, and often highlighted practical and policy measures alongside lifestyle changes. Their religious or spiritual framing was supportive of climate stewardship.

## Cautious

The Cautious segment emphasised balanced approaches, cost-effectiveness, and consideration of multiple solutions, including nuclear power. They often stressed careful evaluation of scientific evidence, economic impacts, and feasibility of policies, reflecting a desire for what they saw reasoned as action rather than alarm. While they expressed a recognition of the need for change, they prioritised practical, manageable interventions and were wary of what they viewed to be overly ideological approaches.

## Doubtful

The Doubtful segment expressed scepticism about the effectiveness or necessity of climate action, often questioning whether human activity can significantly influence the climate. They frequently cited economic, social, and geopolitical concerns, highlighting potential harms from policies or regulations. While some commented that environmental stewardship is important, they generally advocated for cautious or minimal interventions and stressed the importance of reliable evidence and balanced policy approaches.

## Dismissive

The Dismissive segment largely rejected mainstream climate science and framed climate action as unnecessary, misguided, or even harmful. Their responses were dominated by themes of conspiracy, political or financial manipulation, and theological conviction that God controls the climate. Many criticised renewable energy initiatives and governmental climate policies as economically or environmentally counterproductive, while emphasising alternative priorities such as social, moral, and spiritual issues. They saw “alarmist” messaging as psychologically harmful, especially to young people.



COMMON GRACE

# CLIMATE ACTION SURVEY

## SUMMARY REPORT



This report presents results from the Climate Action Survey, which took place in October 2025. The findings are based on responses from 1,142 Christians.

Topics include:

- Climate change attitudes
- Support for climate solutions
- Theology and mission
- Audience segments (Alarmed, Cautious, Doubtful, Dismissive)
- Personal consumer and civic actions
- Church actions
- Barriers to and enablers of action

Citation: Pepper, M. (2026). Climate Action Survey Summary Report. Commissioned Research Report for Common Grace. Sydney: NCLS Research.

This summary report is a companion to the full research report:

