

Polling - Climate change concern

January 2020

Key results

As part of its Climate of the Nation tracking poll, The Australia Institute surveyed nationally representative samples of Australians in July 2019 and January 2020 about climate change concerns and attitudes. The January 2020 polling also asked a new set of questions about climate change and bushfires.

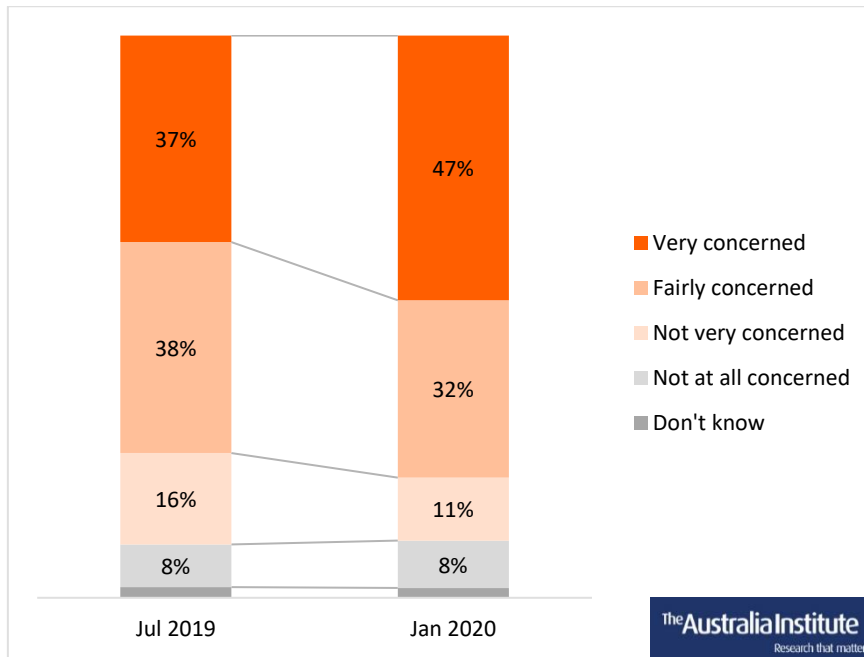
Key findings include:

- Almost half of Australians (47%) are now very concerned about climate change, up 10 percentage points from July 2019;
- Most Australians (57%) say that we are experiencing a lot of the impacts of climate change, up 14 percentage points from July 2019;
- Four in five Australians (79%) are worried that Australia's native forests and unique wildlife will never be the same;
- Three in four Australians (73%) agree that leadership on the bushfire response requires the Prime Minister to lead on climate change action;
- Seven in 10 Australians (72%) agree that this is a wake-up call for the world on the impacts of climate change; and
- Two in three Australians (67%) agree that climate change is making bushfires worse.

Respondents were asked how concerned they are about climate change.

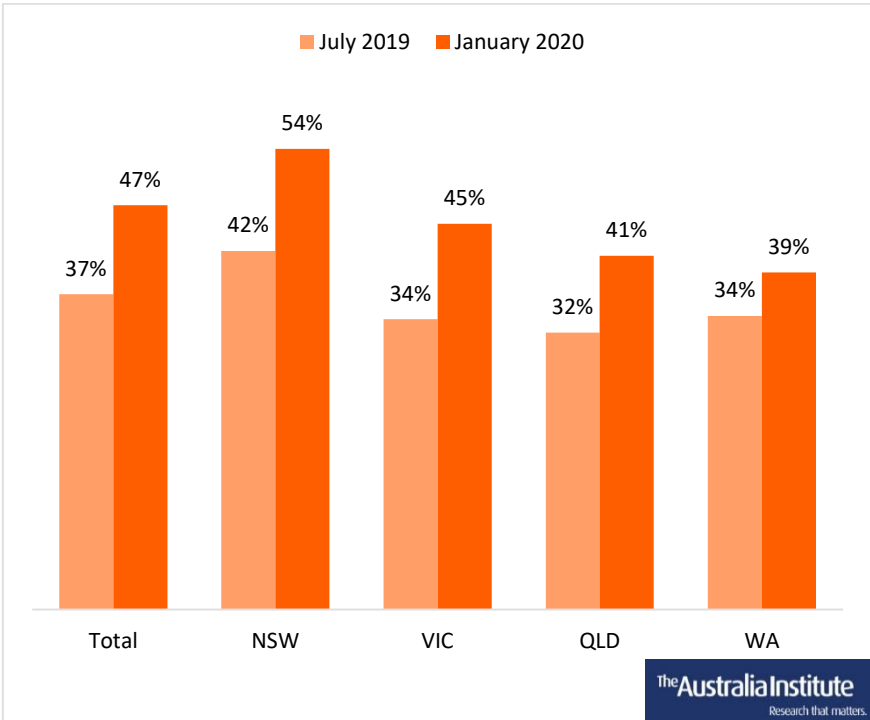
- Almost half of Australians (47%) are very concerned about climate change.
 - This is an increase of 10 percentage points since July 2019, when 37% were “very concerned” about climate change.
- Four in five Australians (79%) are fairly or very concerned about climate change, an increase of 5 percentage points from July 2019.

Figure 1: How concerned are you about climate change? (July 2019 to January 2020)



- Those saying that they are “not at all concerned” about climate change have remained steady at less than one in 10 Australians (8%).
- Concern has grown across the four largest states.
 - In NSW, those who are very concerned about climate change have gone from 42% of the population to 54% (12 percentage point increase).
 - In Victoria, those who are very concerned about climate change have gone from 34% to 45% (11 percentage point increase).
 - In Queensland, those who are very concerned about climate change have gone from 32% to 41% (9 percentage point increase).
 - In Western Australia, those who are very concerned about climate change have gone from 34% to 39% (5 percentage point increase).

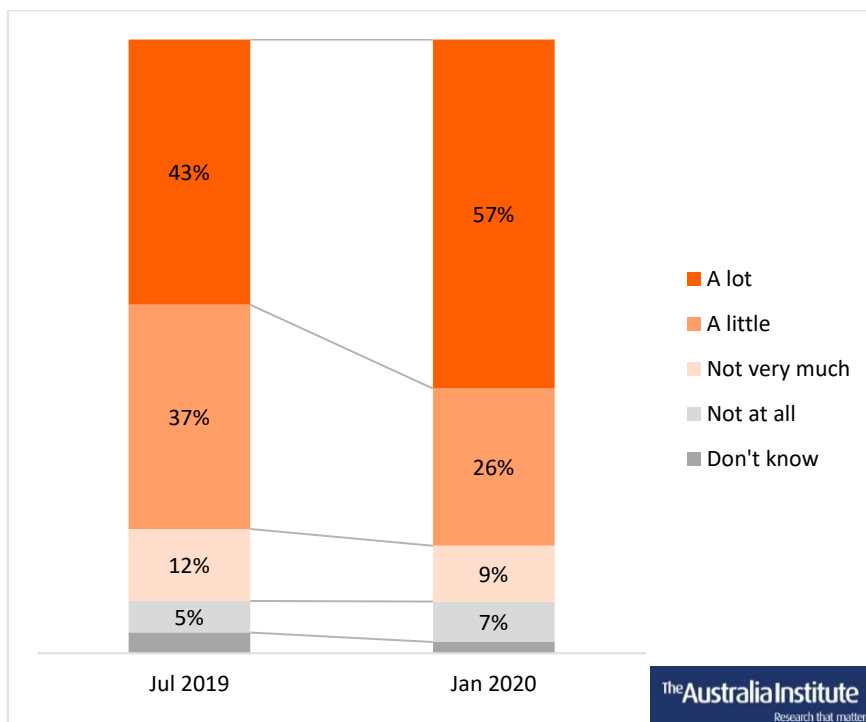
Figure 2: Very concerned about climate change, by state (July 2019 to January 2020)



Respondents were then asked to what degree they think that we are experiencing the impacts of climate change in Australia.

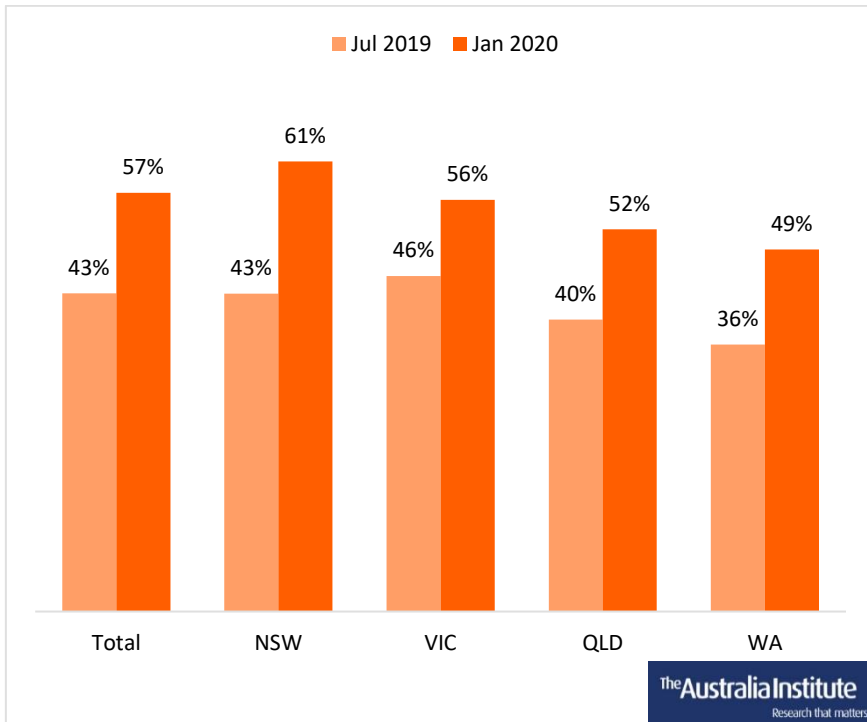
- Most Australians (57%) say that we are experiencing a lot of the impacts of climate change.
 - This is an increase of 14 percentage points since July 2019, when 43% said we are experiencing a lot of climate impacts.
- Four in five Australians (82%) say that we are experiencing a lot or a little of climate impacts, up from 80% in July 2019.

Figure 3: Degree to which we are experiencing climate impacts (July 2019 to January 2020)



- Those saying that we have “not at all” experienced climate impacts has increased by 2 percentage points, within the margin of error for this poll.
- Concern has grown across the four largest states.
 - 61% of those in NSW say we have experienced a lot of the impacts of climate change, up 18 percentage points from July 2019.
 - 56% of Victorians say we have experienced a lot of the impacts of climate change, up 10 percentage points from July 2019.
 - 52% of Queenslanders say we have experienced a lot of the impacts of climate change, up 12 percentage points from July 2019.
 - 49% of people in Western Australia say we have experienced a lot of the impacts of climate change, up 13 percentage points from July 2019.

Figure 4: We are experiencing *a lot* of climate impacts (July 2019 to January 2020)



In the January 2020 polling, respondents were also asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with 10 statements about climate change or bushfires.

- A majority of Australians:
 - are worried that Australia's native forests and unique wildlife will never be the same (79%);
 - agree that leadership on the bushfire response requires the Prime Minister to lead on climate change action (73%);
 - agree that this is a wake-up call for the world on the impacts of climate change (72%);
 - agree that climate change is making bushfires worse (67%);
 - agree that governments should mobilise all of society to tackle climate change, like they mobilised everyone during the world wars (66%);
 - agree that the current bushfires demonstrate the cost of climate inaction (66%); and
 - agree that climate change makes bushfire hazard reduction more difficult to complete safely (62%).
- More Australians agree than disagree that mining and burning coal makes bushfires worse (48% v 34%).
- A majority of Australians
 - *disagree* that the federal Coalition government has done a good job managing the climate crisis (53% disagree v 33% agree); and
 - *disagree* that there is no connection between climate change and bushfires (59% disagree v 32% agree).

Figure 5: Total agreement with statements about climate change

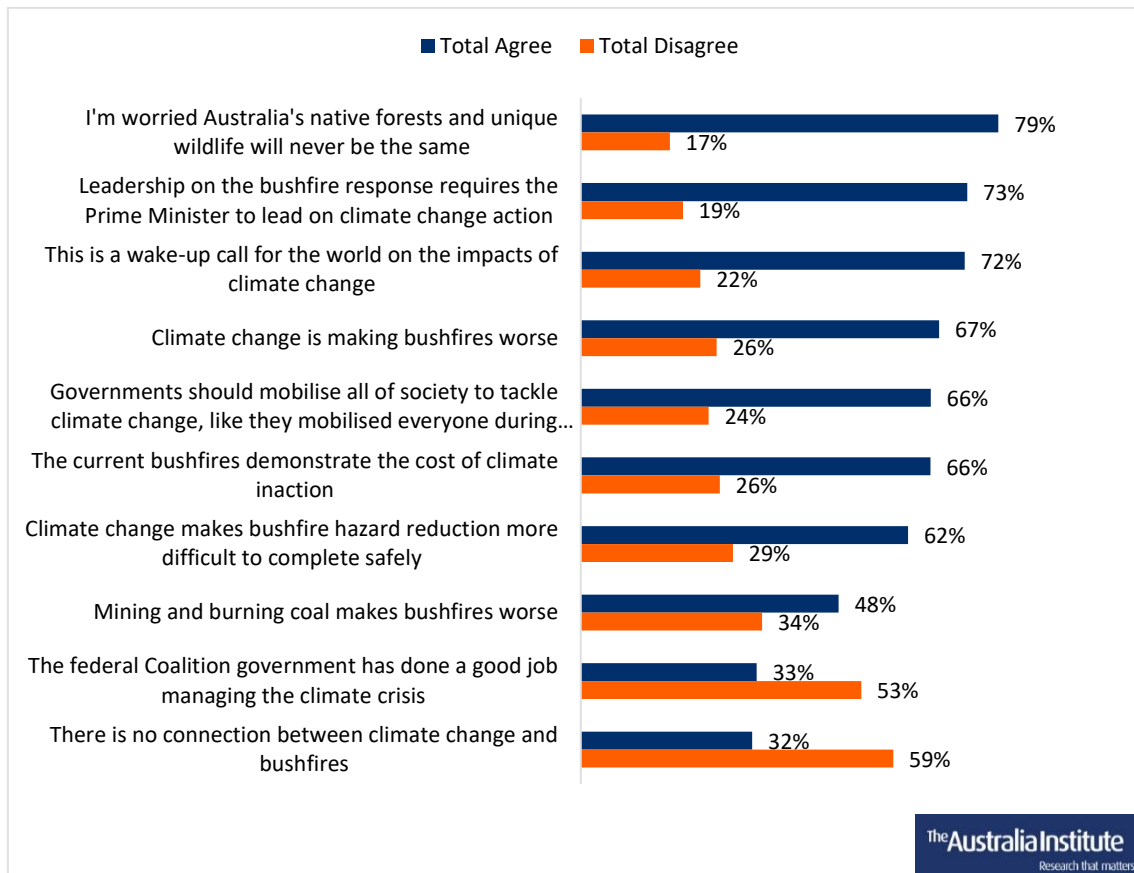
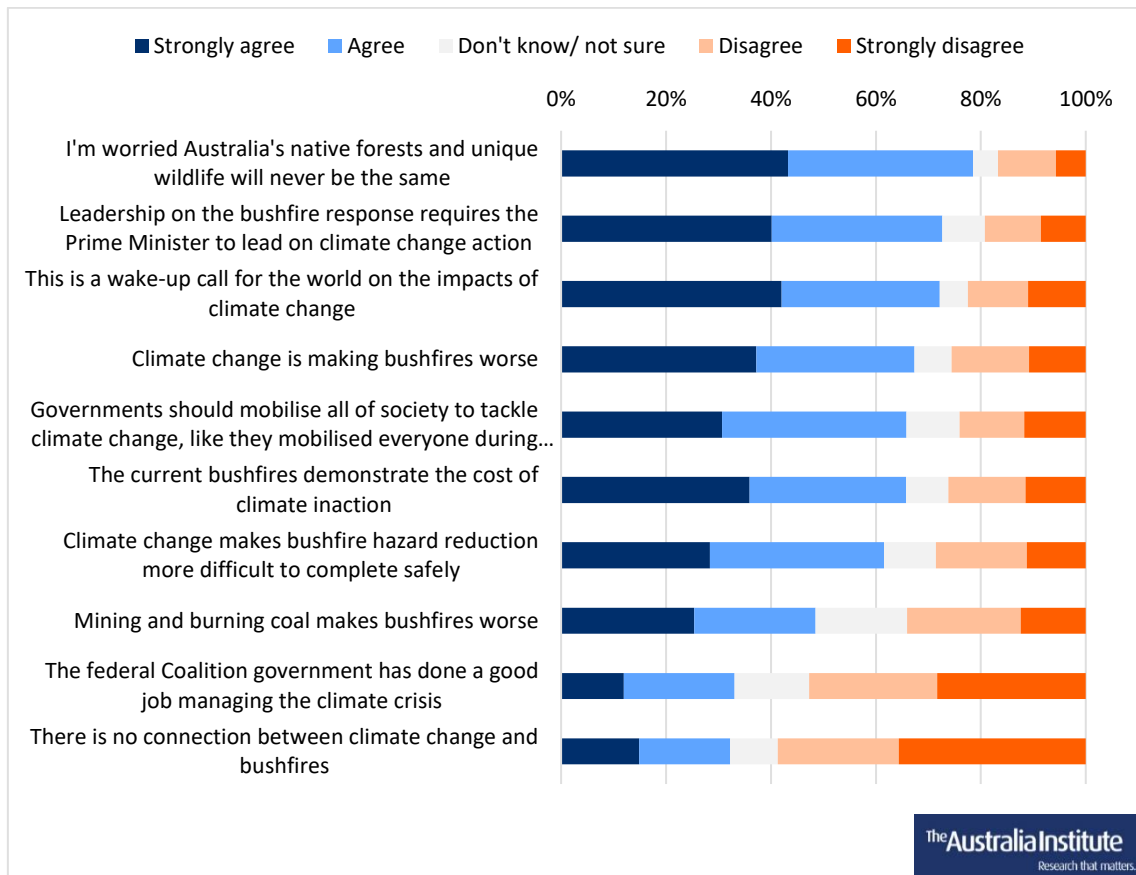


Figure 6: Agreement breakdown for statements about climate change



Method

This study was conducted on the YouGov Galaxy Online Omnibus between Wednesday 8 January and Sunday 12 January 2020.

The sample comprises 1,033 Australians aged 18 years and older distributed throughout Australia, as follows:

NSW	330
Victoria	244
Queensland	219
South Australia	89
Western Australia	103
NT/ACT/TAS	48

Age, gender and region quotas were applied to the sample.

Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

Results are shown only for larger states.

Detailed results

How concerned are you about climate change? Please select one option only

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very concerned	47%	44%	50%	57%	54%	50%	43%	36%
Fairly concerned	32%	31%	32%	28%	35%	34%	31%	28%
Not very concerned	11%	12%	10%	7%	6%	8%	11%	23%
Not at all concerned	8%	11%	6%	4%	4%	7%	12%	13%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	5%	1%	1%	3%	1%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Very concerned	54%	45%	41%	46%	39%
Fairly concerned	27%	35%	34%	33%	37%
Not very concerned	9%	11%	12%	9%	16%
Not at all concerned	9%	6%	10%	11%	7%
Don't know	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%

To what degree do you think we are experiencing the impacts of climate change in Australia? Please select one option only

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
A lot	57%	52%	62%	69%	65%	59%	49%	48%
A little	26%	27%	24%	17%	25%	28%	28%	25%
Not very much	9%	12%	7%	8%	6%	6%	10%	15%
Not at all	7%	8%	5%	3%	3%	6%	10%	9%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	-	3%	2%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
A lot	61%	56%	52%	58%	49%
A little	21%	30%	27%	28%	28%
Not very much	7%	9%	11%	4%	14%
Not at all	8%	4%	8%	9%	6%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(Statements presented in randomised order, here sorted by total agree)

	Total Agree	Total Disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not sure
I'm worried Australia's native forests and unique wildlife will never be the same	79%	17%	43%	35%	11%	6%	5%
Leadership on the bushfire response requires the Prime Minister to lead on climate change action	73%	19%	40%	33%	11%	9%	8%
This is a wake-up call for the world on the impacts of climate change	72%	22%	42%	30%	12%	11%	5%
Climate change is making bushfires worse	67%	26%	37%	30%	15%	11%	7%
Governments should mobilise all of society to tackle climate change, like they mobilised everyone during the world wars	66%	24%	31%	35%	12%	12%	10%
The current bushfires demonstrate the cost of climate inaction	66%	26%	36%	30%	15%	11%	8%
Climate change makes bushfire hazard reduction more difficult to complete safely	62%	29%	28%	33%	17%	11%	10%
Mining and burning coal makes bushfires worse	48%	34%	25%	23%	22%	12%	17%
The federal Coalition government has done a good job managing the climate crisis	33%	53%	12%	21%	24%	28%	14%
There is no connection between climate change and bushfires	32%	59%	15%	17%	23%	36%	9%

Climate change is making bushfires worse

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	37%	32%	42%	45%	47%	43%	31%	22%
Agree	30%	31%	29%	35%	33%	32%	27%	26%
Disagree	15%	17%	13%	6%	11%	11%	19%	25%
Strongly disagree	11%	13%	8%	5%	4%	7%	14%	22%
Don't know/ not sure	7%	6%	8%	9%	5%	8%	8%	6%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	42%	38%	30%	37%	28%
Agree	27%	33%	31%	36%	32%
Disagree	13%	17%	15%	13%	17%
Strongly disagree	10%	6%	16%	11%	16%
Don't know/ not sure	8%	6%	9%	3%	9%

Leadership on the bushfire response requires the Prime Minister to lead on climate change action

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	40%	38%	42%	48%	48%	42%	38%	27%
Agree	33%	32%	33%	29%	38%	35%	26%	34%
Disagree	11%	14%	8%	6%	6%	9%	15%	16%
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	7%	3%	3%	6%	11%	19%
Don't know/ not sure	8%	6%	10%	14%	5%	8%	10%	5%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	47%	41%	33%	35%	36%
Agree	29%	36%	31%	41%	30%
Disagree	8%	10%	14%	8%	15%
Strongly disagree	8%	5%	11%	11%	12%
Don't know/ not sure	9%	8%	11%	5%	7%

The federal Coalition government has done a good job managing the climate crisis

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	12%	13%	11%	8%	14%	17%	7%	12%
Agree	21%	26%	17%	11%	22%	24%	17%	27%
Disagree	24%	22%	27%	29%	24%	22%	23%	26%
Strongly disagree	28%	28%	29%	32%	29%	21%	36%	27%
Don't know/ not sure	14%	11%	17%	20%	12%	15%	18%	8%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	14%	12%	9%	13%	7%
Agree	20%	20%	24%	18%	29%
Disagree	21%	27%	26%	33%	20%
Strongly disagree	29%	27%	28%	25%	23%
Don't know/ not sure	16%	14%	13%	11%	20%

Mining and burning coal makes bushfires worse

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	25%	25%	25%	30%	34%	28%	21%	15%
Agree	23%	23%	23%	31%	27%	29%	16%	16%
Disagree	22%	22%	21%	16%	16%	15%	26%	34%
Strongly disagree	12%	17%	8%	2%	5%	7%	18%	27%
Don't know/ not sure	17%	12%	22%	22%	18%	20%	20%	9%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	27%	29%	18%	25%	21%
Agree	26%	20%	21%	26%	23%
Disagree	20%	24%	25%	21%	20%
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	18%	13%	16%
Don't know/ not sure	17%	18%	18%	15%	21%

Climate change makes bushfire hazard reduction more difficult to complete safely

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	28%	31%	26%	34%	37%	34%	23%	15%
Agree	33%	31%	35%	40%	38%	37%	25%	28%
Disagree	17%	17%	18%	9%	12%	11%	23%	29%
Strongly disagree	11%	13%	10%	2%	4%	8%	16%	23%
Don't know/ not sure	10%	9%	11%	15%	8%	10%	13%	5%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	32%	31%	21%	27%	20%
Agree	34%	33%	35%	28%	35%
Disagree	14%	18%	20%	22%	16%
Strongly disagree	10%	10%	12%	11%	16%
Don't know/ not sure	10%	9%	12%	12%	12%

There is no connection between climate change and bushfires

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	15%	17%	13%	11%	16%	19%	12%	15%
Agree	17%	19%	16%	8%	14%	18%	18%	24%
Disagree	23%	24%	22%	26%	22%	21%	25%	23%
Strongly disagree	36%	32%	39%	46%	42%	32%	34%	30%
Don't know/ not sure	9%	8%	10%	9%	6%	10%	11%	9%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	16%	14%	15%	17%	13%
Agree	18%	18%	20%	16%	14%
Disagree	20%	26%	23%	25%	29%
Strongly disagree	39%	33%	34%	33%	33%
Don't know/ not sure	8%	9%	9%	9%	12%

The current bushfires demonstrate the cost of climate inaction

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	36%	34%	38%	43%	46%	41%	31%	21%
Agree	30%	29%	31%	34%	34%	34%	25%	24%
Disagree	15%	16%	13%	10%	7%	9%	20%	28%
Strongly disagree	11%	14%	9%	4%	5%	8%	16%	22%
Don't know/ not sure	8%	7%	9%	10%	8%	9%	9%	5%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	43%	35%	30%	35%	24%
Agree	27%	32%	29%	29%	37%
Disagree	11%	15%	19%	15%	17%
Strongly disagree	11%	10%	15%	12%	11%
Don't know/ not sure	8%	9%	7%	9%	11%

I'm worried Australia's native forests and unique wildlife will never be the same

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	43%	36%	50%	46%	48%	48%	43%	32%
Agree	35%	36%	34%	39%	32%	37%	33%	37%
Disagree	11%	14%	8%	6%	11%	7%	11%	20%
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	3%	3%	5%	4%	8%	8%
Don't know/ not sure	5%	5%	4%	7%	5%	4%	5%	3%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	47%	40%	42%	37%	43%
Agree	36%	44%	29%	37%	33%
Disagree	8%	8%	15%	16%	14%
Strongly disagree	5%	4%	11%	4%	4%
Don't know/ not sure	5%	5%	3%	6%	6%

This is a wake-up call for the world on the impacts of climate change

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	42%	37%	47%	50%	50%	46%	38%	29%
Agree	30%	31%	29%	31%	35%	34%	24%	27%
Disagree	12%	13%	10%	11%	7%	7%	15%	18%
Strongly disagree	11%	14%	8%	3%	4%	7%	16%	22%
Don't know/ not sure	5%	4%	6%	6%	4%	6%	7%	4%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	49%	41%	36%	40%	31%
Agree	26%	32%	31%	37%	34%
Disagree	9%	13%	13%	7%	15%
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	14%	11%	14%
Don't know/ not sure	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%

Governments should mobilise all of society to tackle climate change, like they mobilised everyone during the world wars

	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strongly agree	31%	30%	32%	35%	36%	36%	29%	18%
Agree	35%	33%	37%	29%	42%	36%	30%	37%
Disagree	12%	14%	10%	11%	9%	11%	12%	18%
Strongly disagree	12%	15%	8%	10%	4%	8%	15%	22%
Don't know/ not sure	10%	7%	13%	16%	10%	8%	14%	5%

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Strongly agree	35%	32%	22%	30%	28%
Agree	36%	35%	34%	33%	33%
Disagree	8%	15%	18%	9%	15%
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	14%	16%	12%
Don't know/ not sure	11%	9%	11%	12%	11%