



***Debate erodes belief that climate change is mankind’s defining crisis and demands a commensurate response.***

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Just days before the United Nation’s historic Copenhagen summit the Munk Debates tackled one of the great public policy questions of our time: how should the world respond to climate change?

CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the atmosphere are climbing steadily higher. Some believe this is having a devastating effect on humans and nature, while others argue that the threat has been overstated. Is this the moment for a bold international treaty to curb carbon emissions? Or, are the social and economic costs of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions too high in a world where a billion people live on a dollar or less a day?

The Munk Debates posed the following question:

**BE IT RESOLVED:**

***Climate change is mankind’s defining crisis, and demands a commensurate international response.***

This question was put directly to the audience of the *Munk Debates on Climate Change* both before and after they listened to a debate on the issue between the Green Party’s Elizabeth May and best-selling climate change author George Monbiot, both for the government side AND global opinion leader and author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* Bjorn Lomborg and former Chancellor of the Exchequer under Margaret Thatcher Lord Nigal Lawson both for the opposition side of the argument.

At the beginning of the debate, six-in-ten (61%) agreed with the statement, while 39% disagreed. After the debate agreement with this statement declined to 53%.

“These results show that public debate matters” stated Rudyard Griffiths, organizer of the debate. “The turnout out is proof Canadians care about the world around us and the change offer the evening shows that we are open to argument, even on an issue that engages our emotions such as climate change.



## About This Study

This poll was conducted for the **Munk Debates** ([www.munkdebates.com](http://www.munkdebates.com)) by **Innovative Research Group, Inc.** ([www.innovativeresearch.ca](http://www.innovativeresearch.ca)), a national public opinion research firm on Tuesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

Prior to the beginning of the debate, members of the audience at the Munk Debates on Climate Change were asked to fill out a ballot where they indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with the resolution. Ballots were collected and the results recorded using Scantron readers.

After the debate concluded, the audience was again asked to fill out a ballot where they indicated whether they still agreed or disagreed with the resolution. Again, the ballots were collected and results recorded using Scantron readers. See detailed findings below for the ballot question wording and results.

The results of this poll are based on ballots collected among 1,100 spectators at the *Munk Debates on Climate Change*. A sample of this size would have an estimated margin of error of  $\pm 3.0$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

## The Munk Debates

The Munk Debates is an initiative of the Aurea Foundation, a charitable organization founded in 2006 by Peter and Melanie Munk to support Canadian Institutions involved in the study and development of public policy. The goal of the Munk Debates is to enliven and elevate public discussion of the major international issues shaping the course of world events and Canada's future.

## Innovative Research Group

Innovative Research Group Inc. (INNOVATIVE) is a national public opinion research and strategy firm with offices in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

INNOVATIVE provide critical information needed to assess and overcome public affairs and corporate communications challenges, identify and evaluate potential solutions, and monitor outcomes.

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## DETAILED FINDINGS

### Pre-Debate Ballot

#### QUESTION #1

Climate change is mankind's defining crisis, and demands a commensurate response.

AGREE - 61%

DISAGREE - 39%

#### QUESTION #2

Depending on what you hear during the debate are you open to changing your vote?

YES - 79%

NO - 21%

### Post-Debate Ballot

#### QUESTION #1

Climate change is mankind's defining crisis, and demands a commensurate response.

AGREE - 53%

DISAGREE - 47%