

## UK election: What climate change policies would appeal to Conservative ‘Climate Citizens’<sup>1</sup>?

Based on our Environmental Choices<sup>2</sup> public opinion data, this article describes the types of policies that would appeal to English people who are very concerned about climate change, from the three main political parties.

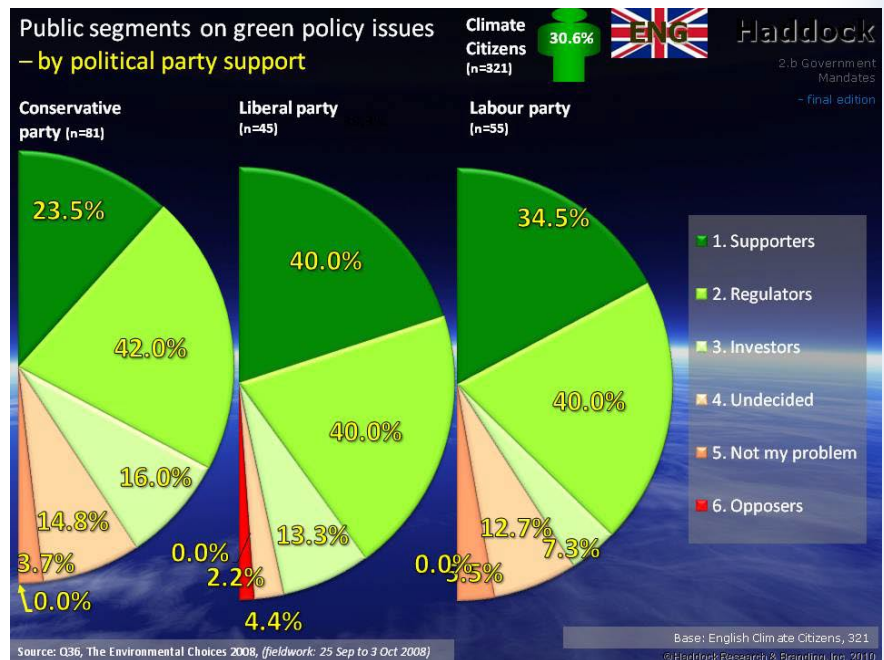
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### Party differentiation on climate change policies

With the UK election due to take place on May 6<sup>th</sup>, all three main political parties are campaigning for urgent and substantial action on climate change. Earlier this week, party leaders Gordon Brown<sup>3</sup> (Labour), David Cameron<sup>4</sup> (Conservative) and Nick Clegg<sup>5</sup> (Liberal Democrats) each released a dedicated video message about the policies their parties would adopt to tackle climate change, if elected to form the next UK government.

Public reaction as to which combination of policies to adopt is not just a matter of political party support/ideology – it is also to do with an individual’s concern about climate change. If you are a voter who is not concerned about climate change, you are not likely to give much support for low-carbon policies to tackle, what you believe, is a ‘non-existent/unimportant’ problem.

So, what policies do people support amongst those who **are** concerned about climate change? And is there a difference between Labour, Conservative and Liberal supporters?



<sup>1</sup> A segmentation, developed within the Environmental Choices 2008 study, has classified people into 3 types according to their attitudes towards climate change – from Climate Citizens (who are most engaged with climate change), to Mild Greens (who are moderately engaged) to Sceptics & Uninvolved (who are least engaged). For more information, visit <http://haddock-research.com/segmentation>

<sup>2</sup> For Interim Highlights of this study, visit [http://www.haddock-research.com/EC2008\\_interim\\_highlights](http://www.haddock-research.com/EC2008_interim_highlights)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/video/2010/apr/26/gordon-brown-ask-the-climate-question>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/video/2010/apr/26/climate-change-david-cameron>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/video/2010/apr/26/climate-change-nick-clegg>



Of particular interest are Conservative supporters who would typically be more opposed to ‘big government intervention’ and tax increases.

The following analysis is based on the 27% of Conservative supporters, 35% of Labour supporters and 39% of Liberal supporters from England who are *Climate Citizens*.

Amongst all *Climate Citizens*, a good majority (over 70%) endorse strong green policy action – they are either ‘Supporters’ or ‘Regulators’ (see definitions below). The Liberal party has the strongest mandate amongst these two groups – whereas 13% of such Labour supporters and 15% of Conservative supporters are ‘Undecided’ about what policies they support. Also, Conservative *Climate Citizens* are less likely to be ‘Supporters’ than Labour or Liberal *Climate Citizens*; rather many of these Conservative *Climate Citizens* are ‘Regulators’ and, more than other parties, are ‘Investors’.

In addition to negotiating international agreements, David Cameron’s focus on regulation and investment seems well targeted towards Conservative *Climate Citizens* – and perhaps he could convince those who are still undecided to support these policies.

**Six degrees of support for climate change policies**

Using cluster analysis on attitudes towards 8 climate change policies amongst the full international sample, we can identify six groups with distinctly different sets of attitudes towards government policy. These groups can be considered to be on a spectrum of support for government ‘green’ policies. Below is a description of these groups, leading with the most supportive.

**1. SUPPORTERS -**

***Supporters of all climate change policies***

The most ‘green’ group, is generally supportive of all policy types – investment, regulation and carbon taxes.

**2. REGULATORS - *Supporters of strong regulation and green investment; against car taxes***

The second most ‘green’ group that green policy should focus on strong regulation supported by green investment - but are resistant to higher car fuel taxes, and road pricing.

	All England respondents n=1050	Climate Citizens n=315
1. <i>Supporters</i>	15.8%	31.8%
2. <i>Regulators</i>	26.5%	39.3%
3. <i>Investors</i>	17.5%	12.8%
4. <i>Undecided</i>	21.1%	13.1%
5. <i>Not my problem</i>	9.5%	2.5%
6. <i>Opposers</i>	9.5%	0.6%



**3. INVESTORS - *Supporters of green investment; strongly against car taxes or air taxes***

The third most 'green' group, believe that green policy should focus on green investment – and are particularly strongly resistant to extra car taxes and flying taxes.

**4. UNDECIDED - *Mostly undecided; mildly pro-investment and mildly anti-car taxes***

This fourth most 'green' group is currently not engaged with any of the different policy options tested. Without a reason to believe, in reality, people in this group are perhaps likely to resist regulation and carbon taxes.

**5. NOT MY PROBLEM - *Anti car taxes; ambivalent of investment; some support for regulation***

This fifth most 'green' group disagrees with car taxes, and is ambivalent about green investment. There is some agreement that airports should be restricted and coal stations should not be built; perhaps because they see climate change as really a 'business problem'.

**6. OPPOSERS - *Disagreement with all climate change policies***

The least 'green' group disagrees with all policy options – and they unanimously strongly resist the idea of road pricing!

**About Haddock Research & Branding, Inc.**

Haddock Research & Branding Inc. is a full-service market research agency focused on climate change and the low-carbon economy. Making use of the latest advances in survey design, Haddock advises businesses on how best to develop profitable low-carbon opportunities; and provides governments with the vital information they need to mobilize people to take action on climate change. For further information, visit our website - [www.haddock-research.com](http://www.haddock-research.com)

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Information from this press release comes from section report 2b. 'Government Mandates for action on climate change'. More detailed analysis may be found within this report.

***Any comments in this press release are solely the responsibility of Haddock Research and Branding, Inc.***

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<sup>6</sup> [www.haddock-research.com](http://www.haddock-research.com) A quick registration is required to download the free reports. More detailed results are available in the published reports section.