

Public Support for Climate Change Adaptation among South Carolina's Coastal Residents

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This project uses a deliberative polling approach to measure support for various policies to address climate change. Deliberative polling combines traditional public opinion surveys with small discussion groups of participants recruited from the survey respondents. Previous research has found that public opinion about climate change is often a function of social and political values. Using a sample of residents from South Carolina's coastal counties, we examine the role of values in shaping support for various approaches state and local governments can use to adapt to climate change. Drawing from the pool of survey respondents, we recruited 28 individuals from Charleston County to participate in one of four small discussion groups. These groups heard a presentation about climate change and its potential impacts to the Charleston area, as well potential climate adaptation strategies. The groups were then encouraged to discuss the various solutions. We found that values played a large role in the types of adaptation policies that respondents supported. In addition, we found that small group discussions were conducive to agreement on adaptation strategies, except when the discussions turned toward the polarizing aspects of climate change such as the scientific consensus and the role of government in addressing climate change.