



AAPG Climate Change Poll Results

April 2020 | Jeff Aldrich , Robert Shoup

In September – October 2019, the AAPG conducted an email-based poll of all members concerning whether or not AAPG should have a position paper and, specifically, should AAPG have a statement on anthropogenic climate change. The AAPG Executive Committee has reviewed the results of that poll and carefully considered every comment provided by the members. We wish to share the results of that poll with the membership. The raw numbers are shown in the table below. However, the Executive Committee spent some time to sort through the data to try and understand the distribution of responses and the demographics of those that took the time to respond.

There were 3,226 members who filled out all or part of the poll. There were some technical issues with the poll when it was first sent out, however, we have eliminated duplicate poll responses that resulted from that issue.

	Are policy statements useful	Should we continue policy statements	Should AAPG have a Climate Change Statement	If you said Yes on a Climate Change Statement should AAPG post it on our website?
YES	1974	2239	1725	1656
NO	1071	814	1446	409

Out of the more than 3,000 members who filled out the survey, there were 1,152 who also submitted comments, or about one-third of the respondents. These comments ranged from “thank you for asking for members’ opinions,” to criticism of the polling questions, and some interesting comments that were non sequitur to the topic at hand. The comments were analyzed to attempt to understand if the member (the names were kept anonymous from the analysis) leaned toward a position of believing in anthropogenic climate change or in a position of not believing in ACC. It needs to be noted that the Executive Committee, in requesting the poll, did not advocate a position for a statement but asked if a statement of any kind was needed.

Of the 1,152 members who added comments, there were 183 who could clearly be identified as opposing ACC in some manner and 141 who supported a position of ACC in some manner: a 56-44 percentage split. This is a similar percentage to the response for a statement: 55 percent in favor of a statement. When we examine the responses from those who do not believe in ACC: 42 percent would like a statement and 23 percent do not. Likewise, looking at the responses from those who do believe in ACC, 14 percent do not want a statement and 21 percent do.

Thus, the number of those who favor a statement is equally divided between those who believe in ACC and those that do not. Additionally, from the comments, both those who believe in ACC and those who do not also believe that the science supports their position.

Approximately 80 percent of the poll's respondents were 50 years old or older, with 63 percent aged 60 or above. Less than 2 percent of the respondents were 30 years of age or younger. Of those commenting, 77 percent were from the sections and 23 percent were from the regions.

From the responses and comments to the poll, we can conclude the following:

- Our members are almost equally split on whether or not AAPG should have a statement on climate, with those wanting a statement having a slight majority.
- Our members are also almost equally split as to whether humans have a significant impact on climate.
- Those members who believe in anthropogenic climate change are slightly more supportive of AAPG having a climate statement than those members who do not believe human activity strongly influences climate.

Future Steps

The Executive Committee is now working on drafting a statement on climate. As part of that process, we have reviewed statements put forward by other organizations, both scientific member organizations and commercial organizations. We are also working with AAPG's Corporate Advisory Board to ensure that our statement is in line with our corporate members and sponsors.

In drafting a climate statement, we are taking into account the comments received in the membership poll, advice from the [Division of Professional Affairs](#), advice from the Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Change, solicited comments from the sections and regions leadership and recommendations from the Advisory Council and Corporate Advisory Board. With the advice and comments from this broad cross-section of our membership and leadership, the EC is confident that it can write and bring forward a statement on climate that reflects the values and concerns of the membership and remains true to the mission of AAPG. Stay tuned!

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Jeff Aldrich

Jeff Aldrich, DEG President for 2015-16.



Robert Shoup

Robert "Bob" Shoup is the International Training and Consulting Manager for Subsurface Consulting & Associates LLC (SCA). He is a Board Certified Petroleum Geologist with over 35 years' experience in basin analysis, regional studies, new play generation, prospect evaluation, field studies and development planning, drilling operations, and project management.

Extended reading

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Comments (4)

Let's focus on helping AAPG constituents during this time of crisis

AAPG has wrestled with climate change statements over the years without providing any benefit to members unless you count venting many spleens. Can AAPG instead focus on helping members by providing opportunities to learn about the petroleum geoscience we know best, mentoring Young Professionals and students who are seeing a price collapse for the first time, and providing virtual community to support each other?

4/2/2020 10:42:59 AM **Gretchen "Chainsaw" Gillis**

American Association of PETROLEUM Geos

Start advocating the goodness that is hydrocarbons and the hydrocarbon molecule. Start showing and talking about how the petroleum business improves the human condition. How cheap energy (oil and gas and coal) lifts people from poverty, improves health, education, living conditions, etc. That's what AAPG should do and when not doing that start educating folks on the anthropogenic climate change boondoggle and its falsities by using geology to prove it and how if we went down the path that the climate catastrophist want us to go the human misery it would bring. Ernie Grodi

4/2/2020 10:34:31 AM **Ernest Grodi**

Science does not go away when we put our head in sediment

Well, whatever. People have a right to state what they believe in. If 50% do not believe in climate science, so be it. By the way, how are we feeling about health science? Will we ignore the warnings of these scientists over the coronavirus? No it is not different, except it may impact you this year versus a longer time frame. It is not ethical to choose what good science to follow simply because one is more convenient than the other....

4/1/2020 4:50:00 PM **Mary Barrett**

ad hoc Committee on Climate Change

For the record, the ad hoc Committee on Climate Change ceased to exist on June 30, 2019, and its former members are not currently providing advice to AAPG. The recommendation of the committee to the 2018-2019 EC in February of 2019 stands as the final work of the committee, and has not been reviewed by or published to the membership at large.

4/1/2020 2:04:05 PM **Edith Newton Wilson**

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