

## COMPLETION REPORT

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### Understanding Public Support for Climate Policies in Japan

Considering the ambition of the Japanese government in the shift toward net zero emissions, more investigations into how the public view climate policies and what determine their opinions are needed. However, in a recent comprehensive review of research in this regard, Drew and van den Bergh (2016) observed that the bulk of previous studies were conducted in North America, Australia, and Europe, leaving other regions in the world, including Japan and other Asian countries, largely understudied. It is important to emphasize that findings based on the Western world do not necessarily apply to societies in other regions.

With the funding from this grant (SFJP20HS01) and two other grants, we conducted a survey in four countries, including three Asian countries (China, India, Japan) and the U.S. In this study, respondents from a representative sample in each country reported the following: 1) beliefs about climate change; 2) various psychological factors, including patriotism, climate change anxiety, expectations regarding action by other countries, views of the social and political systems, and connectedness to nature; 3) private-sphere climate action and climate activism; 4) support for climate policies. The data set generated from this study allows us to not only identify factors that predict public support for climate action and climate policies but also compare the predictive power of these factors across the four countries.

We are in the process of analysing this very rich data set, but here are two key findings to date.

1. We observed that patriotism, which implies prioritizing national interest, is not necessarily incompatible with pro-climate opinion. Its effect actually depends on how its meanings is negotiated. Individuals who have blind and uncritical love for their country tend to deny their country's responsibility in climate change and reject domestic climate efforts. On the contrary, people who show constructive patriotism are more willing to accept their country's responsibility and support domestic contributions to the mitigation of climate change. These findings highlight the need to expand our understanding of public engagement with climate change from a purely individualistic perspective to a framework that takes into account people's relations with their own country.

2. Participants reported their perceived likelihood that enough national governments would take action that significantly reduce climate change and their level of support for a wide range of domestic climate policies (e.g., a law to stop generating any electricity by burning fossil fuels). We observed that in all samples, respondents who expected climate efforts by other governments expressed stronger support for these policies. This was observed even when other relevant variables (e.g., climate change beliefs, political trust, age, gender) were controlled for. These results were replicated with a 23-country data set based on the European Social Survey Round 8 (2016). These findings highlight the potential effectiveness of messages reporting climate action in other countries in increasing public support for domestic climate policies.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

<p>Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)</p> <p>Tam, K-P. (2021, May). Understanding public engagement with climate change through the tension between national interest and global benefits. In A. Fotopoulou, Y. Kashima, &amp; E. Pacherie. (Chairs), Climate change: Addressing climate change and its psychological, ethical, and socio-economic challenges. Invited panel discussion at the 2021 Association for Psychological Science Virtual Convention.</p> <p>Tam, K-P. (2021, July). Understanding public engagement with climate change through the lens of national interest. Paper presented at the 14th Biennial Asian Association of Social Psychology Conference. Seoul, South Korea.</p>
<p>Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)</p>
<p>Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)</p>