

## **Consensus**

The key issue of relevance is to understand whether there is a consensus that humans are the dominant cause of the recent warming. The 97% number doesn't really relate to this issue. The 97% consensus number that was tweeted by President Obama was based on a paper that examined the abstracts of published papers, and has been shown by numerous different people to be deeply flawed.

The best way to understand what scientists think is to ask them. Several surveys have recently been published. In a survey of professional members of the American Meteorological Society, only 52% agreed with the statement that most of the warming has been caused by humans. Another study surveyed a broad spectrum of climate scientists, and found that 85% of the scientists agreed that most of the warming has been caused by humans. Yes there seems to be a majority of scientists that think that most of the warming has been caused by humans, but this is very far from the overwhelming consensus that is portrayed by the media.

So then why do so many organizations claim such a strong consensus in their policy statements? There are strong sociopolitical factors in play here in scientific organizations, driven by the overall politicization of the science.

Have you been following the recent news about the collapse of the consensus regarding cholesterol and heart disease? For scientific progress to occur, scientists need to continually challenge the evidence and the conclusions drawn from the evidence. Manufacturing a consensus in the context of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has acted to hyper-politicize the scientific and policy debates, to the detriment of both.

The bottom line is that the science is not 'settled.'