



The Copenhagen Shambles Who gives a stuff? Who's not surprised?

So, Copenhagen turned out to be a damp-squib after all the hype. What was billed as the "World's Leaders" coming together to "save the Planet/Mankind" descended into petty bickering and entrenched obstinacy.

In a recent survey, conducted just before the start of Copenhagen, when it was far from clear that any but the most die-hard and fool-hardy world leaders would even show their faces at the conference, we asked just over 2000 people for their thoughts. They were asked:

With the Copenhagen "Climate Change" summit coming up, many world leaders are reluctant to show up in person. Which one of these statements comes closest to your view?

1. I don't believe in man-made climate change, so it doesn't matter.
2. Shame on them if they can't be bothered to turn up for something so important.
3. It's for Industry not Governments to sort this out, so whether the politicians come is irrelevant.
4. This is pretty much the last chance to avoid catastrophe, so they should be there.
5. They'll never put their own petty interests aside, so what difference does it make if they're there or not?
6. It's all too little, too late anyway – they should have sorted it years ago.

Deniers	12.4%
Believers	72.7%
Swingers	15.1%

Those who went for Option 1 are obviously climate deniers¹, while those who go for Options 2, 3, 4 and 6 are almost certainly climate believers. Those choosing Option 5 could swing either way – maybe they're just resigned to the ways of politicians.

What we found was that believers outweighed deniers by 6 to 1. But, when we looked into the numbers a bit more deeply, especially from a Values perspective, some interesting contrasts emerged.

Climate Believers

Pioneers	38%
Prospectors	31%
Settlers	31%

Starting with the Believers, we found an almost equal distribution across the three Maslow Groups – Pioneers, Prospectors and Settlers – with just slightly fewer Settlers and just slightly more Pioneers. What is notable about this is that it's a very broad church. Up until the last few years, we regularly found this group to be dominated by Pioneers, with very few Settlers. It is clear that something has levelled this up over recent times. Whether this is due to successful persuasion by environmentalists, actual day-to-day evidence of climate change on the TV news, the consensus of the scientific community, or simply acquiescence in the face of "climate fatigue", the evidence is not clear. Whatever the cause, it demonstrates that the politicians (for once!) had the people with them.

Climate Deniers

Pioneers	29%
Prospectors	22%
Settlers	49%

The Maslow Group profile of the Deniers broadly follows everything that we've seen over the years. This is overwhelmingly a Settler orientation. We have always been able to understand this in terms of a "deny and deflect" perspective. We have seen this in respect of so many "worthy issues". *"If I don't think about it, it'll go away"*. This same principle can also account for about half of the Prospector element.

¹ I can never see that word and not think of nylons!



What is really interesting is the Pioneer segment. While it is only 78% as large as might be expected from the size of this group in the population, this is still somewhat more than we would have been led to expect historically. There is further work to be done in understanding this fully but a few observations can be made at this stage.

First, it is in the nature of Pioneers to question the *status quo*. That the *status quo* may have been shaped by them is of no consequence – they will have thought of a million better questions to ask than the ones that they had before! “*If I can think it, it probably is*”.

Second, when we look at the overall set of deniers, we see that they are 2 to 1 male over female. This is slightly less (6 to 4) for the Pioneers but, nevertheless, is important. For Pioneer males, we find that there is a Values tension between Power² and Universalism³. This is one of the most fundamental values polarities to be found in any culture around the world⁴. In psychological terms, it is the tension that drives Jungian “individuation” – and, in a predominantly “Paternalistic” world, the brunt of this tension falls on the male.

Whoa! What does that mean? What it means is that, never mind your Maslowian orientation, in most cultures, the male monkey is more “f***ed up” than the female⁵. Back to the subject in hand and “climate change” threatens the male mind-set more than the female. (With apologies to the feminists who might be reading this). After all, even the most “enlightened” societies still expect the male to be the “bread-winner” – the “man” who “provides” for “his woman”. (I know that’s very un-PC, but I challenge anyone to find the PC-gene in the human genome). No matter how you run the climate-change scenarios, it doesn’t look particularly brilliant on this front.

So, if this has any bearing on reality, we would expect to find that the Pioneer deniers are those “least far out” in Maslow’s hierarchy. This is indeed what we find with the Transcenders (which we understand to be the “furthest out” Pioneer Values Mode) half as likely as any of the others to be deniers.

Climate Swingers	
Pioneers	36%
Prospectors	22%
Settlers	43%

Pioneers	36%
Prospectors	22%
Settlers	43%

Finally, let’s look at our “swingers”. Remember, these are the folks for whom the response really gives us no definitive clue as to their pro/anti climate change orientation. Let’s consider the previous two groups to guide us (and it can be no more than a guide).

The proportion of Settlers strongly suggests that we are looking (at least marginal) at deniers who also accept that “the politicians” don’t represent their views (whatever they are!).

When we look inside the Prospector contribution, this option can best be described as a “minority sport” or “default option”. It is under-represented (compared to the national profile) in every one of the Prospector Values Modes - especially the Golden Dreamers, who are more likely to have gone for the “deny and deflect” strategy.

Looking inside the Pioneer group, we find a complex picture. The Transitionals and Flexible Individualists would probably sign up to (Climate Change) confused.com! The Concerned Ethicals are probably just resigned to the fact that “the politicians” are all just a load of something odious that ought to be treated by biological means to yield bio-gas. The Transcenders seem to live in hope that everyone will somehow “do the right thing”.

² Desire for material wealth and control over others.

³ Openness to others, belief in justice for all, and concern for Nature.

⁴ See the work of Shalom Schwartz, University of Jerusalem.

⁵ See the recent video of Pat Dade at Red Bull.



So, what have we learned? First, who cares? Well, in the UK, the majority of people. Let's put a bit of a political spin on that.

Labour, being the incumbent party of government, will undoubtedly be held accountable for their part in the Copenhagen failure. However, they played a good media game (words over results) that might just gain them a few Brownie points in compensation.

The Conservatives, despite DC's efforts to convince the public of the Conservatives' green credentials, are still regarded (and the data in our survey backs this up) as the most "climate-sceptic" party (50% of Deniers are Conservatives in their heart of hearts).

The Lib-Dems just don't have the critical mass needed to figure in this one, apart from the fact that our data shows, quite clearly, that, while the Conservatives' real battle is with the BNP and UKIP (nothing to do with climate change), Labour's chief rivals are the Lib-Dems and the Greens (much more climate relevant). There is, however, as much desire for a hung Parliament as there is for an outright majority for any of the main parties.

Second, who was surprised by the Copenhagen fiasco? Certainly not our "swingers". What we've seen is that it is likely that this 15% of the population represents the hard-core of those who have simply lost faith in the ability of our (global) political system to act in the interests of the greater good. While 15% may not sound much, in the light of the other options offered, if we were to focus the spotlight more specifically on the quality of our "world leaders", it is highly probable that we would see a significant "lack of faith".

This, above all else, will be the fall-out from Copenhagen – lack of faith. Most of us now seem to accept that the world's going to Hell in a hand cart as far as climate is concerned. Up until recently, some of us still had some faith that "good people" would "do the right thing". Well, it seems like a lot of people are heading towards "Fool me once, shame on you! Fool me twice, shame on me!"⁶ Copenhagen probably was the politicians' last chance to look "credible" on the climate change scene.

⁶ Boy! I hope I made a better job of that than Gee Dubya!