

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Global climate survey: Most Americans feel exposed and vulnerable to a deterioration in their quality of life due to worsening climate conditions, and demand action**

- *Veolia's Barometer of Ecological Transformation survey shows Americans are feeling increasingly anxious and vulnerable to worsening climate conditions, but still believe it's not too late to turn the tide.*
- *Americans are ready to take unprecedented action to address the challenges of climate change.*

**BOSTON** (June X, 2024) – A large majority of Americans is ready to take measures to address the challenges of climate change that would have been unheard of a generation ago, including drinking recycled wastewater to adapt to ongoing water shortages, according to new survey results released today by global environmental leader Veolia and renowned research firm Elabe.

The survey gauged American public opinion about the impacts of climate change and shows that they are no longer an abstraction for a large percentage of Americans, but something that can be seen and felt on a regular basis. Worsening storms, unpredictable weather patterns, drought, flooding and other tangible signs of a changing climate are making Americans feel increasingly anxious and vulnerable, the survey shows.

While a previous Veolia survey, conducted in 2022 and released in January 2023, showed a growing consensus toward green solutions for climate-related challenges, the latest one reveals a deepening level of concern and openness to solutions that may have once been regarded as too extreme. Protecting public health has become a powerful lever to encourage a desire for ecology and consent to changes in behavior or the additional costs of environmental solutions. Mitigating PFAS and other micropollutants in drinking water is just one example of the investments that will need to be made in the coming years.

The Veolia survey findings are echoed in recent government reporting, including an Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in the 2023 [report](#) conducted by the U.S. Federal Reserve Board, showing that almost 20% of adults in the U.S. were financially impacted by natural disasters last year, marking a nearly 50% rise from 2022.

Findings like these are among the key motivations behind GreenUp, Veolia's global strategy for leading the ecological transformation of the planet through accelerated innovation and growth. The drivers behind the GreenUp strategy uniquely position Veolia to meet the challenges raised in the recent survey.

Conducted in late 2023 and early 2024, the latest Veolia survey posed climate-related questions to 2,000 Americans selected from a broad range of demographics, including all geographic regions and age groups ([click here to see survey results and methodology](#)).

**Fred Van Heems, President and CEO of Veolia North America**, said, *“From the latest survey results, we can see that the anxiety and concern that Americans feel about climate change and the dangers it poses to our health and well-being are only growing more pronounced. At the same time, we see that many Americans remain hopeful that it’s not too late to take steps to reverse these impacts and preserve the planet for our children and future generations – but we need to act. Global public opinion that includes America is also convinced that inaction will cost humanity more than the necessary investments to the ecological transition.”*

## U.S. Highlights

- **57%** of Americans are certain that the costs of the consequences of climate disruption are going to be greater than the investments needed for ecological transformation
- **61%** of Americans said they feel exposed and vulnerable to a deterioration in their quality of life due to worsening climate conditions
- **57%** of Americans said they feel exposed and vulnerable to health risks due to worsening climate conditions
  - Of those, **54%** said they were concerned about the impact climate change was having on their mental health
- **61%** (+19% compared to 2022) of Americans expressed willingness to drink recycled wastewater in order to adapt to severe water shortages
- **74%** expressed willingness to eat food from agriculture that uses recycled water for fertilizer
- **82%** expressed willingness to pay more out of their own pocket to help cover costs for eliminating micropollutants in drinking water supplies
- **53%** of Americans remain confident that the future of humanity is still in our hands, and that meaningful steps can still be taken to reverse and mitigate impacts

#####

## ABOUT THE METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted in 26 countries across 5 continents, reaching more than 29,500 individuals (between 1,000 and 2,000 per country / 2,000 in the US). Countries were chosen for their demographic weight, their contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, and to ensure diversity in ecological political and cultural backgrounds. Overall, these countries represent nearly 60% of the world's population and 67% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The survey was conducted online from October 17 to December 6, 2023. For each of the 26 countries, a representative sample of

residents aged 18 and over was gathered. Frequency: the barometer is published every 18 months (allowing for long-term evolution of representations, opinions, and behaviors).

## **ABOUT VEOLIA**

Veolia group aims to become the benchmark company for ecological transformation. Present on five continents with nearly 218,000 employees, the Group designs and deploys useful, practical solutions for the management of water, waste and energy that are contributing to a radical turnaround of the current situation. Through its three complementary activities, Veolia helps to develop access to resources, to preserve available resources and to renew them. In 2023, the Veolia group provided 113 million inhabitants with drinking water and 103 million with sanitation, produced 42 million megawatt hours of energy and treated 63 million tonnes of waste. Veolia Environnement (Paris Euronext: VIE) achieved consolidated revenue of 45,351 million euros in 2023. [www.veolia.com](http://www.veolia.com)

## **ABOUT VEOLIA NORTH AMERICA**

A subsidiary of Veolia group, Veolia North America (VNA) is the top-ranked environmental company in the United States for three consecutive years, and the country's largest private water operator and technology provider as well as hazardous waste and pollution treatment leader. It offers a full spectrum of water, waste, and energy management services, including water and wastewater treatment, commercial and hazardous waste collection and disposal, energy consulting and resource recovery. VNA helps commercial, industrial, healthcare, higher education, and municipality customers throughout North America. Headquartered in Boston, Mass., Veolia North America has more than 10,000 employees working at more than 350 locations across the continent.

[www.veolianorthamerica.com](http://www.veolianorthamerica.com)

## **ABOUT ELABE**

Elabe is an independent French research and consulting firm founded in 2015 by Bernard Sananes. It carries out numerous studies for companies, business and media actors, in France and abroad, particularly on social issues and public debate.

[www.elabe.fr@elabe\\_fr](http://www.elabe.fr@elabe_fr)

---

## **CONTACTS**

**VEOLIA NORTH AMERICA**  
Carrie Griffiths  
(781) 491-3117  
[Carrie.Griffiths@Veolia.com](mailto:Carrie.Griffiths@Veolia.com)