



This is the print version of the [Skeptical Science](#) article '[Deniers are part of the 97%](#)', which can be found at <http://sks.to/fringe>.

Contrarian opinions on global warming match the 2–3% fringe minority of peer-reviewed papers

What The Science Says:

If anyone claims to be part of the 97%, it means they disagree with the contrarian argument that humans are having a minimal impact on global warming. Moreover, in order to be part of the 96% expert consensus, they must explicitly agree that humans are responsible for the majority of the global warming over the past half-century.

Climate Myth: Deniers are part of the 97%

"All [contrarians] are part of that 97% because that 97% includes those who think humans have some influence on climate. Well, that's a fairly innocuous statement." ([Roy Spencer](#))

In May 2013, several Skeptical Science contributors published [a paper](#) showing that of peer-reviewed climate publications over the past 20 years that take a position on the cause of global warming [97 percent agree](#) that humans are responsible. Since that paper was published, [it's been met with extensive denialism](#).

One of the most common contrarian reactions to the results of our paper has been to [claim that 'skeptics' are included in the 97 percent as well](#). These arguments are based on one of the categories used in our study regarding "implicit endorsements" of human-caused global warming. A paper that was included in this category:

"Implies humans are causing global warming. E.g., research assumes greenhouse gas emissions cause warming without explicitly stating humans are the cause"

This particular category doesn't state *how much* global warming humans are causing, and hence climate contrarians claim that because they admit humans are causing some global warming, they should be included in the 97 percent.

However, this argument only considers one of the seven categories used in our study. Another critical category, the "implicit rejections" included any paper that (emphasis added):

"**implies humans have had a minimal impact on global warming** without saying so explicitly
E.g., proposing a natural mechanism is the main cause of global warming"

For those desiring papers with more explicit positions on the cause of global warming, we also used categories that only included papers that explicitly quantified the human contribution to global warming. We asked the scientific authors to rate their own papers, and of the papers in those categories (237 total), 96 percent agreed that humans are responsible for the majority of the current global warming.

Therefore, if anyone claims to be part of the 97 percent, it means they disagree with the contrarian argument that humans are having a minimal impact on global warming. Moreover, in order to be part of the 96 percent expert consensus, they must explicitly agree that humans are responsible for the majority of the global warming over the past half-century (a position the latest IPCC report took [with 95 percent confidence](#)). Those who believe the human influence on the climate is minimal hold fringe views that are consistent with just 2 to 3 percent of the peer-reviewed climate science literature.



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Skeptical Science explains the science of global warming and examines climate misinformation through the lens of peer-reviewed research. The website won the Australian Museum 2011 Eureka Prize for the Advancement of Climate Change Knowledge. Members of the Skeptical Science team have authored peer-reviewed papers, a [college textbook on climate change](#) and the book [Climate Change Denial: Heads in the Sand](#). Skeptical Science content has been used in university courses, textbooks, government reports on climate change, television documentaries and numerous books.



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