

## Why does public have selective hearing on scientific opinions?

How come we sometimes listen to scientific arguments, but sometimes disregard them entirely? Pew Research Center has done a survey comparing scientists' and the general public's attitudes towards subjects ranging from Genetically Modified Foods (GMO) over climate change to evolution.

On subjects such as the space station and bioengineered fuels, the public opinion is pretty much in line with scientists' opinions. But the single largest opinion difference between the public and scientists is the safety of GMOs. Where 88 per cent of scientists agree that it is safe to eat GMO foods only 37 per cent of the public agrees. It seems that the public sometimes has a selective hearing or get distorted messages from interest groups and media.

On climate change, there is also a gap, albeit smaller than on GMOs and pesticides, 87 per cent of scientists agree that climate change is happening and is manmade whereas only half of American adults agree.

This selective hearing being delivered to the public is also very evident in the vaccine debate.

Ironically, some of the celebrities campaigning against vaccines are also working hard to raise attention to the climate issue. How can you be a staunch supporter of scientific evidence, when it comes to climate change, but totally disregard scientific evidence and consensus, when it comes to vaccines? Clearly, we should listen to the science in all cases, not just the ones that fit our own ideological preferences.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Bjorn Lomborg: We should listen to scientists, not only when it suits our preferences](#)**