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## Critical Issues Program Releases Preliminary Results of "Defining Critical Issues" Survey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Critical Issues Program Releases Preliminary Results of "Defining Critical Issues" Survey

Alexandria, VA – The Critical Issues program, part of the American Geosciences Institute's (AGI's) Center for Geoscience Education and Public Understanding, has just released the preliminary results of the "Defining Critical Issues" survey which can be accessed from the Critical Issues program website: <http://geocntr.org/critical-issues/>.

The majority of responses to the web-based survey were from geoscientists in the post-secondary academic sector, while the number of responses from the public and the decision-making community was substantially smaller. The most frequently mentioned critical issues were climate change, water, energy, environment, natural hazards, economics, and issues associated with agriculture, food, and soils. When asked to select the highest priority issues, all cohorts chose climate change. Those who described themselves as geoscientists, public, or "other" chose water as the second priority issue, while decision makers considered human population growth to be the second highest priority. Human population growth was ranked as the third highest priority issue by the geoscientist, public, and "other" cohorts. Decision makers were evenly split between energy, environment, and politics (which includes issues surrounding the political system, governance and regulation, among others) for their third priority issue.

The aim of the web-based survey is to understand how the decision-making community, geoscience community, and the public define the term "critical issue," as well as which critical issues are of top concern to each community. The survey is deliberately short, broad, and unstructured in order to capture a wide range of responses. The survey, which was launched on November 5, 2013, will officially close on December 31, 2013, and a final report will be published in January 2014. The Critical Issues program especially seeks additional input from members of the public and decision-making community. The survey can be accessed at <http://surveys.agiweb.org/index.php?sid=33589>.

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The Critical Issues program is part of the Center for Geoscience Education and Public Understanding, a service of the American Geosciences Institute. The program's mission is to support well-informed public and individual decision making by providing relevant geoscience information to decision makers at all levels, from federal to regional, state, local, and individual. The program aims to serve as a hub that facilitates the exchange of ideas, inquiries, and relevant geoscience information between decision makers and the geosciences community.

The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geosciences education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

## Press Release PDF:



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