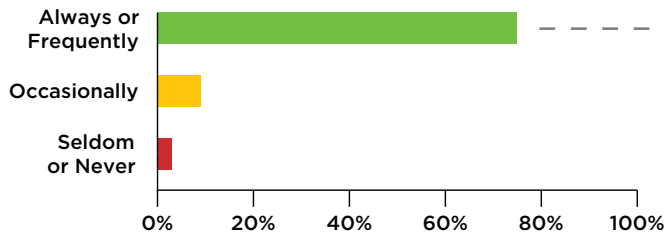
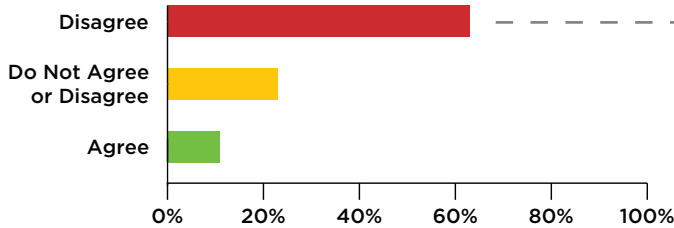


Surveying the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

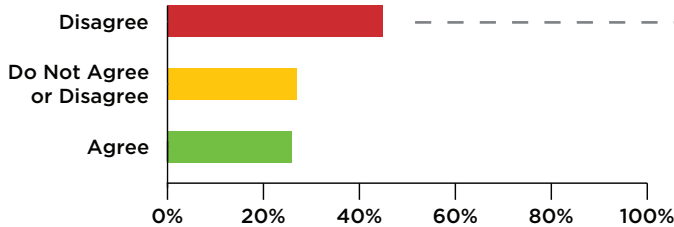
Scientist Voices under President Biden



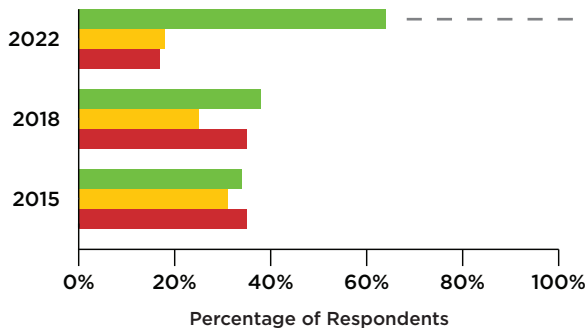
271 out of 361 NOAA scientists agreed: the agency's actions were always or frequently consistent with its scientific findings.



233 out of 370 NOAA scientists reported that they did not feel that the agency's senior leadership reflected the country's diversity.



161 out of 358 NOAA scientists felt that political interests did not hinder the agency's science-based decisionmaking.



226 out of 353 NOAA scientists reported being adequately trained on the agency's scientific integrity policy, more than during the Obama (549 out of 1,612) or Trump (415 out of 1,081) administrations.

See reverse for more information on this survey. For the purposes of this fact sheet, "Agree" includes both "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" response categories, and "Disagree" includes both "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree." For detailed breakdowns of responses and exact survey questions, please visit www.ucsusa.org/resources/scientists-survey-2022.

Our nation relies on government science and scientists to protect public health, public safety, and the environment. To that end, scientific integrity safeguards are necessary for ensuring that political, ideological, and financial interests do not undermine the use of science in federal decisionmaking, harming the public good in the process.

In September and October of 2022, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and the University of New Hampshire Survey Center administered a survey to over 46,000 federal scientists

across six government agencies, including at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). UCS received survey responses from 385 NOAA scientists and experts, for a total response rate of 6.81 percent. The results shed light on how NOAA scientists and experts perceive their current working environment and the agency's ability for science to inform decisionmaking without political interference.

Codifying Scientific Integrity Principles

The work of NOAA scientists helps us understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts, and NOAA science is pivotal to conservation efforts in coastal and marine ecosystems. NOAA scientists surveyed in 2022 had a positive perspective on scientific integrity and evidence-based decisionmaking. More than under the two prior administrations, NOAA scientists said they had been adequately trained on the contents of the agency's scientific integrity policies and that senior decisionmakers with conflicts of interest did not inappropriately influence agency decisionmaking. Unlike other agencies, NOAA's scientific integrity policy allows scientists to speak to media without preapproval; our survey results reflected this positive policy. However, many NOAA scientists also reported experiencing burnout in the last two years, mostly due to a lack of scientific capacity. NOAA scientists surveyed reported that the scientific workforce, senior leadership, and advisory committees did not reflect the country's diversity.

Congress should pass the Scientific Integrity Act to strengthen its scientific integrity protections. Agency leadership should remind management and staff of the definition of political interference and continue to train staff on processes for bringing forward scientific integrity allegations. The agency should strengthen its scientific integrity policy in accordance with guidance from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and its Scientific Integrity Taskforce.

Anita Desikan is the senior analyst in the Center for Science and Democracy at UCS. Jacob Carter is the research director in the Center for Science and Democracy at UCS.

NOAA Scientists Speak Out

Anonymous NOAA survey respondents provided their views on scientific integrity, environmental justice efforts, and evidence-based decisionmaking.

"I definitely appreciate the administration's efforts to support scientific integrity—I think it increases morale and trust in our work."

"The most significant limiting factor for my agency's ability to maintain scientific integrity is its staffing level. We are consistently being asked to do more with either less or the current level of staffing."

"The increased focus on environmental justice, equity, and the government-to-government relationship with tribal nations has promoted increased engagement with these communities. This will result in a better representation and data considered in decision making."

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