

3 Beliefs about Climate Change

Beliefs are people's perceptions about the world and how it works. They are statements about what is regarded as true and not true. Beliefs arise from a number of sources, ranging from scientific fact, systematic (or unsystematic) observation, learned behavior, or unverified assumptions. Climate changes are shifts over time in the long-term averages of daily weather. In this section beliefs about whether the climate is changing and perceived causes of climate change are mapped.

Respondents were provided with the introductory text, "There is increasing discussion about climate change and its potential impacts. Please select the statement that best reflects your beliefs about climate change" and given five statements to choose from. These were: climate change is occurring and it is caused mostly by human activities; climate change is occurring it is caused mostly by natural changes in the environment; climate change is occurring and it is caused more or less equally by natural changes in the environment and human activities; climate change is not occurring; and, there is not sufficient evidence to know with certainty whether climate change is occurring or not.

Table 2. Beliefs about climate change, percent (n = 4,778)

Watershed (HUC6)	CCHUM ¹	CCHUMNAT ²	CCNAT ³	CCUNCERT ⁴	NOCC ⁵
Weighted Full Sample	7.8	33.1	24.6	30.9	3.5
Loup.....	7.8	31.0	30.3	26.1	4.9
Middle Platte.....	7.3	27.7	27.7	32.9	4.4
Elkhorn	3.3	33.1	18.8	41.6	3.3
Big Blue	8.1	34.3	18.0	34.9	4.7
Lower Platte.....	5.9	35.3	24.2	32.0	2.6
Big Sioux	5.8	30.1	27.2	34.1	2.9
Missouri-Little Sioux	10.1	27.4	23.1	37.0	2.4
Missouri-Nishnabotna.....	8.7	40.4	23.1	25.0	2.9
Minnesota	7.5	37.2	24.8	28.8	1.8
Des Moines.....	5.2	31.5	25.0	34.7	3.6
Iowa.....	8.6	30.0	25.8	31.3	4.3
Black Root	8.4	34.2	24.0	28.0	5.3
Skunk Wapsipinicon	9.6	26.9	29.7	28.3	5.5
Maquoketa Plum.....	9.7	33.8	23.2	31.2	2.1
Lower Illinois.....	6.1	32.9	27.6	29.4	4.0
Rock	9.9	45.0	16.9	26.0	2.1
Kaskaskia	9.5	35.8	22.1	30.0	2.6
Upper Illinois.....	11.2	29.2	24.2	33.6	1.8
Wabash	7.5	32.6	26.0	29.5	4.4
Patoka-White	5.9	31.4	27.7	31.9	3.2
Southeastern Lake Michigan.....	9.3	29.6	25.9	30.1	5.1
Western Lake Erie	7.1	33.9	25.1	30.5	3.4

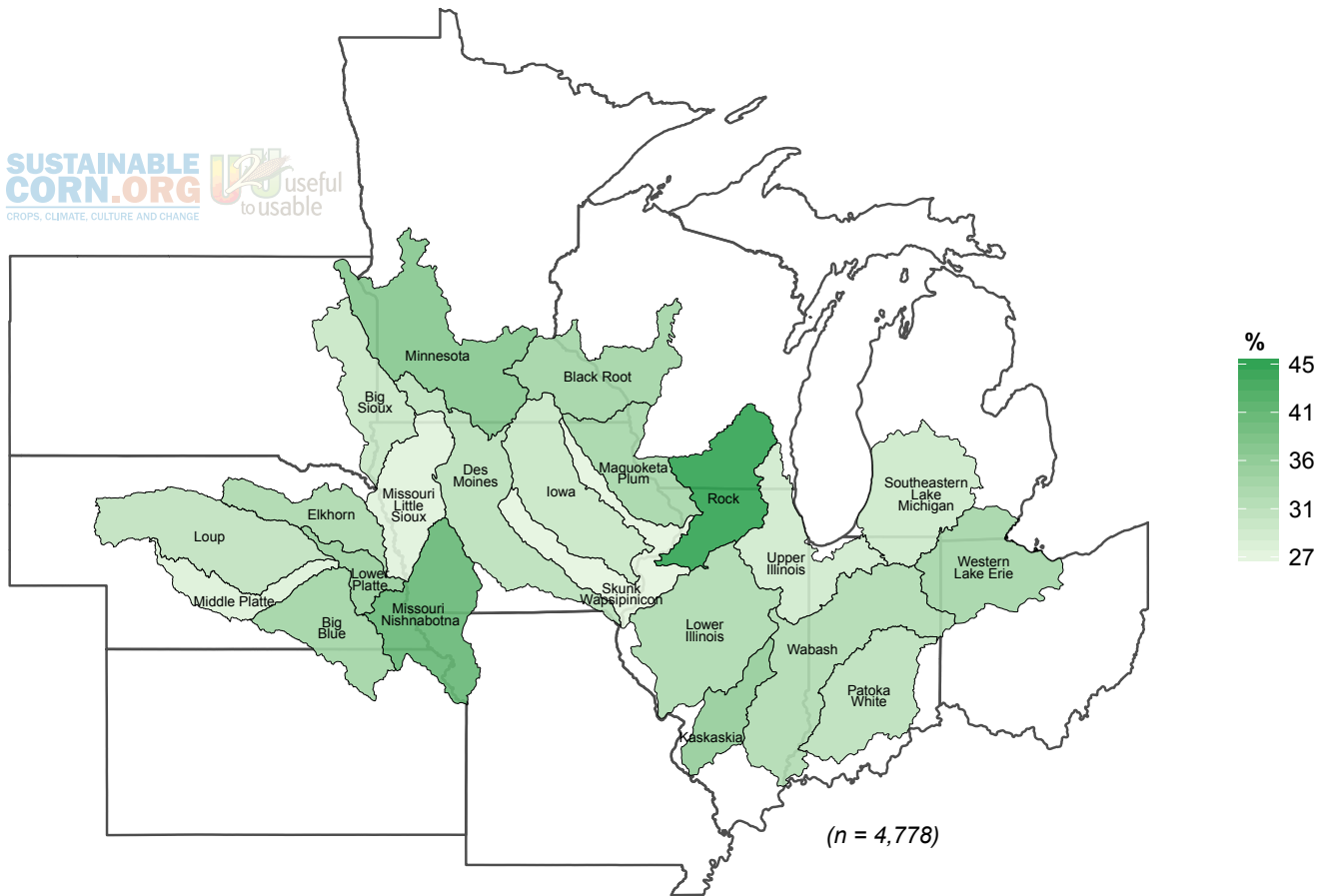
¹Climate change is occurring, and it is caused mostly by human activities.

²Climate change is occurring, and it is caused more or less equally by natural changes in the environment & human activities.

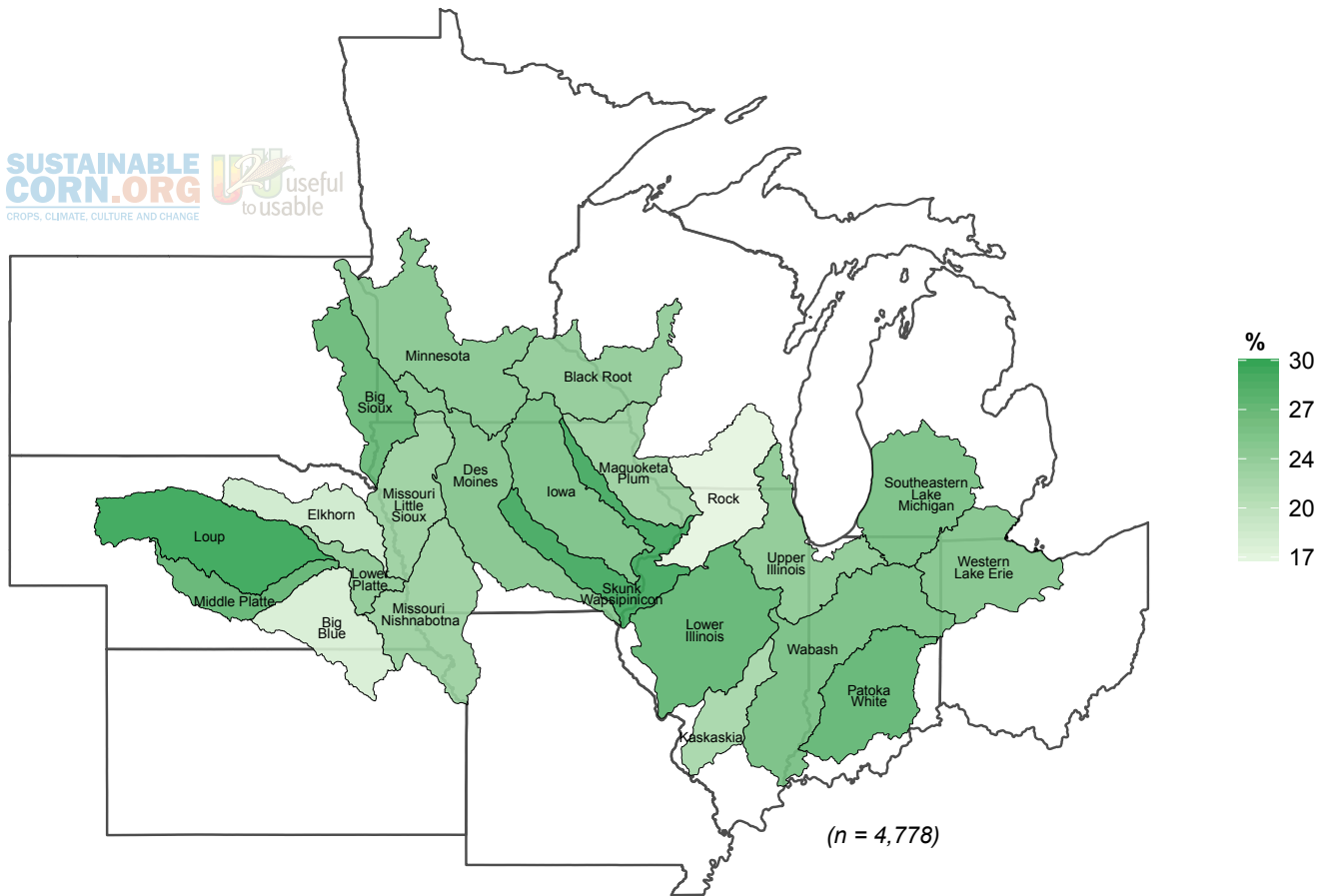
³Climate change is occurring, and it is caused mostly by natural changes in the environment.

⁴There is not sufficient evidence to know with certainty whether climate change is occurring or not.

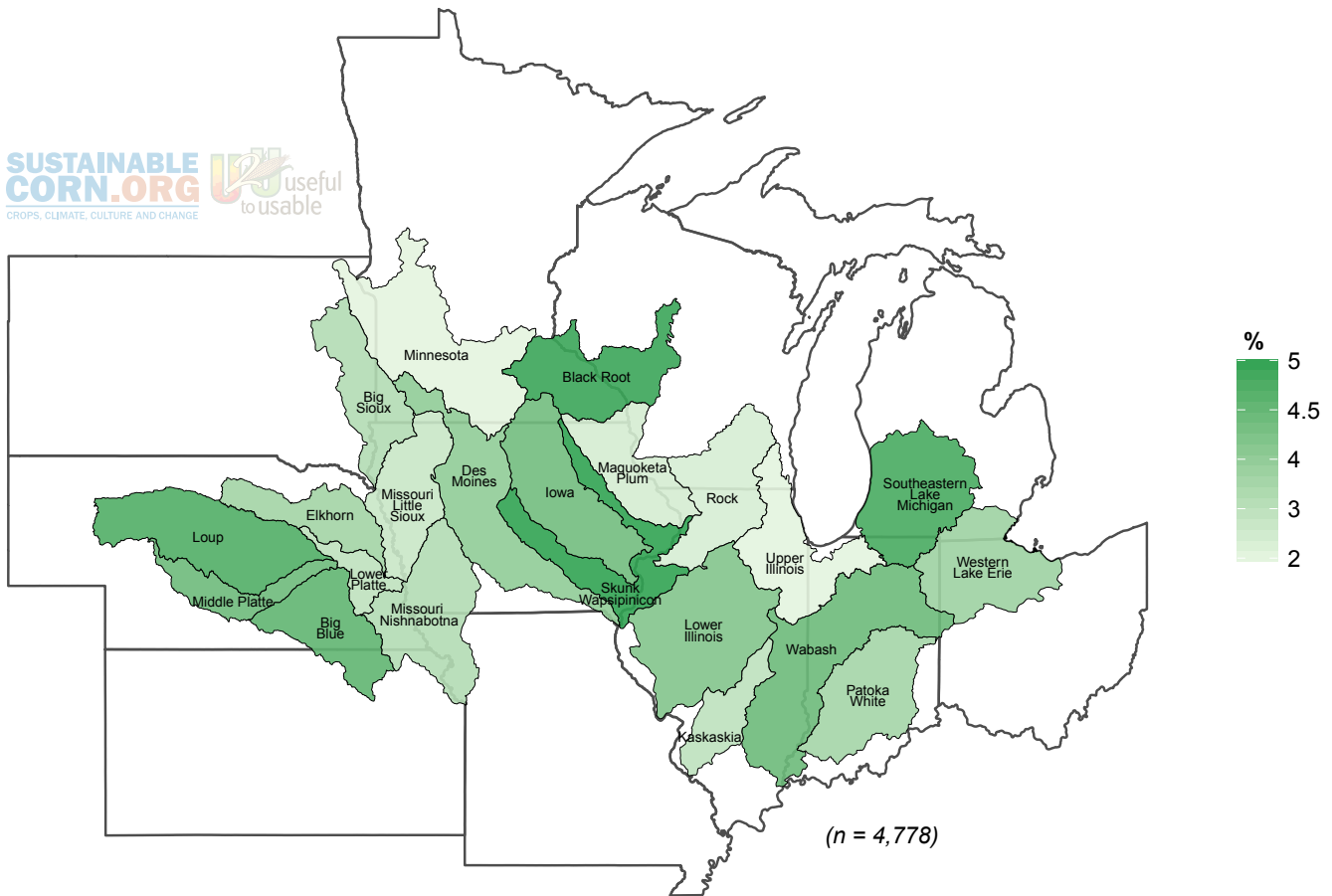
⁵Climate change is not occurring.



Map 17. Climate change is occurring, and it is caused more or less equally by natural changes in the environment and human activities (CCHUMNAT), percent.



Map 18. Climate change is occurring, and it is caused mostly by natural changes in the environment (CCNAT), percent.



Map 20. Climate change is not occurring (NOCC), percent.

