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Global community connects the dots about climate change

Brian Roewe | May. 8, 2012 Eco Catholic

Saturday, May 5 was somewhat of a marquee day on the calendar for many Americans.

For some, it meant partaking in Cinco de Mayo festivities; for others, gathering at their local racetrack or in front of their televisions to watch three-year-old colt I?ll Have Another overtake Bodemeister in the last legs of the 138th Kentucky Derby.

But for a third group, the day had far more significance ? it was a day for connecting the dots.

Americans across the country joined thousands of people across the globe to gather in their local communities, with a dot in tow, to bring attention to the connections between extreme weather and climate change.

Climate Impacts Day, organized by climate group 350.org [1], saw a range of events, activities and demonstrations, from a snowless ski race in Aspen, Colo., to climbers hanging a red dot off of Table Mountain in South Africa, to a giant game of climate-themed ?Twister? in London.

Other events included:

- In the African country of Burundi, students gathered with victims of a flood that destroyed more than 500 homes in March.
- In the Marshall Islands of the Pacific, a team of divers, underwater amidst dying coral reefs, held a banner reading ?Connect the Dots: Your Carbon Emissions are Killing our Coal.?
- In Iran, students hiked to the top of Mt. Tochal outside the capital of Tehran, to view the pollution above the city and to place a dot banner at the summit.
- In Peru, high school students formed a dot in the main plaza of Carhuas, in a symbol of solidarity with the farmers whose crops have dried up due to a lack of rain.
- In Canada, more than a dozen British Columbian residents were arrested after blocking a coal train.
- And in Boston, activists passed out flyers to subway riders (showing ferries replacing the subway lines due to rising sea levels) and used the 100th anniversary of Fenway Park to show how climate change

would affect the Boston Red Sox.

And the list goes on and on.

?There isn?t a country left that hasn?t felt the sting of climate change?that?s why this effort is so widespread,? said Bill McKibben, the founder of the international climate campaign, in a statement. ?People everywhere are saying the same thing: our tragedy is not some isolated trauma, it?s part of a pattern.?

But what?s most remarkable of the campaign are the images. On their website [2] and their Flickr photo sharing site [3], 350.org has collected photographs of all the creative and unique displays spanning the globe, reflecting the magnitude of climate change concern internationally. You can see some of them below.

Nationally, the concern for climate change permeates, as well. With a presidential election drawing closer and closer, climate change remains a serious issue among a high percentage of Americans, according to a March 12-30 Yale University poll [4].

Conducted by the Yale Project on Climate Change Communication, the poll found a majority of Americans (72 percent) believed global warming should at least be a medium priority for the president and Congress, and a similar percentage (69 percent) believing that the development of clean energy should be a high or very high priority for the country.

Polls taken in Nov. 2011, May 2011, June 2010 and Jan. 2010 all showed more than two-thirds of Americans rating global warming as at least a medium priority. In November 2008, that number was 84 percent.

The March 2012 poll also revealed a preference to place environmental protection above economic growth, with 62 percent saying it is more important to protect the environment, even if it risks reducing economic growth.

A closer look at the Yale poll?s findings will come later this week. In the meantime, enjoy some of the photos of the global rally.

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DROPS ARE DOTS OF HOPE

THE MAD RIVER
SWALLOWED
MY HOUSE.

CLIMATE
CHANGE STARTS
HERE
B.C.A. STOP FUNDING
COAL

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Links:
[1] http://350.org/
[2] http://www.climatedots.org/
[3] http://www.flickr.com/photos/350org/sets/72157629691371891/
[4] http://environment.yale.edu/climate/files/Policy-Support-March-2012.pdf