CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO - OBSERVATORIO DE CONSUMIDORES FINALES

Pablo Pereira - Accenture (pablo.pereira@accenture.com)

FOREWORD

In recent months, climate change has been overshadowed in the global media headlines by the credit crunch and its fallout. But irrespective of the challenging times, it is clear that the issue of climate change remains high on the agenda for businesses, consumers and governments alike. Indeed, there are strong arguments that the downturn will magnify rather than diminish the importance of taking action on climate change.

This is because the underlying global trends and drivers behind the move toward a low-carbon economy are not fading, but intensifying. Natural resources will continue to be increasingly scarce, and the real cost to extract, transport and use them will continue to rise. The combination of population growth, globalization and rising living standards in emerging economies will continue to drive up demand for energy. Against this background, the pressure for continued attention on climate and emissions is being strengthened by expansion of societal awareness and by the growing scientific and economic indications regarding the dire consequences of inaction. And increasingly, the focus on energy security is dovetailing with the focus on climate change to drive many similar actions.

At the same time, the enablers of economically viable action to foster a sustainable, low-carbon future are continuing to advance. While there may be near-term challenges on financing, investment capital is and will continue to be available for the right carbon-reducing initiatives. And consumer demand for such solutions remains strong, especially when tied to cost savings. These enablers are strengthened by other persistent forces, such as from employees for their companies to take positive steps, and from governments' regulatory and policy actions and incentives, which will increasingly provide a blend of compulsion and encouragement. In parallel, continuing technology innovation is steadily expanding the ability to drive carbon reduction, whether via energy efficiency, decarbonizing power and fuels, transmitting and distributing power more intelligently or by various other means.

In light of these drivers, it is Accenture's view that current economic challenges can make the move toward a lower-carbon economy an even more valuable source of bottom-line benefits. The obvious example is cost reduction related to energy efficiency. But Accenture also sees revenue enhancement opportunities, with lower-carbon products and services providing a way for businesses to tap into consumers' desire to take individual action on climate change. Similarly, being seen as environmentally responsible boosts customer acquisition and retention, and helps keep engaged and talented employees on board. Finally, actions toward a lower-carbon future are a lever for innovation and market differentiation, and can drive organic and inorganic growth through new products and services, as well as merger and acquisition (M&A) activity and new forms of collaboration.

These drivers and benefits are especially relevant to resources companies—a category that includes businesses in chemicals, natural resources (forest products, building products, metals and mining), energy and utilities—given their collective position as the world's major emitters.

INTRODUCTION

To help resources companies meet the challenges and opportunities presented by the move toward a low-carbon economy, Accenture has launched an ambitious global research program aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the business implications and impacts of climate change. Completed in 2007, Phase 1 of the program, the Accenture End-Consumer Survey on Climate Change 2007, was a global consumer survey to investigate end consumers' expectations toward their energy providers. The results highlighted the emergence of a new consumer mindset that brings with it both business opportunities and risks. To create a more comprehensive set of insights, in 2008, we moved on to Phase 2 of the program—the Accenture Executive Survey on Climate Change—a research study among senior executives in 133 resources companies worldwide, that helped us understand how Accenture's resources clients regard the issue of climate change.

We have now returned to the consumer perspective with Phase 3 of the program—the Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change—a larger and more extensive global consumer study of almost 11,000 consumers across 22 countries. This latest phase—which has also expanded the scope of the 2007 survey from energy and utilities companies to include implications for chemicals and natural resources—enables us to track changes in consumers' views over time, specifically focusing on the following aspects:

• Measuring how attitudes to climate change and the perception of energy providers have evolved over the past 12 months.

• Analyzing the gap between intentions declared in 2007 and actual actions taken since then.

• Segmenting consumers and countries/regions according to their attitudes and actions.

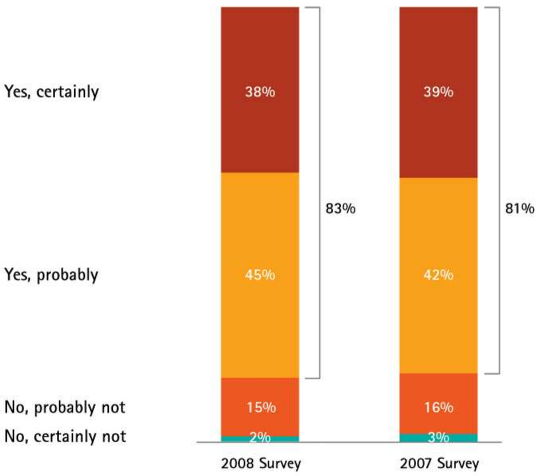
1) Key Finding No. 1: General concern on climate change is durable

One of the clearest headline findings from our new Phase 3 study is that consumers' level of concern over climate change has remained unaffected by the widespread challenging economic conditions. As Figures 1 and 2 show, the results exhibit a remarkable degree of consistency between 2007 and 2008, even though our survey took place directly in the midst of the credit crisis. More than 80 percent of respondents in both studies say they are either "somewhat" or "extremely" concerned by climate change, and a similar proportion think it will "certainly" or "probably" directly impact their life.

This durable and continuing level of concern is further underlined by the fact that 74 percent of respondents say they have changed their behavior to a "great extent" or "some extent" over the past 12 months to try and reduce their own individual carbon footprint (see Figure 3).

Figure 2

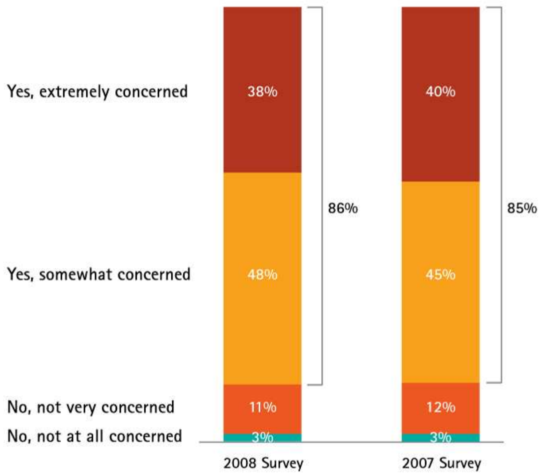
"Do you think climate change will directly impact your life?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 1

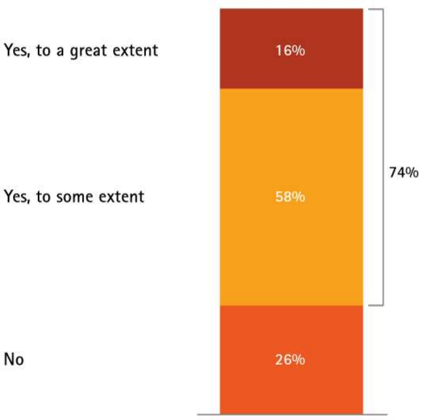
"Are you concerned by climate change?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 3

"Over the past 12 months, have you changed your behaviors considering your carbon footprint, i.e., your level of carbon emissions?"

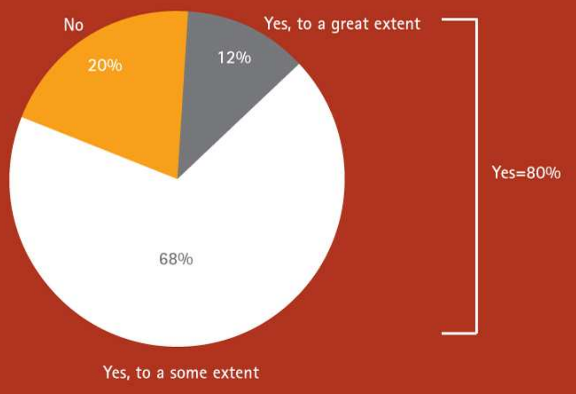


Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Looking back: Findings from the Accenture Executive Survey on Climate Change

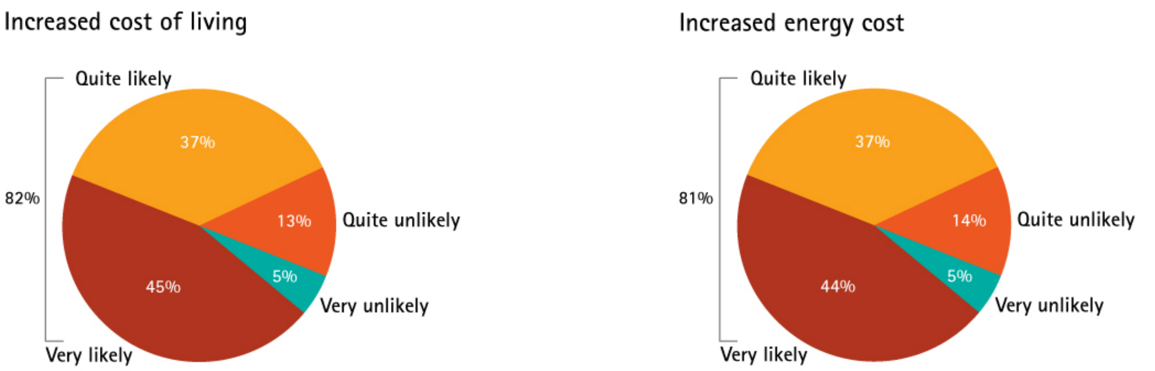
The changes in consumers' behavior shown in Figure 3 echo the views expressed by resources companies' executives in Phase 2 of our climate change research. In that study, 80 percent of companies said they thought end consumers were ready to change their behaviors through conservation or the deployment of efficient technologies to help solve climate change (see Figure A).

Figure A
"Do you think that individuals are ready to change their behaviors to help solve the climate change issue (e.g., use more fuel-efficient cars, reduce heating temperature at home, etc.)?"



Further findings also highlight the extent to which individuals' concern over climate change transcends challenging economic conditions, and even suggest it may be boosted by those conditions. As Figure 4 shows, 82 percent of respondents say the increased cost of living is "quite likely" or "very likely" to influence them to take action against climate change. Furthermore, 81 percent of respondents say that increased energy costs are "quite likely" or "very likely" to influence their behavior—and although energy prices have fallen back somewhat since the survey was undertaken, it is likely that higher prices in the future will help to drive energy efficiency and conservation actions. In the meantime, actions to reduce energy consumption will also be driven by pressures on household budgets from the global economic downturn.

Figure 4
"How likely is each of the following to influence you to take action against climate change?"

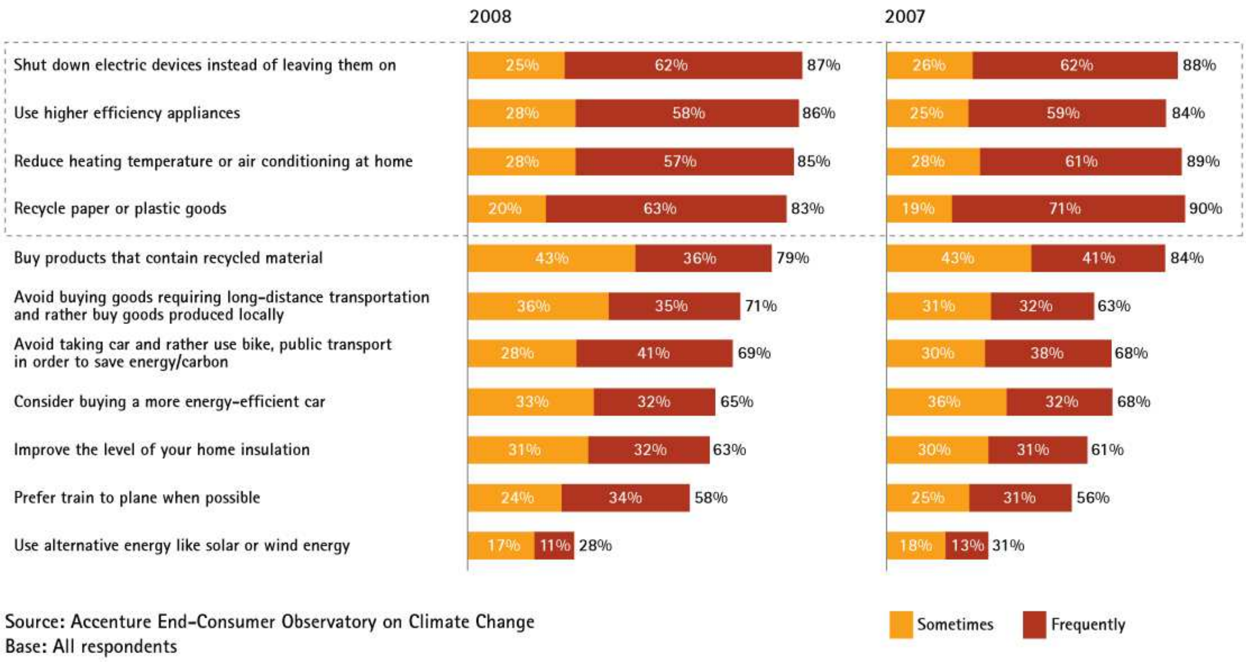


Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

A further finding is that consumers remain as committed now as in 2007 to taking actions at a personal level to help address climate change, such as shutting down electric devices instead of leaving them on standby and using higher-efficiency appliances. When asked how often they take such actions, their responses once again show very little difference between 2007 and 2008—with substantially more than 80 percent continuing to say they do take such actions “sometimes” or “frequently” (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

“How often do you currently do the following actions?”



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

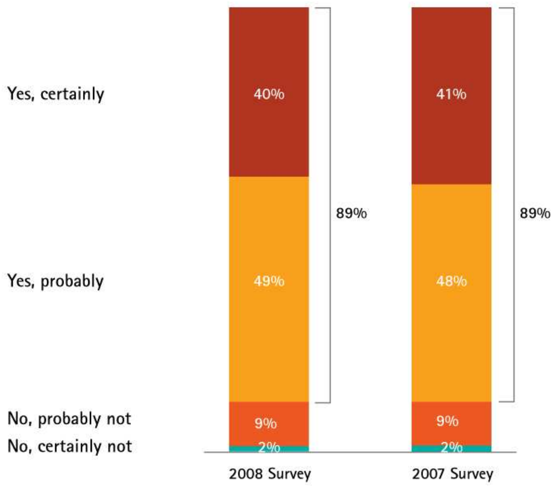
2) Key Finding No. 2: There is a gap between intentions and actions

A striking finding of our Phase 1 study in 2007 was consumers’ high degree of readiness to switch to an energy supplier offering products and services that help to reduce carbon emissions. This intention remains equally strong in the 2008 research, with 89 percent of respondents saying they would switch for this reason, if the option is open to them in their local market (see Figure 6).

Consumers also still claim to be prepared to reward the providers of such products and services by paying a premium. As Figure 7 shows, 59 percent of our respondents—only a slight drop from the proportion in 2007—say they would be prepared to pay more for lower-carbon products and services.

Figure 6

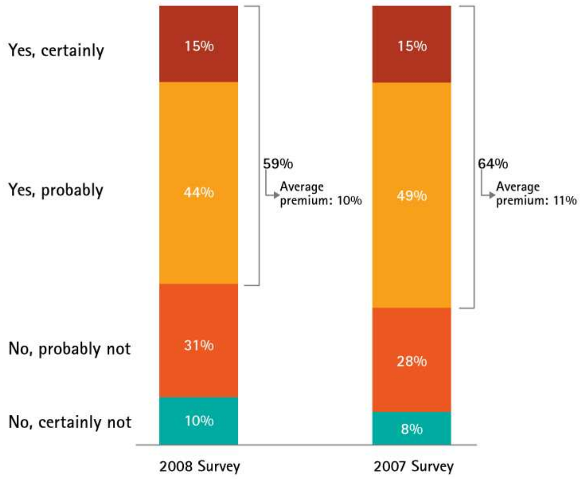
"If an energy provider was proposing products/ services that help reduce the level of carbon emission, would you be willing to switch to this provider if this was an option?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 7

"Would you be ready to pay more to benefit from products/services that help reduce the level of carbon emission?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

However, further findings suggest that a disparity exists between intentions and actions. As Figure 8 shows, in our 2007 study a relatively high proportion of consumers—some 89 percent—claimed they were ready to switch to more carbon-efficient energy providers. But our new research shows that only a fraction of this number has actually taken such a step in the past year, with just 12 percent and 9 percent switching their electricity/natural gas providers (in those countries where switching was generally an option) and oil providers respectively. Even when the numbers "considering" switching are included, the overall proportion either taking or contemplating such action is still only around one-quarter of all respondents.

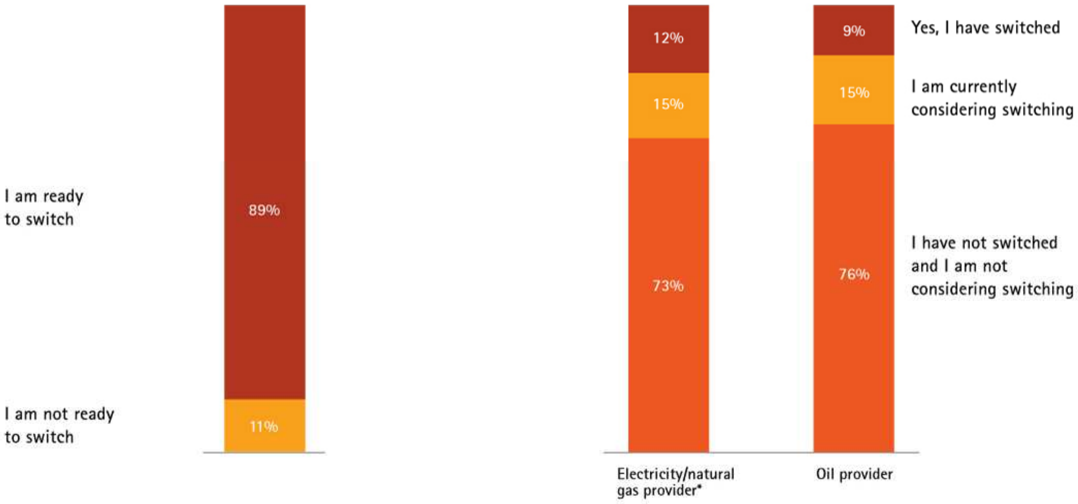
Figure 8

Intentions declared 12 months ago (2007 survey)

"If an energy provider was proposing products/services that help reduce the level of carbon emission, would you be willing to switch to this provider if this was an option?"

Actions taken in the past 12 months

"Have you switched over the past 12 months or are you considering switching to a new energy provider?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

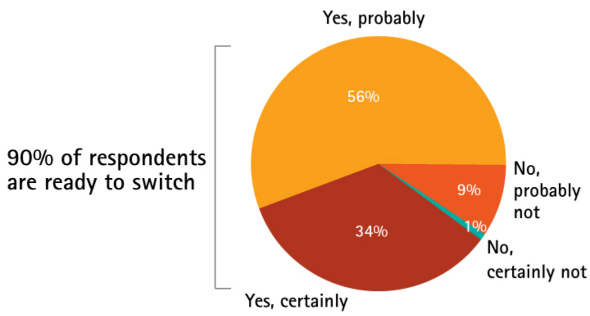
* Analysis conducted for the countries where switching of electricity/natural gas provider is an option

14

In contrast, there are much stronger signs of consumers taking action on manufactured goods, a category where it is easier to differentiate products and to change suppliers than in—for example—the energy supply market. In our 2008 study, 90 percent of respondents across the global sample say that they would be willing to switch to a new manufacturer if its product was certified as minimizing the climate change impact (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

"If a product (e.g., car, electronics, food, clothing) was certified by an independent organization as being manufactured in a way to minimize the climate change impact (e.g., materials used, production efficiency, transportation), would you be willing to switch to this product?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Furthermore, as Figure 10 shows, this intention already has been put into effect by a relatively high proportion of consumers, with around one-quarter having switched manufacturers over the past 12 months for reasons such as better use of recycled or biodegradable materials.

This finding highlights the commercial opportunity for companies that successfully differentiate themselves in consumers' eyes by taking action on climate change.

This opportunity is especially apparent for those energy providers that are competing in markets where switching providers is relatively easy. However, there is a larger prize that is equally relevant and available to energy providers in non-competitive markets, which is to position themselves at the heart of end consumers' efforts to improve energy efficiency, conservation and climate change. Our interviewees' responses also underline the importance that consumers attach to trustworthy certification of the environmental benefits related to a product or service. Taken together, both of these messages may offer valuable insights for resources companies seeking to achieve high performance by optimizing their climate change strategies.

At the same time, the fact that consumers are taking action to buy solutions with a lower climate change impact creates a clear challenge for companies in industries such as chemicals or metals to manage their carbon intensity, and to position lower-carbon solutions effectively for the end consumer.

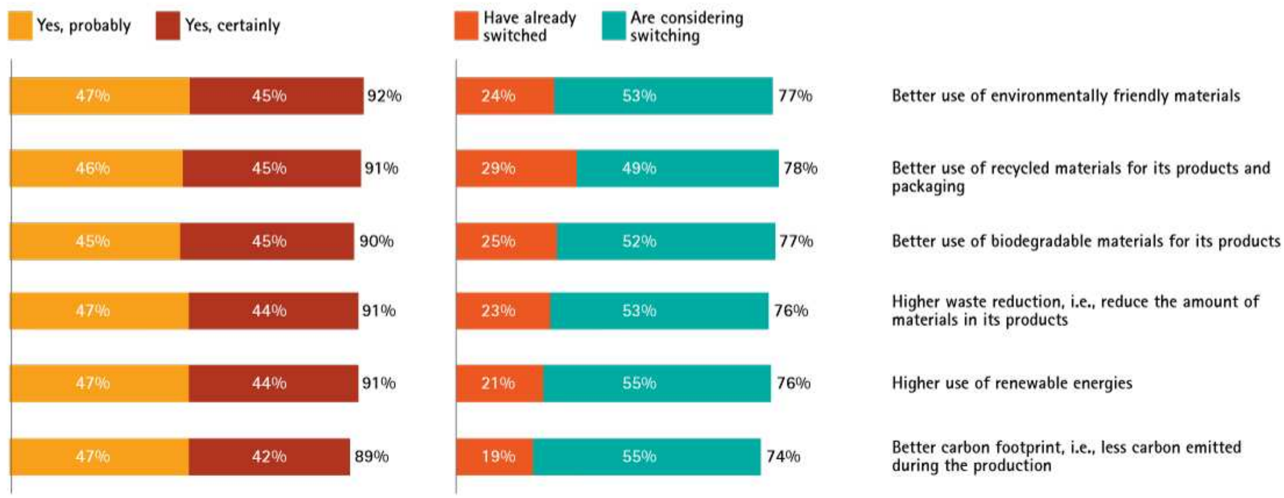
Figure 10

Intentions declared (2008 survey)

"If a manufacturer (e.g., car, clothing, food, electronics) was taking the following actions to address the climate change issue, would you be willing to switch to this manufacturer?"

Actions taken in the past 12 months

"Have you switched over the past 12 months to a new manufacturer to benefit from the following actions?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

3) Key Finding No. 3: Individuals in emerging economies are more optimistic, more confident in a solution and are taking more action

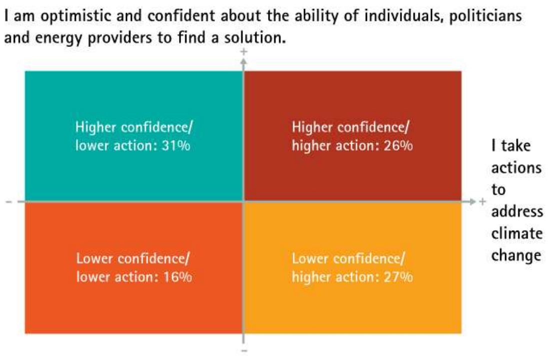
A focus in our 2008 study was consumer confidence. We asked consumers not only how active they are personally in helping to address climate change, but also how confident they are that a solution ultimately will be found. By combining these sets of findings we can categorize consumers globally into four distinct groupings. These groupings, shown in Figure 11, range from highly active individuals with high confidence in a solution at the top right, to those who seem to take less action and have lower confidence at the bottom left.

At first glance, this chart suggests a fairly balanced but fragmented global landscape, with consumers worldwide split between four different sets of attitudes. However, when we analyze these findings by geography, the seemingly random fragmentation of global opinion is replaced by a far more instructive picture. In an echo of our findings in 2007 when we found that consumers in emerging markets were the most concerned and ready to act, our 2008 study confirms that respondents in emerging economies generally declare themselves to be both more active on climate change, and also more optimistic and confident in humankind’s ability to take action to solve global climate change.

This geographical trend is illustrated in Figure 12, with the top-right quartile dominated by emerging economies, and the bottom-left quartile occupied largely by developed economies in North America and Europe.

Figure 11

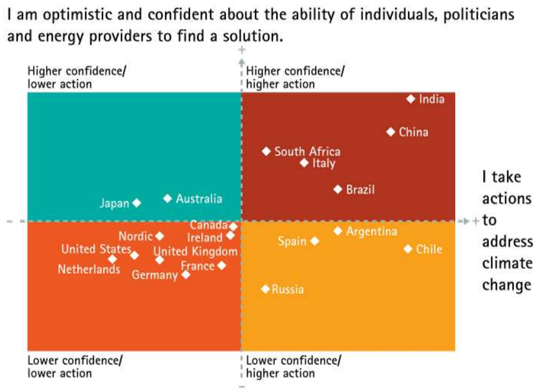
Accenture analysis: Segmentation of consumers according to level of action and confidence in a solution to solve climate change



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 12

Accenture analysis: Relative weight of the four groups in each country/region



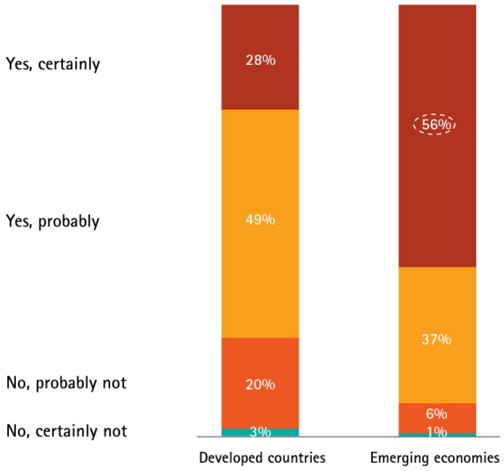
Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

A closer analysis of the figures reveals a further close correlation with our 2007 results: While the economic crisis has not reduced worldwide concern about climate change, this concern is still at its greatest in the emerging economies in our survey. Fifty-three percent of consumers in emerging economies claim to be “extremely” concerned about climate change, against only nearly one-third (31 percent) in developed countries. This may be due to the fact that a majority (56 percent) in emerging economies think climate change will “certainly” have a direct impact on their life, against only 28 percent in developed countries (see Figures 13 and 14).

Furthermore, our survey reveals that 70 percent of consumers in emerging markets say they are ”quite” or ”very” optimistic about humankind’s ability to take action to solve climate change, against just 48 percent saying this in developed markets (see Figure 15).

Figure 14

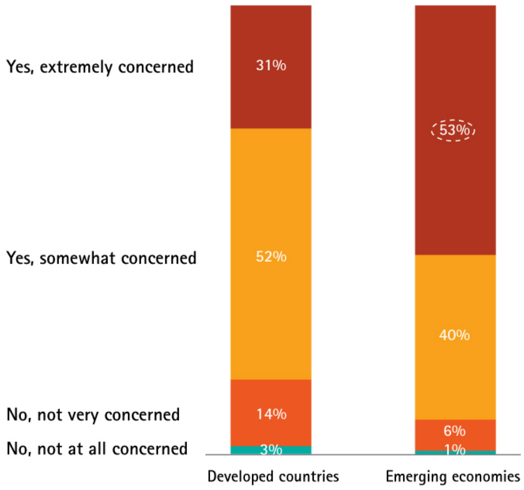
"Do you think that climate change will directly impact your life?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 13

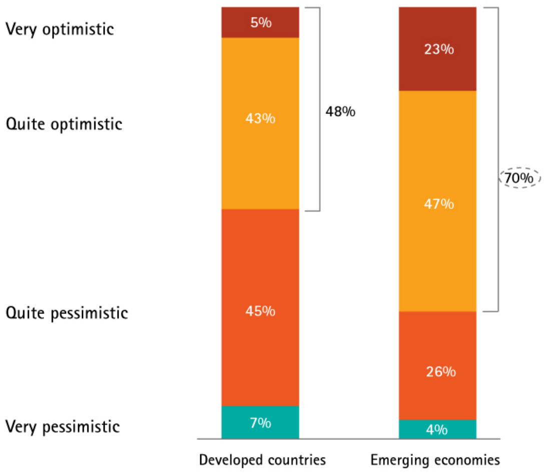
"Are you concerned by climate change?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 15

"How optimistic are you about humankind's ability to take action to solve global climate change?"

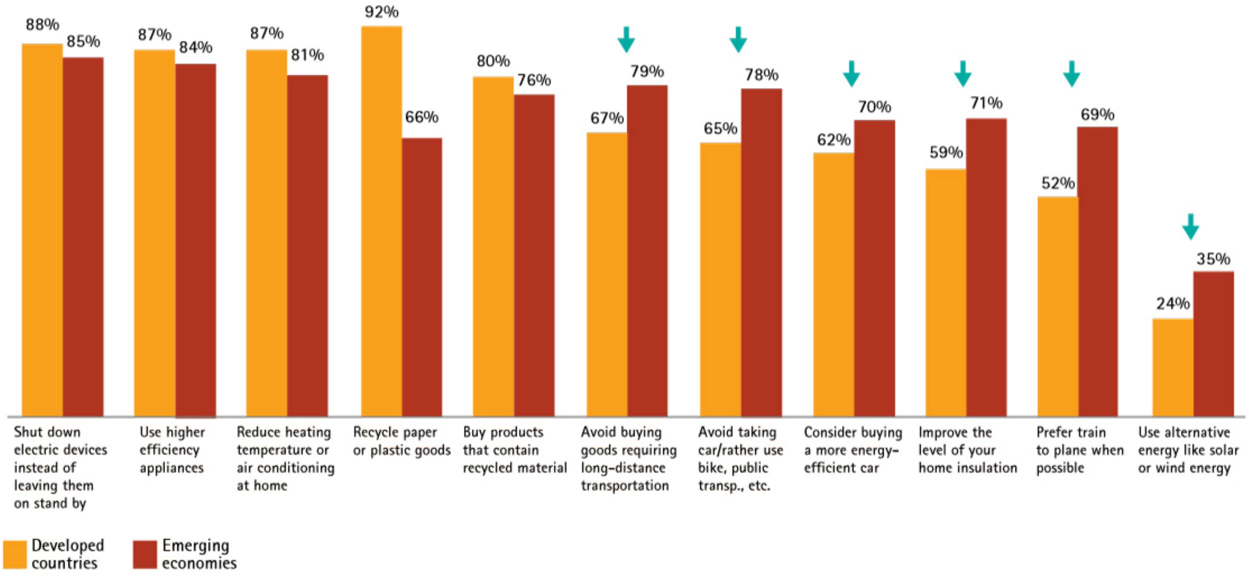


Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Consumers in the emerging economies also continue to claim they are more active personally on climate change. Their strong focus on energy efficiency measures is underlined by the fact that more than 75 percent of emerging markets respondents—a significantly higher proportion than in other territories—say they "frequently" or "sometimes" avoid taking the car or buying food imported by plane (see Figure 16).

Figure 16

"How often do you currently do the following actions?" (% frequently + sometimes)



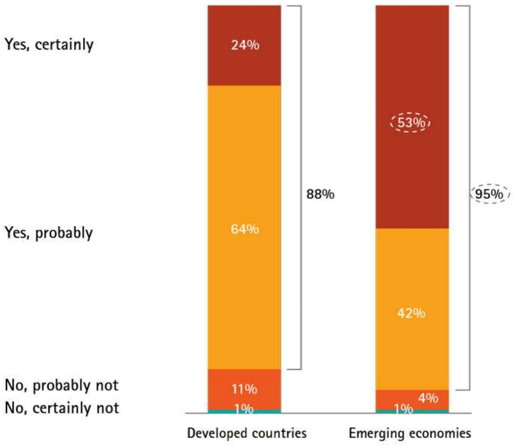
Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

This polarization of concern, actions and confidence between the developed and emerging economies is mirrored in the difference between the two groups' willingness to act. For example, in emerging economies 95 percent of respondents say they would switch manufacturers and 96 percent would switch energy providers to access lower-carbon offerings if this was an option. Further insights show an even greater divide. Those individuals saying they would "certainly" switch if a product was certified account for only 24 percent of respondents in developed countries against 53 percent in emerging economies (see Figures 17 and 18).

And we see similar results when asked about switching energy providers; 61 percent—more than twice the percentage in developed countries—would "certainly" switch energy providers.

Figure 17

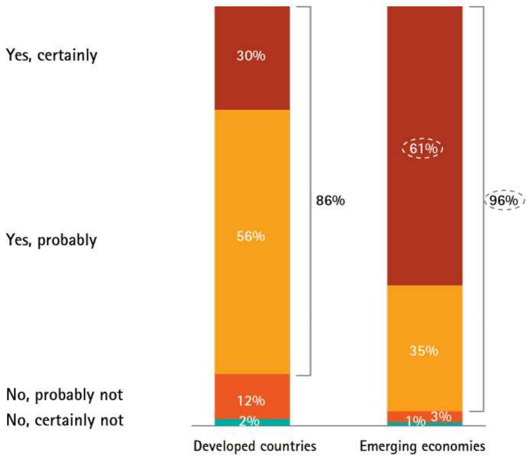
"If a product (e.g., car, electronics, food, clothing) was certified by an independent organization as being manufactured in a way to minimize the climate change impact (e.g., materials used, production efficiency, transportation), would you be willing to switch to this product?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 18

"If an energy provider was proposing products/ services that help reduce the level of carbon emission, would you be willing to switch to this provider if this was an option?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

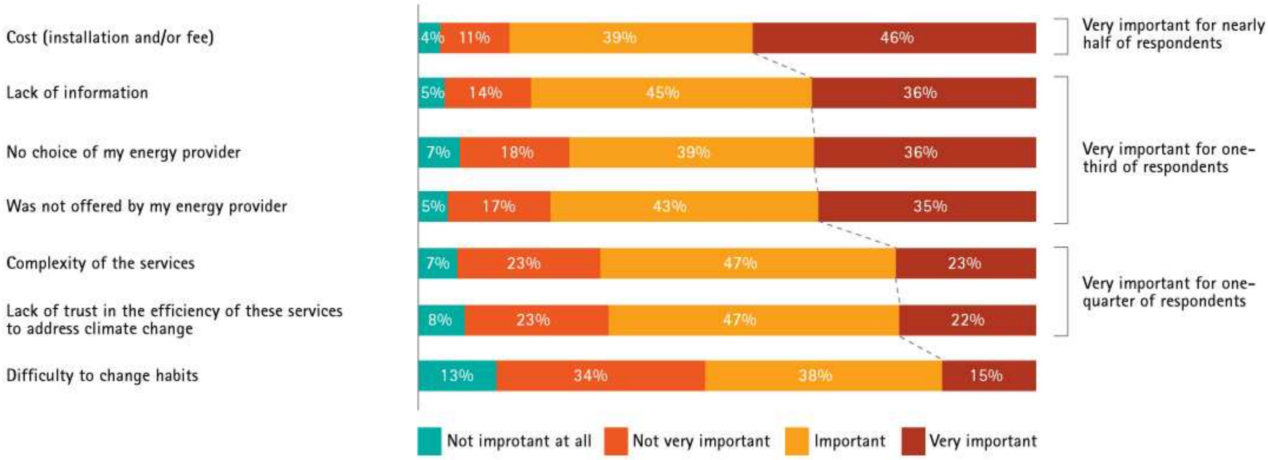
4) Key Finding No. 4: Consumers need more from their energy providers in order to take action

So, if consumers worldwide are eager to take personal action and switch their energy providers to help address climate change, what is stopping most of them from doing so? Our research suggests that a key barrier to action by consumers is that their energy suppliers are not yet providing them with the clear lower-carbon differentiation and choices they need as a basis for switching.

Asked what factors have prevented them from signing up with an energy provider whose services help to address climate change, consumers most commonly point to barriers such as cost—a "very important" inhibitor for 46 percent of respondents. Lack of information is also a significant barrier, cited as a "very important" inhibitor by 36 percent of respondents (see Figure 19).

Figure 19

"What has prevented you from using services offered by energy providers to help you address climate change at your personal level?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

This lack of information is important to highlight when viewed alongside the 49 percent of respondents who say they do not understand enough about how they can personally act to combat climate change (see Figure 20). These numbers reinforce that the need for information is an important factor that may help people take more personal action.

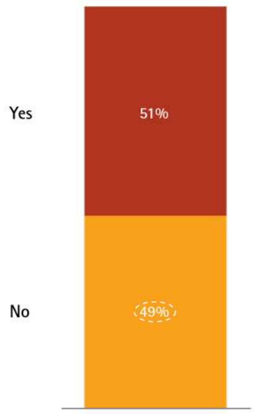
What is more, in countries where switching is an option for consumers, 71 percent of the respondents mention "no choice of energy provider" as a reason for not being more active in making a change. This in itself indicates a lack of information from energy providers, in this case regarding switching capability.

Energy providers can act to mitigate most of these elements, thereby motivating individuals to take action. So the findings suggest that unexploited opportunities exist for energy providers to close the gaps between consumers' intentions and actions.

One step that energy suppliers can take to stimulate action by consumers is offering more flexible payment options to implement energy innovations. As Figure 21 shows, 80 percent of respondents say they would consider installing a system to generate their own electricity if they could pay a monthly fee instead of the full amount up-front to cover the installation.

Figure 20

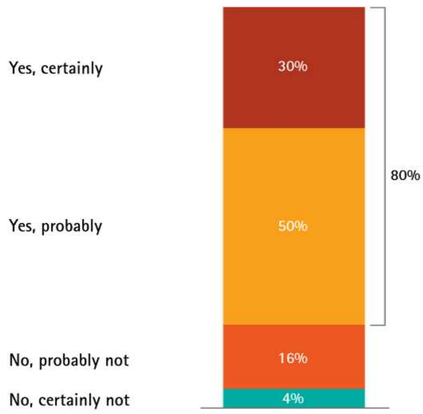
"Do you feel you understand enough about how you can personally act to combat the effects of climate change?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 21

"If you could pay a monthly fee instead of the full amount up front to cover the installation of a system that allow you to generate your own electricity, would you consider installing this system?"

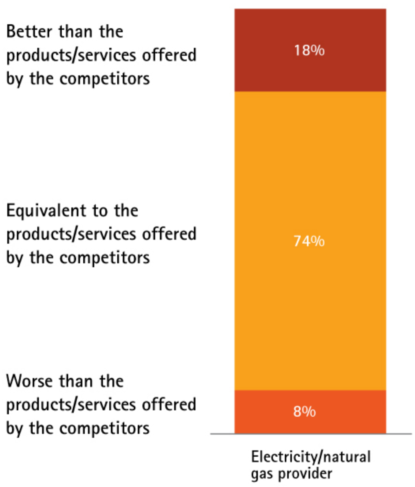


Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Another interesting barrier to action is that consumers find it difficult to differentiate between energy providers who offer clear, understandable climate change-related products and services versus those providers who do not, meaning they have insufficient grounds for making firm decisions to switch to lower-carbon suppliers. As Figures 22 and 23 show, this lack of differentiation is reflected by the vast majority of consumers saying they think their current providers of energy and oil are no better nor worse than any others.

Figure 22

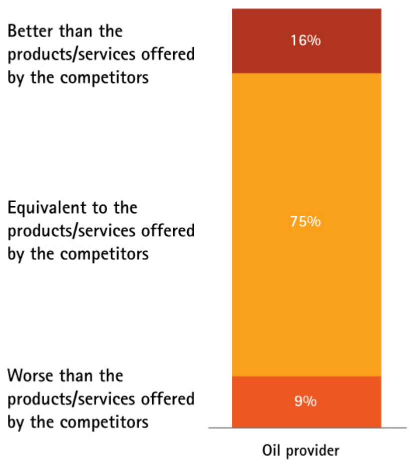
"What do you think of the products/services offered by your current electricity/natural gas provider to help you address climate change at your individual level?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Figure 23

"What do you think of the products/services offered by your current oil provider to help you address climate change at your individual level?"



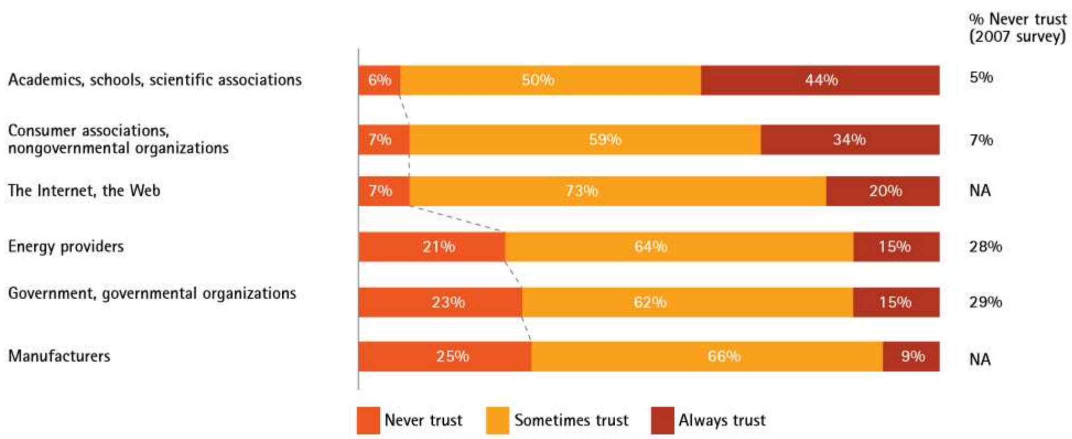
Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

Finally, our respondents highlight information and education as key drivers for taking action. While academics, schools, scientific associations and consumer associations/nongovernmental organizations remain the information sources most trusted by consumers, energy providers have increased their credibility since 2007. That said, more than 20 percent still do not trust energy suppliers at all to provide them with reliable information on climate change—showing that energy providers still face a battle for many people’s hearts and minds (see Figure 24). Accenture believes this finding resonates with the implications, discussed later, for resources companies that are struggling to differentiate their businesses or grow market share.

For all resources companies, information and education of customers and employees alike goes hand in hand and represents an important opportunity to build essential credibility, particularly in today’s socially networked environment.

Figure 24

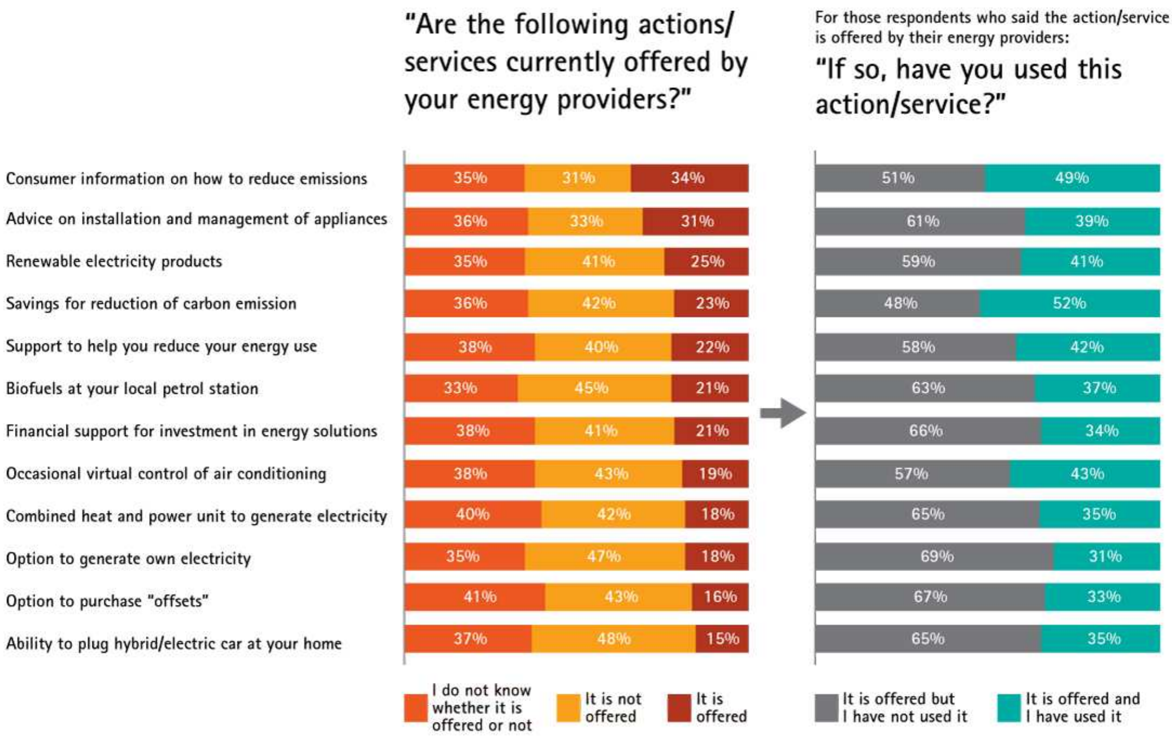
"What sources of information do you trust the most to inform you on concrete actions that you can take at a personal level to efficiently address climate change?"



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents

On the basis of these findings, we believe energy companies are missing a substantial opportunity to differentiate their products and services related to climate change, energy efficiency and the low-carbon economy. The scale of this opportunity is underlined by the fact that, in cases where a lower-carbon service has been proposed by an energy provider, between 30 percent and 50 percent of consumers worldwide say they have opted to use it (see Figure 25).

Figure 25



Source: Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change
Base: All respondents
Note: Due to rounding, some totals do not equal 100 percent

5) Implications

Implications for electricity and gas providers

A year ago, Accenture's research indicated a significant and rapid change in mindset for electricity and gas customers. Increased concern for climate change, combined with a willingness to act, suggested the potential for new customer propositions that drive reductions in energy use and carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions.

Today, we see that the concern over climate change has not diminished significantly despite challenging times for the global economy. However, moving from general concern to positive action has proven to be difficult. This could be interpreted that the potential for customer "pull" for lower-carbon solutions might be inherently limited and that the only route to significant emissions reductions in this sector is through command and control regulation, such as energy efficiency standards and specifications, renewable generation obligations or enforced time-of-use tariffs. Alternatively, it is possible that there are compelling consumer propositions that can tap into customer concern over climate change, though they have not yet been developed or communicated effectively to customers in order to gain traction in the marketplace.

Accenture believes that the policy solutions to climate change will inevitably include a considerable amount of command and control regulation. However, it is vital for electricity and gas providers to position themselves as proactive contributors to the solutions—for a number of reasons. First, there is the potential to play a key role across a much broader part of the energy value chain. Electricity and gas providers are in a critical position to support end consumers in increasing their efficient use of energy and their levels of conservation. No other industry can span across the supply and demand side with such impact, providing the opportunity to be a real partner for governments that wish to reduce emissions and manage the increasing energy costs of their electorate, while at the same time furthering their national energy security agenda. This opens up new revenue streams at the same time as there is pressure to reduce consumer demand. In the longer term, there is also an opportunity to extend services—such as into the transportation sector—as plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles move toward the mainstream.

For electricity and gas providers in competitive markets, there is an important shorter-term driver for action. Consumers have clearly demonstrated their concern around climate change and how their opinions will be colored by their provider's actions. Companies that can develop compelling propositions and a strong brand positioning on climate change are well placed to capture those customers willing to switch. There appears to be a new category of products and services that are of interest to consumers. And while this growth in the numbers and complexity of products has the potential to raise operational costs, it seems clear that some customers are willing to cover some of that cost. The key will be to transform the business model to enable delivery of more complex, information-intensive products and services, and do so in an efficient and profitable way.

Implications for chemicals, metals and mining companies

Although major energy users such as chemicals, metals and mining companies may not typically have end consumers as part of their customer base, the survey provides some interesting indications on consumer attitudes that ultimately trickle through the value chain. While we have seen limited evidence of a transition from concern to action for energy purchases, consumers appear to be more ready to change their buying patterns to take account of climate change for manufactured goods. This change may reflect the fact that energy products are only considered as simple commodities by end consumers or that purchase of manufactured goods generally elicit greater consumer interest.

Whatever the reason, it is clear that there is a scope for lower-carbon materials to be incorporated into manufactured products. This scope will be increased by the growing trend to "carbon labeling" (that is, detailing the "embedded" carbon in products). For some sectors, there are likely to be new standards and certifications that increase the credibility of products to consumers.

While this creates an opportunity for some, it will also pose a risk for others. There are significant differences in carbon intensity between the "best-in-class" and worst levels across major energy users. Understanding emission levels of production and the potential for reduction is essential. This is necessary both for positioning of lower-carbon products and for understanding potential exposure to carbon markets.

Implications for policymakers

Our current climate change survey provides a number of insights that are useful for policymakers. The first is the worrying level of consumer pessimism in developed countries about humankind's ability to take action to solve global climate change issues. If this becomes a widespread attitude, it will be more difficult to gain support for national climate change policies, and even harder when it comes to participating in global policies. It also reduces the potential for customer-initiated mitigation action.

The second area of note is the low proportion of consumers that have moved from concern to action when it comes to energy products. Part of the ideal scenario in addressing climate change is that a significant proportion of the mitigation effort will be driven by consumer pull for low-carbon solutions. If this effort does not materialize, it will be necessary to deliver greater emission reductions from command and control regulation. This path may not be as economically efficient as a “pull” scenario. An example is the higher total cost and longer time to payback to implement compulsory energy efficiency standards in appliances as opposed to the low cost and immediate effect of simple conservation behaviors.

As a response to these two concerns, policymakers must ensure that barriers to delivering a consumer-driven response to climate change are addressed. A key barrier is the inability to monetize reductions in consumer emissions. In many cases the reductions provide society-wide benefits, but it is not possible to link these to the consumer’s individual business case. Another common barrier is the “principal-agent” problem. In this case, the asset owner (for example, a landlord) would pay the capital costs whereas the benefits would be seen by the tenant. For countries with major numbers of people in rented accommodations, overcoming this problem could make a significant contribution to emissions mitigation.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, the findings of the consumer research in Phase 3 of our climate change study bring a clear message for energy providers and other resources companies: They have a real opportunity to forge an entirely new relationship with consumers, if they can develop innovative climate change strategies and execute them through differentiated products and services that make an impact.
To have the greatest impact on consumer choices, this product and service differentiation should be backed up with the right cost structures, competitive pricing options and customer awareness programs.

While this opportunity is evident across virtually all markets worldwide, innovation, investment and talent will likely flow to those regions where conditions are most suitable for success. According to our survey, the greater appetite for lower-carbon products and services in emerging markets means these geographies are potentially positioned to be the hubs of action on climate change.

This appetite is accompanied by markedly higher optimism over climate change solutions among the general populace, a greater willingness to take action and a generally higher level of trust in—and expectations of—governmentintervention. The opportunity is further heightened by the fact that many emerging economies have massive energy infrastructure programs already underway, enabling them to leapfrog to new technologies and to include radical energy efficiency and climate change-related actions as part of these programs. Finally, some of these emerging countries have the most to gain by taking decisive actions, changing the relationship between emissions and economic growth.

While climate change may be experiencing a temporary respite from the media spotlight, it is as pressing an issue as ever for consumers, governments and businesses worldwide. If anything, the economic crisis has been an impetus for global governmentsto get a taste of taking decisive multilateral action to solve a global crisis, incurring cost now in an attempt to avoid bigger problems. Companies—especially resources businesses—who are on the journey to achieve high performance need to position themselves and take the offensive on climate change or risk being left behind in the race to capitalize on the opportunities and manage the risks that come with it both now and in the future.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

The research from the Accenture End-Consumer Observatory on Climate Change is based on a series of 20-minute survey interviews conducted online in native languages with 10,733 individuals in 22 countries worldwide during September and October 2008. The study builds on the findings of our similar study in late 2007, which covered 7,526 consumers in 17 countries.
The 2008 survey sample was representative of the general population in all the countries/regions surveyed except in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Russia and South Africa—where the sample was representative of the urban populations. Data collection was conducted for Accenture by Gfk NOP.

Methodology note: While comparisons between the 2007 and 2008 results are based on a slightly different geographical scope, the underlying trends are not altered by this difference

Countries/regions included in the survey, with numbers of participants:

Argentina	520
Australia	546
Brazil	503
Canada	636
Chile	521
China	511
France	538
Germany	527
India	500
Ireland	530
Italy	538
Japan	554
Netherlands	560
Nordic (four countries)	543
Russia	589
South Africa	513
Spain	489
United Kingdom	519
United States	1,096