

## **Environment suffers as global financial crisis concerns hit home**

### **Concern for environmental issues falls as economic situation worsens, new research shows.**

Mobium Group's inaugural *Green-Tracker* survey reveals the number of Australians concerned by the impacts of global warming and climate change has dropped by almost 20 per cent since 2007.

While almost three quarters (73%) of people remain concerned or very concerned about climate change, drought and water shortages remain the overwhelming issue for most Australians (86%).

However, Australians have also become less worried about drought and water shortages as the economic situation has worsened, with concern for this issue dropping 10 per cent in the past six months.

"While the fall in environmental concerns cannot be directly attributed to the economic downturn, naturally people do become more concerned about their personal circumstances when times are tough," Mobium Group's Research Director Nick Bez said.

"Our research shows three in five Australians (60%) are either concerned or very concerned about their job security and almost two-thirds (64%) of Australians are either concerned or very concerned about falling asset prices," he said.

The findings form part of the consumer research company's quarterly *Green-Tracker* survey, which tracks Australians' concerns, values and attitudes, awareness and behaviours about sustainability matters.

### **CPRS: Many Australians still in the dark**

- One-third (35%) of those surveyed had not heard of the government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS);
- Two-thirds (65%) of those surveyed could not name the scheme's initial reduction target of five per cent;
- Fewer than one in ten (8.8%) said they have a good understanding of how the federal government's emissions trading scheme will work.

According to Nick Bez, the *Green-Tracker* findings were quite sobering from a government perspective.

"Even with saturation media coverage and government efforts to clarify the matter, the construct and outcomes of the CPRS remains shrouded in mystery for most Australians," Mr Bez said.



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## Positive outlook for green products and services despite gloomy economic forecasts

Price remains the overwhelming barrier for people to buy environmentally-friendly products and services, with more than three-quarters (77.9%) of people still saying price is a roadblock to purchasing.

“Only one-third (36%) of people are now willing to pay 25% or more for products and services which are made in an environmentally-friendly manner. For most people in the current financially challenging times, the willingness to pay a premium for ‘green’ continues to fall,” Mr Bez said.

The research also shows consumers are more willing to spend on ‘green’ products and services if they can see benefits for themselves as well as for the wider community.

“Products that provide a direct cost-saving such as solar hot water or energy efficient appliances or other personal benefits such as domestic rain water tanks to keep the garden thriving, remain best placed for growth.”

With the current Australian consumer market for healthier and more sustainable options valued at 15 billion dollars, Mobium Group believes 2009 represents a time of enormous opportunity for companies that can offer a product or service with genuine environmental credentials, at a competitive price.

“These companies have an opportunity to fundamentally re-shape markets and attract the growing number of consumers looking for environmentally friendly alternatives, at an affordable price point, within mainstream shopping channels,” Mr Bez said.

**For more information about Mobium Group’s *Green-Tracker* survey, or to arrange an interview with Nick Bez, please contact Lucy Kent, Public Relations Exchange Ph. 03 9607 4500 / 0423 857 942 E. [lkent@prx.com.au](mailto:lkent@prx.com.au)**

### **About *Green-Tracker*:**

Question set: 45 questions

Sample size: 1,001

Coverage: All states- metropolitan/regional

Screen: Aged 18 – 69

Data collection: February 2009

*Green-Tracker* is a quarterly consumer research survey produced by Mobium Group, a Melbourne based strategic consultancy providing market insights about issues of sustainability, technology, health and well-being.

The *Green-Tracker* survey is designed to help businesses, government and NGOs gain insights into Australians concerns, values and attitudes, awareness and behaviours about sustainability matters.

*Green-Tracker* leverages Mobium Group’s LOHAS segmentation methodology (based on values and attitudes about the environment and actual purchasing behaviour of ‘green’ products) to assess feedback not just at a population level, but also discreetly for the four LOHAS segments of the Australian adult population - Leaders, Leaning, Learners and Laggards.



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This allows organisations to probe the differences between segments to allow for deeper understanding and better targeting of products, communication or programs. It also integrates fully into the Mobium Group annual Living LOHAS studies for continuity and tracking of data from 2007 and 2008.

### **About Mobium Group:**

Since 2007, Mobium Group principals, Andrew Baker and Nick Bez have worked with over 70 Australian and international brands in the areas of primary consumer, social and market research, economic modeling, environmental science, structured communications and business analysis.

Mobium Group also conducts the annual Living LOHAS consumer survey that tracks Australians consumers' desire for and participation in healthier, more sustainable lifestyles and consumption habits. Over the course of 2007, 2008 and 2009, Mobium Group has surveyed more than 15,000 individuals to inventory the values, attitudes, and actions of adult Australians.

LOHAS stands for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability, a term used to describe a group of individuals who seek to integrate healthier, more sustainable product and service options into their lives. LOHAS consumers are identified by their values and world view rather than traditional demographic metrics.

For more information, visit [www.mobium.com.au](http://www.mobium.com.au)

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