

# Inflation is both a barrier and a catalyst to going 'green' in the US – New findings from GfK Consumer Life

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, November 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Recently, a range of societal issues have propelled to the forefront of consumers' minds, but one thing remains a clear influence over spending behavior: sustainability.

In the [latest Green Gauge® study](#) from GfK Consumer Life, more than half the U.S. population (53%) expressed serious concern for the environment, noting it should be a priority for everyone. 67% also agree that environmental pollution is a serious issue, up 3 percentage pts. from last year. Events like the pandemic have prompted consumers to connect with the environment in more personal ways, placing a heightened emphasis on conservation.

While inflation is the #1 societal concern for consumers today, global climate change ranks #6 out of 24 – on par with issues like recessions and the cost of healthcare. As a result, Americans are noticing the impacts of climate change. 77% of consumers agree that extreme weather is increasing because of climate change, and just 1 in 3 believe the government is doing an excellent or good job addressing the issue. Not just governments, but consumers expect companies to step up too. 67% agree how important it is for companies to take environmentally responsible actions, up 4 pts. since 2021.

Though concern is growing, many consumers grapple with barriers to living a sustainable life.

There's an issue with the perception of high prices and lower quality when it comes to 'green' products, with 55% of Americans saying environmentally friendly products are too costly (up 4 pts. since 2021). Additionally, only 29% of consumers consider the environment when purchasing, down 3 pts. from last year. The impact of ongoing inflationary pressure is prompting consumers to reconsider where they spend their precious dollars. However, consumers play a balancing act during these moments of reduced spending: they turn to the home for their eco-friendly actions.

67% of consumers will conserve energy in the home (+ 3 pts. from 2022) through actions like turning off lights, monitoring cooling and heating devices, and using major appliances less frequently. These actions serve a double purpose, serving as financial savings in the face of economic uncertainty and an expression of sustainable values. Consumers want to do more – in fact, 80% want greener energy options to be more accessible.

With all this in mind, it's important to look ahead at what consumers think the future of sustainability looks like, and that lies in circularity. 80% agree that a waste-free lifestyle is possible in the next 20 years, and a staggering 87% agree that it's important for companies to source materials responsibly. From electronics to clothing, consumers are interested in extending the useful life of products and they expect companies to step up with them.

"People are increasingly recognizing and acting on important elements of circularity, like buying used products and focusing on how products are manufactured", says Tim Kenyon, Director of the Green Gauge study at GfK Consumer Life. "Bottom line, caring is great, but circularity enables a form of consumer consumption that actively contributes to good – making good business sense."

GfK Green Gauge® delivers an in-depth look into sustainability-related consumer trends, attitudes, and behaviors in over 20 countries. Now running for more than 30 years, Green Gauge combines up-to-date thinking with a historical view of consumers and environmental concern. Backed by the rich insights of GfK Consumer Life (formerly known as Roper Reports®), our study places sustainability in the broader landscape of consumer concerns and actions – showing how it fits within society's other trends and forces.

The 2023 Green Gauge study was conducted among approximately 35,000 consumers in 20+ core global markets, including 2059 interviews in the U.S. Field dates were January through April 2023.

#### About GfK

GfK. Growth from Knowledge.

For over 89 years, we have earned the trust of our clients around the world by solving critical questions in their decision-making process. We fuel their growth by providing a complete understanding of their consumers' buying behavior, and the dynamics impacting their markets, brands and media trends. In 2023, GfK combined with NIQ, bringing together two industry leaders with unparalleled global reach. With a holistic retail read and the most comprehensive consumer insights - delivered with advanced analytics through state-of-the-art platforms - GfK drives "Growth from Knowledge".

For more information, visit [GfK.com](https://www.gfk.com).

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