



## **Media Release – for immediate release**

### **How trust and communication are crucial in shaping Australia's renewable energy future**

[Melbourne, 04 June 2025] – New research by the Social Research Centre reveals that nearly 4 in 10 Australians (38%) say limiting their carbon footprint is very or extremely important to them personally; a figure 13 percentage points higher than in the U.S. An additional 37% consider it somewhat important, highlighting that three-quarters of Australians place at least some personal value on reducing their environmental impact.

While many Australians express concern about climate change, there is a clear gap between **intention and action**; often due to systemic barriers and a lack of clear, accessible information.

The gap between intention and action in reducing carbon footprints, particularly in the context of renewable energy and societal systems, is a well-documented issue. While individuals express concern and highlight personal importance, systemic barriers and societal structures often hinder meaningful action.

#### **Community understanding**

- Most Australians feel the transition to renewable energy hasn't been explained well. Less than half (under 45%) believe government, energy companies, or the media have clearly communicated how renewable energy changes will affect their households.
- People who value carbon reduction are more likely to feel the transition has been communicated clearly (39%-48%) compared to those who don't (15%-20%).

#### **Trust matters**

- Australians who completely distrust the electricity sector were twice as likely to say reducing their carbon footprint is not at all important (23% compared to 11% overall).

#### **Regional differences**

- People in outer regional Australia show less trust in utility companies and financial services than those closer to major cities.

#### **Price still a barrier**

Cost is a concern for all Australians, but particularly for those who don't value reducing their carbon footprint (67% vs. 47% for those who do). Renters often feel less empowered to make significant energy choices, relying more on the electricity grid and public transport.

"Our data suggests that many Australians are not aware that they can become part of the solution", said Kipling Zubevich, CEO of the Social Research Centre. "By giving people the right tools and information, we can empower them to play an active role in combating climate change."

The study was guided by leading energy social scientists at the Australian National University (ANU) Centre for Energy Systems.

*Associate Professor Heather Logie, Co-Director of the ANU Centre for Energy Systems said:*

*"We know from the results of this study and previous social research findings, that building trust with customers remains a key issue for industry. We also know that clear, regular and targeted communications can help to build trust in a complex, fast-paced, and evolving energy landscape."*



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*"Importantly we see there being a role for 'trusted intermediaries' to help householders navigate energy related decisions in a way that works for them. There is no one-size fits all approach to the energy transition and we make the case for the establishment of an 'honest broker' or one-stop shop to empower Australians to make informed energy decisions."*

As Australia moves toward a more sustainable future, these findings will help shape education initiatives and long-term monitoring of consumer attitudes. The research was conducted using the Social Research Centre's Life in Australia™ online panel.

More than 1,000 Australians participated in this research.

#### **About Life in Australia™**

*Established in 2016, Life in Australia™ is the highest-quality online panel in the country, and one of the few probability-based online panels globally. This means every Australian has a chance of being invited to the panel. Unlike traditional online opt-in panels, Life in Australia™ uses rigorous recruitment and maintenance procedures to ensure that results are truly representative and generalisable to the Australian population.*

*As response rates to traditional telephone surveys decline, probability-based online panels like Life in Australia™ strike the perfect balance between cost-effectiveness, speed, and data reliability. This makes the panel a trusted source of high-quality, methodologically rigorous survey data for academia, government, not-for-profits, and business.*

#### **About the Social Research Centre**

*The Social Research Centre, owned by the Australian National University (ANU), delivers high-quality social research that informs policy and drives positive social impact. We partner with government, academia, not-for-profits, and mission-aligned commercial clients to provide robust, methodologically rigorous insights across key social issues, including education, health, employment, and social cohesion. Our expertise spans survey design, data management, and advanced qualitative and quantitative methodologies, ensuring that decision-makers have access to insights they can trust.*

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