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# 2025 C-suite Sustainability Report






Consumer industry insights

October 2025





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# Executive summary

In its fourth year, Deloitte Global's 2025 survey of more than 2,100 C-suite executives spanning 27 countries explores the current state of corporate sustainability and how companies are evolving their sustainability approach.

**Sustainability remains a top business priority. Companies continue to increase investments, particularly in sustainability technologies.** A large majority of executives say their approach to sustainability either involves transforming their business model or embedding sustainability throughout their organization. And respondents indicated that they are not reducing their sustainability actions on account of either broader market conditions like economic uncertainty or competing priorities such as the need to invest more heavily in technology.

- Forty-five percent of respondents identify climate change/sustainability as a top three challenge for their companies in the coming year, on par with technology adoption and AI, and ahead of economic outlook and trade-related challenges.
- Eighty-three percent of respondents reported increasing their sustainability investments in the last year. Of those, 69% say their investments increased somewhat (6 – 19%), with an additional 14% saying they increased significantly (>20%)—nearly identical to last year.

**Leaders recognize the business case and related benefits from corporate sustainability efforts.** Revenue generation was the most frequently cited business benefit across a range of sustainability actions, followed by compliance-related outcomes, brand and reputation and finally risk and cost savings.. Technology solutions have emerged as a key enabler of corporate sustainability efforts, and AI use is already ubiquitous.

- Across a range of sustainability initiatives respondents reported undertaking, very few (10% or less) said they had a negative impact on a variety of business outcomes, including revenue generation, cost reduction, brand and reputation, compliance and governance, and risk and resiliency.
- As it was last year, “Implementing technology solutions to help achieve sustainability goals” was one of the most-frequently cited action taken among respondents. Technology also came out on top when respondents were asked to rank their highest-priority initiatives.
- Eighty-one percent of respondents globally report they are already using AI to further their company's sustainability efforts.



## Executive summary (continued)

**There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of respondents that say they have undertaken a range of sustainability actions after several years of advancement.**

- Compared to last year, fewer respondents say they are:
  - Tying senior leaders' compensation to sustainability performance: 36% vs. 43% (2025 vs. 2024)
  - Requiring suppliers and business partners to meet specific sustainability criteria: 38% vs. 47%
  - Decreasing operations emissions by purchasing renewable energy: 42% vs. 49%
  - Developing new sustainable products or services: 44% vs. 48%
  - Using more sustainable materials: 45% vs. 51%
  - Increasing energy efficiency: 45% vs. 49%
  - Implementing technology solutions: 46% vs. 50%

**Both the obstacles and pressure for action have shifted from prior years.** Relatively few executives said that cost or lack of policy support were key barriers to their sustainability efforts, instead pointing to challenges in measuring environmental impacts. Leaders report climate change as less disruptive to their business strategy and operations in the near term than they have in past years. In addition, respondents indicate pressure from various stakeholders has waned, and is not uniformly in the same direction, which may be a factor impacting companies.

- Executives indicate that most stakeholders continue to push for increased sustainability efforts, but there remains a minority that are pressing to reduce action, and pressure from stakeholders overall has decreased in recent years.
- Across nearly every major stakeholder group, fewer respondents today say they are feeling pressure to act on sustainability than in 2022. That includes shareholders (71% in 2022 to 58% in 2025), boards (75% to 60%), governments (77% to 58%), civil society (72% to 57%), customers (75% to 57%), and employees (65% to 54%).

**A set of sustainability actions is emerging as a de facto roadmap for leaders, based on multiple years of survey data, suggesting a path companies can follow to embed sustainability considerations into their strategy, operations, and innovation.**

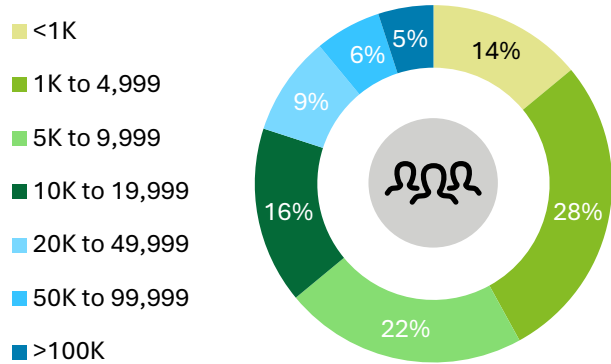
- Across multiple years, top actions taken have included:
  - Implementing technology solutions
  - Using more sustainable materials
  - Developing more sustainable products and services
  - Implementing operational efficiency measures
  - Tracking and disclosing sustainability metrics



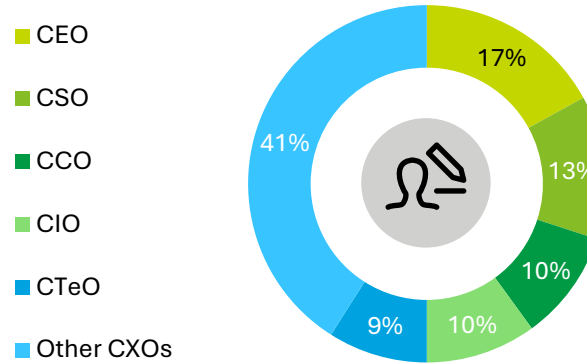
# Consumer industry business profile

408 executives in the Consumer industry were surveyed

## Number of employees

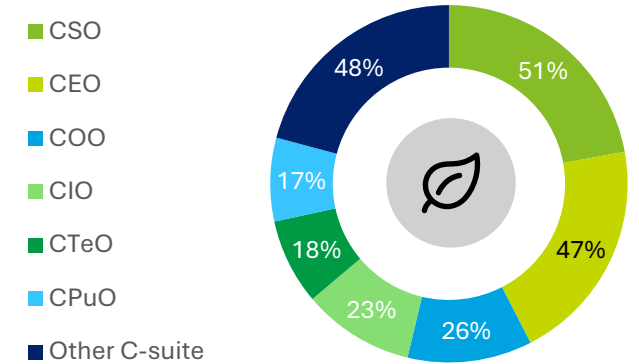


## Job title



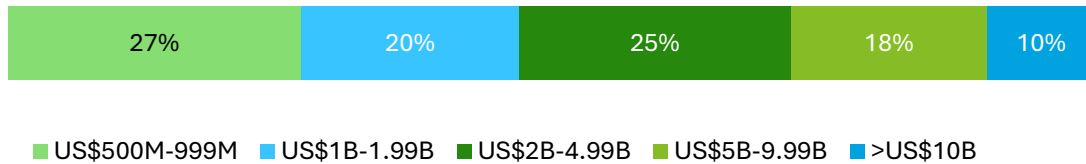
Note: CTeO is Chief Technology Officer

## Position(s)\* at your company responsible for sustainability goals

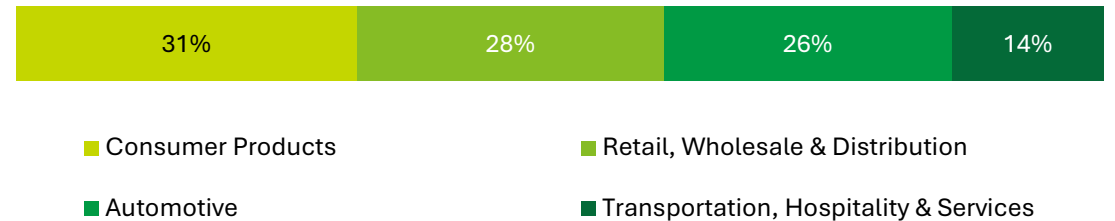


\*Some respondents indicated multiple roles within the company have responsibility, resulting in the total percentage across roles exceeding 100%.  
Note: CTeO is Chief Technology Officer, CPuO is Chief Purpose Officer

## Revenue (US\$)



## Industry

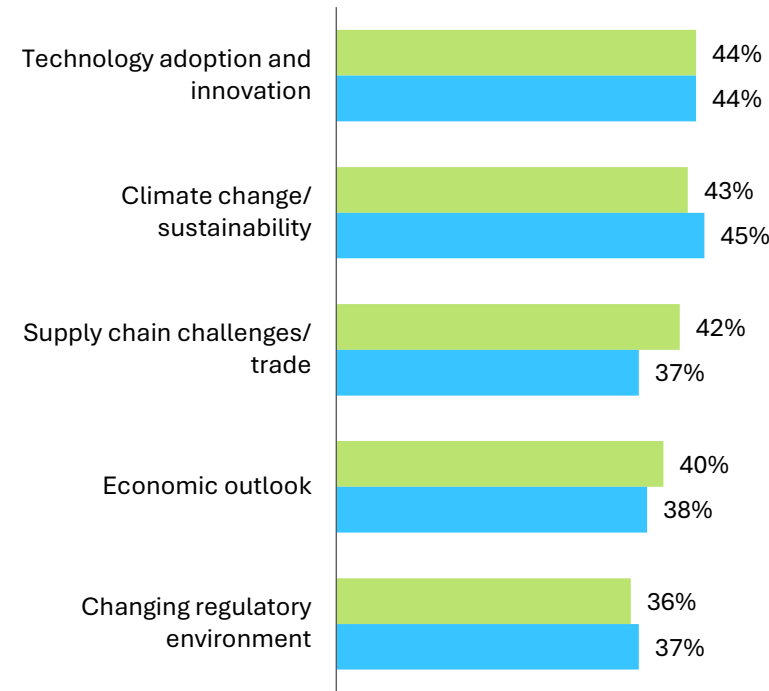


# Sustainability as a business priority

Sustainability is one of the concerns for Consumer industry executives and more than four out of five indicate sustainability investments have increased over the last year.

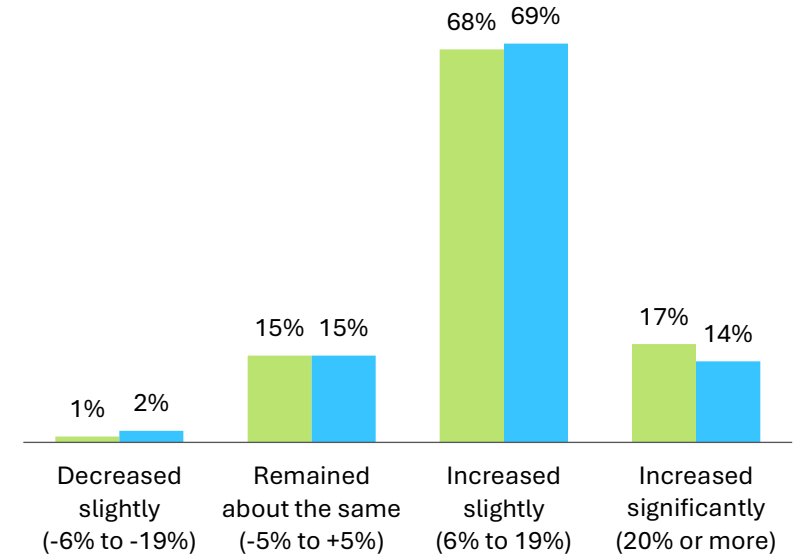
- Climate change/sustainability (43%) ranks as the second most pressing challenge, closely following technology adoption and innovation (44%).
- Supply chain challenges are also a pressing matter for Consumer industry executives (42%)—higher than the global average.
- On investment, Consumer industry executives are on par with their global peers: 68% report slightly increasing sustainability investments, compared to 69% globally.

## What does your organization see as the most pressing challenges to focus on over the next year? (rank eight options in order of importance)



■ % ranked in the Top 3, Consumer  
 ■ % ranked in the Top 3, Global

## How have your sustainability investments changed over the last year?



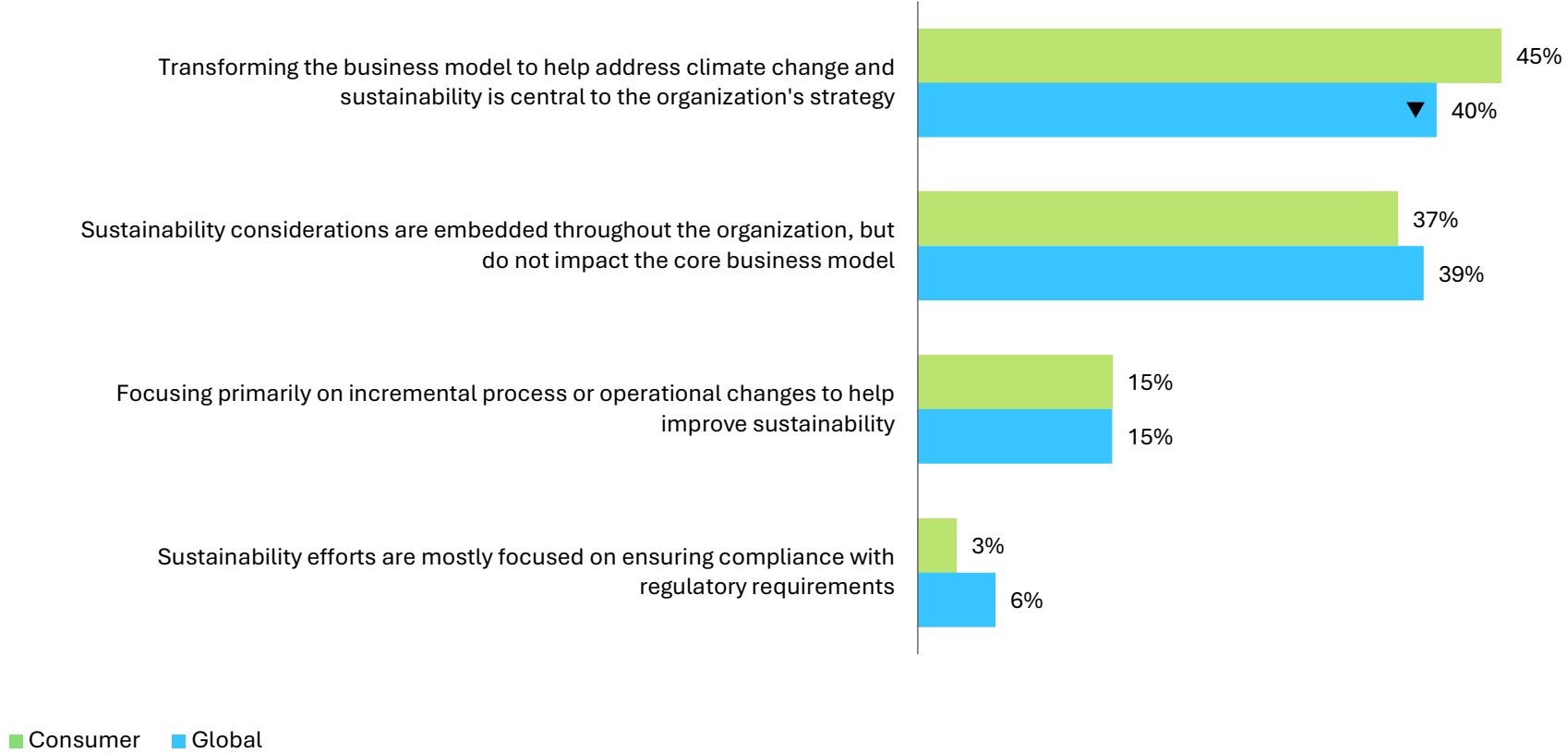
■ Consumer ■ Global

# Company approach to sustainability

Just under half of Consumer industry executives say they are transforming the business model to help address climate change and sustainability, higher than the global average.

- More than one-third (37%) indicate that sustainability considerations are embedded throughout their organizations, though not central to the business model.
- Smaller portions of executives point to incremental process improvements (15%) or a focus on regulatory compliance (3%) as their primary approach, with the latter trailing global averages.

## Which of the following statements best describes your company's current approach to sustainability? (select one)

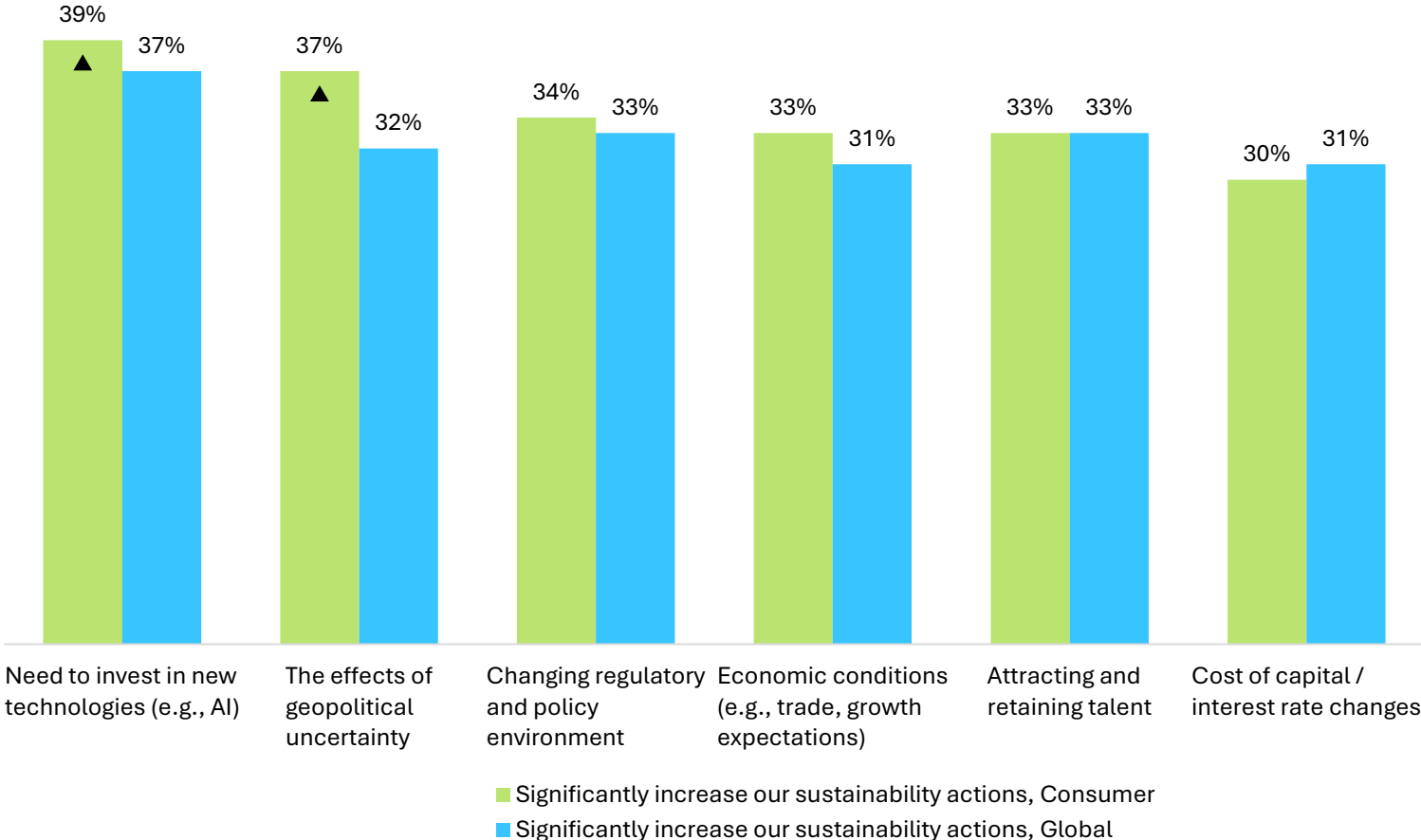


# Broader market conditions' and competing priorities' effects on sustainability actions

Consumer industry executives say that the need to invest in new technologies such as AI has significantly increased their organization's sustainability actions (39%), higher than 2024.

- Over one-third (37%) also highlight the effects of geopolitical uncertainty as a major driver, higher than 2024 and the global average.
- Changing regulatory and policy environment (34%), economic conditions (33%), and attracting and retaining talent (33%) are also top mentions.

## How have the following matters affected your organization's sustainability actions over the last year?





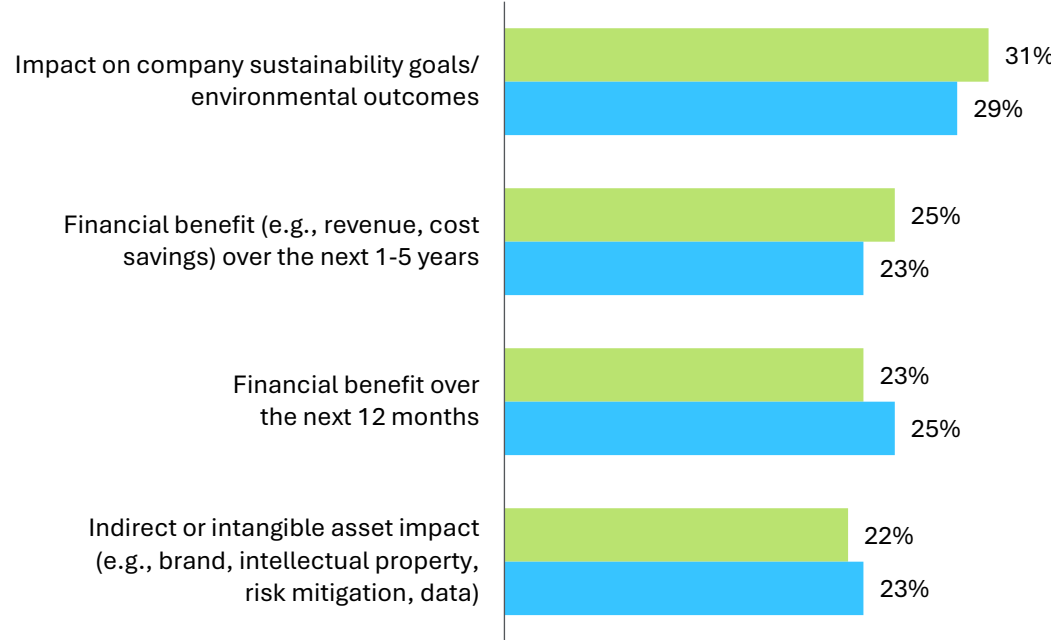
# Business case and benefits from sustainability efforts

For Consumer industry executives surveyed, the impact on company sustainability goals and environmental outcomes is the most influential factor in decision-making on sustainability actions and investments (31%).

- Near- to longer-term financial benefits also play a significant role, with 25% citing expected returns over the next one to five years as most influential. Another 23% see more immediate financial benefit as the top driver.
- When asked about the outcomes of their sustainability efforts, executives most often report positive effects on revenue generation (66%) and regulatory compliance and governance (61%).

## When assessing potential sustainability actions and investments, which outcomes are most influential in driving decision-making?

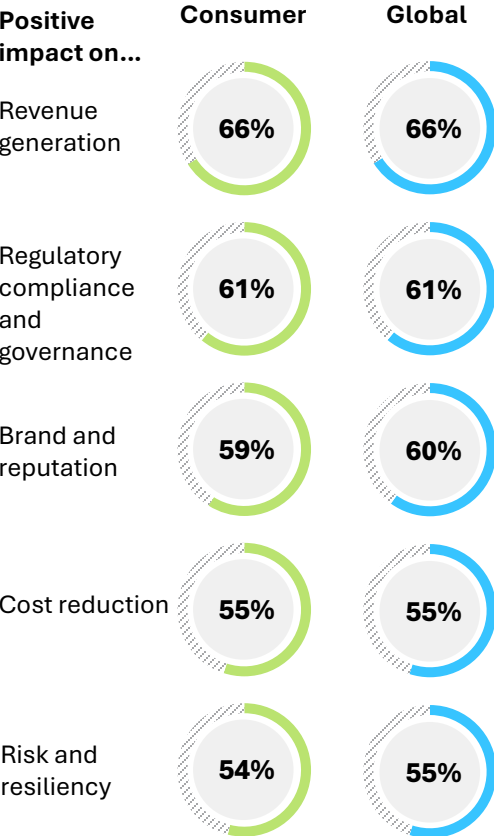
(rank in order of influence)



■ Ranked most influential, Consumer  
■ Ranked most influential, Global

## How would you assess sustainability efforts impact on the following dimensions?

(positive, neutral, negative)



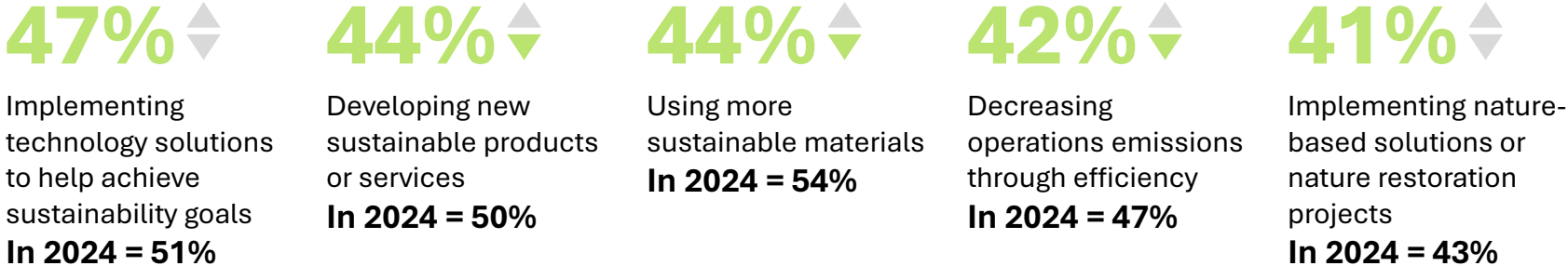
# Sustainability actions undertaken to meet environmental goals

Nearly half of companies in the Consumer industry are implementing technology solutions to help achieve sustainability goals (47%), a slight decrease from 51% in 2024.

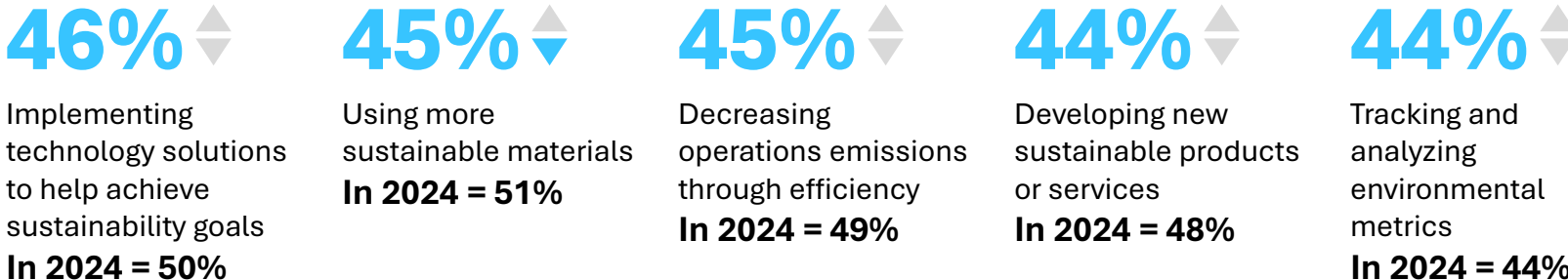
- The remaining top actions from Consumer industry companies have seen noticeable declines from 2024—developing new sustainable products or services (44% vs. 50%), using more sustainable materials (44% vs. 54%), decreasing operations emissions through efficiency (42% vs. 47%), implementing nature-based solutions (41% vs. 43%).

## Which of the following actions has your company already undertaken as part of its sustainability efforts? (select all that apply)

### Top actions taken - Consumer



### Top actions taken - Global



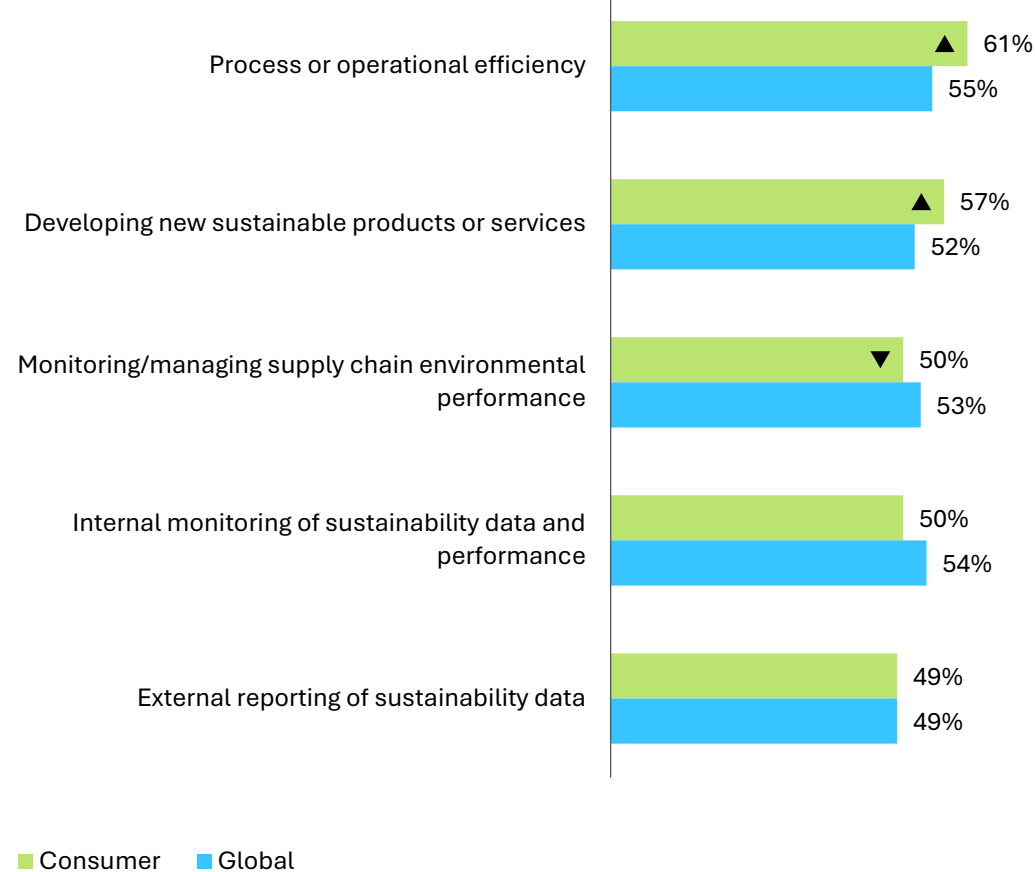


# Technology as an enabler of sustainability efforts

In the Consumer industry, many executives who are implementing technology or planning to cite increasing efficiency and developing new sustainable products or services as goals.

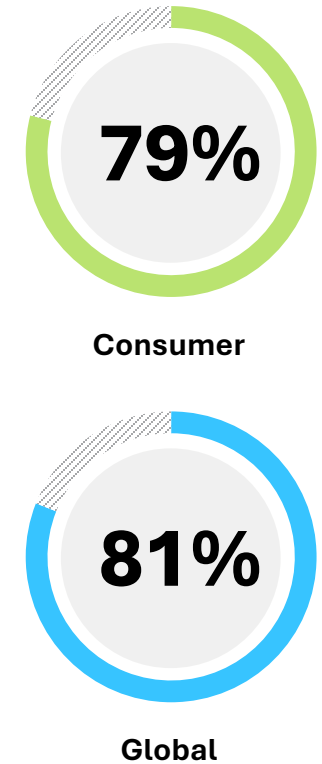
- Sixty-one percent have implemented technology to help with process or operational efficiency and 57% use tech to help with developing new sustainability products or services, both up from 2024.
- Of Consumer executives surveyed, 79% are using AI to assist with sustainability efforts, slightly lower than 81% globally.

**In which areas is your company implementing or planning to implement technology solutions to help achieve sustainability goals?** (select all that apply)



Note: Respondents include those that indicated their company has or plans to implement technology solutions

**Has your company used AI to further its sustainability efforts?**



# Obstacles to sustainability action

**Consumer industry executives cite difficulty measuring environmental impact as the leading obstacle to sustainability deployment, an increase from 2024.**

- Other top challenges include the lack of sustainable solutions or insufficient supply of more sustainable inputs (22%) and the concern taking a stance could alienate a subset of customers or employees (21%).
- At the other end, cost (13%), the lack of customer/client demand (12%, a decrease from 2024), and limited policy support (10%) rank among the least-cited barriers.

## What are the top obstacles to deploying sustainability efforts at your organization? (select top two)





# Impacts on business strategy and operations

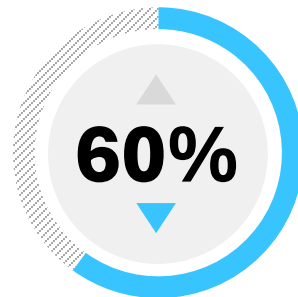
Around three in five Consumer industry executives (58%) expect climate change to have a high or very high impact on their company's strategy and operations over the next three years, similar to the global average (60%).

- Operational impact of extreme weather (31%), changing consumption patterns (30%) and regulations (30%) are frequently cited matters affecting businesses currently.

Executives who expect climate change to impact their company's strategy and operations to a high/very high extent over the next 3 years

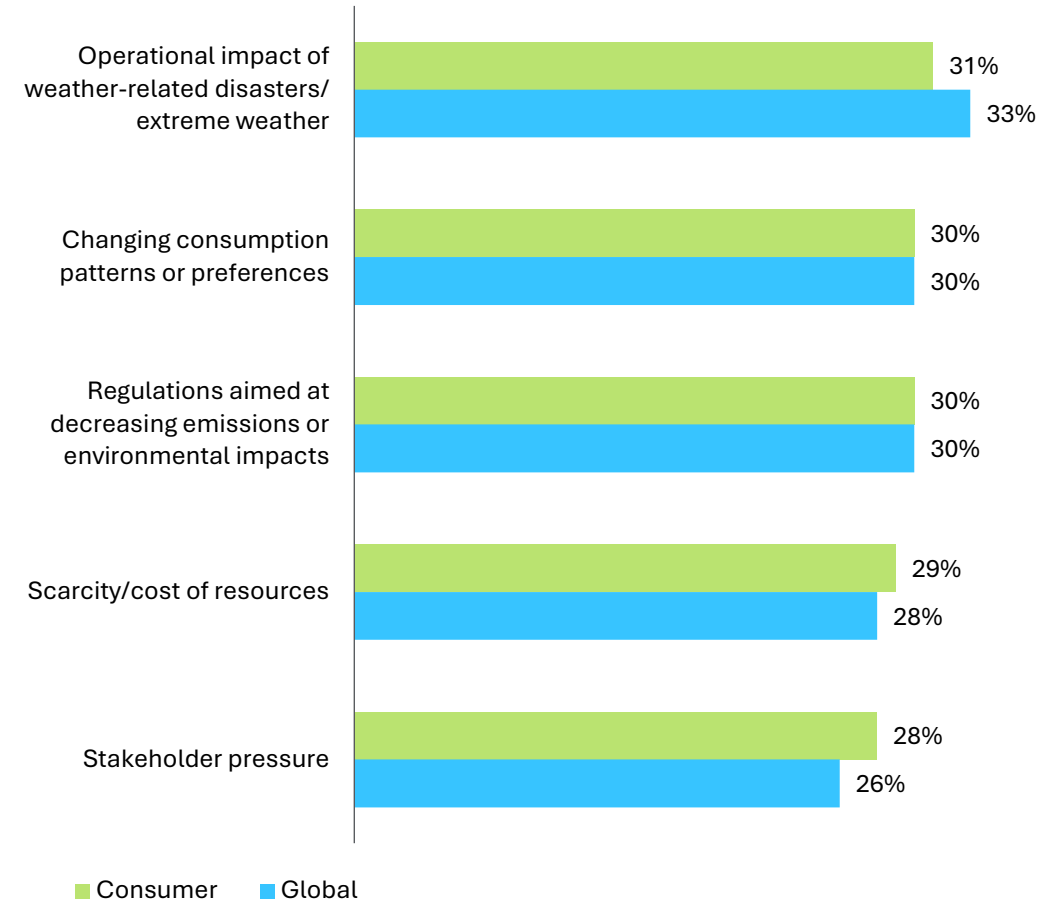


Consumer



Global

What are the top sustainability matters that are already impacting your business? (select top three)

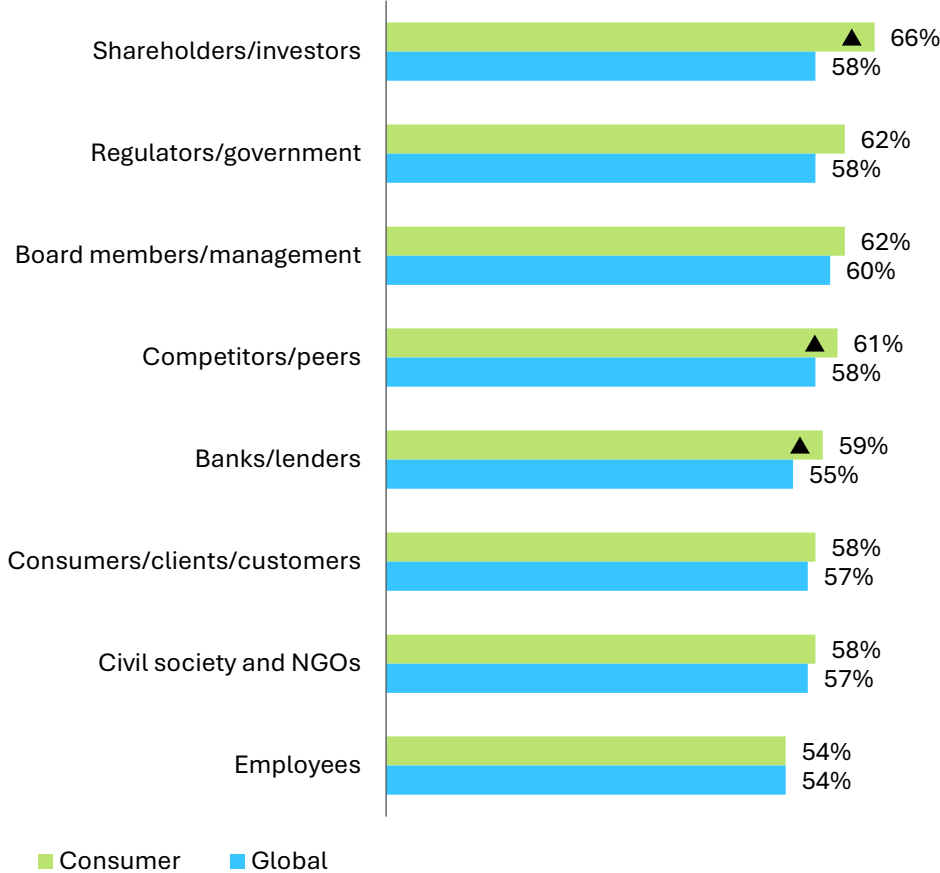


# Stakeholder pressure on sustainability

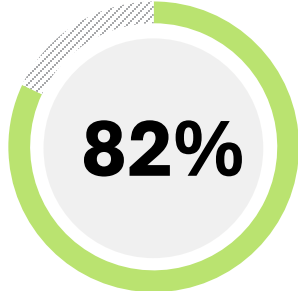
On average, 82% of Consumer industry executives report feeling stakeholder pressure to increase sustainability action.

- The most frequently cited sources of pressure are shareholders/investors (66%, an increase from 2024), regulators government (62%), and board members/management (62%).
- Pressure from competitors/peers (61%), and banks/lenders (59%) have increased from last year.

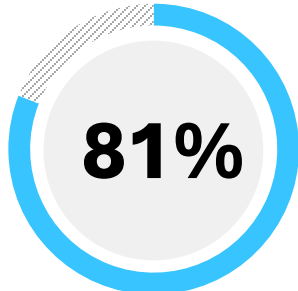
## Executives who feel pressure from the following stakeholders to a moderate/large extent to increase or decrease their efforts in addressing sustainability



## Average percentage of organizations feeling pressure across stakeholders' groups to increase action



Consumer



Global

Number represents average across all stakeholder groups of those who selected Somewhat or Significantly increase sustainability action.



# A roadmap of sustainability actions is emerging

Based on multiple years of survey data, a de facto roadmap appears to be emerging around a set of sustainability actions, offering companies a potential path to embed sustainability considerations into strategy, operations, and innovation. Across multiple years, top actions taken have included:



**Implementing technology solutions**



**Using more sustainable materials**



**Developing more sustainable products and services**



**Implementing operational efficiency measures**



**Tracking and disclosing sustainability metrics**

# Navigating the future of corporate sustainability: Key questions for c-suite leaders

The current corporate sustainability landscape is dynamic. Policy and regulatory conditions are changing around the world, the economics of key sustainability solutions continue to shift, and the impacts of a changing environment are growing more acute—set against a backdrop of changes in the broader business environment.

Today’s dynamic conditions provide an opportunity for organizations to reevaluate their sustainability ambition, strategy, investments, initiatives, and execution to help ensure they both meet their sustainability goals and further build resilience into their organizations. To guide that effort, leaders can consider:

**1** Which sustainability matters are material for their business and stakeholders? Where can the organization create real value and impact? Where are they best positioned to move the needle on key metrics?

**2** What resources is their organization willing and able to commit? Budget, talent, executive support, organizational capital—what is the level of support available?

**3** How patient is their organization? How patient are their key stakeholders? Are they prepared to wait 5–10 years for results, and/or are short-term wins needed?

**4** What level of risk and uncertainty can their business tolerate? What volatility (regulatory, reputational, physical) can the organization absorb?

**5** What are the dependencies? Would this action require policy shifts, technology breakthroughs, demand guarantees, and/or ecosystem alignment?

# Contacts



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