

2022

An Institutional Perspective on Climate Change, Markets, and Consumption across Three Countries

Delphine Godefroit-Winkel
Toulouse Business School, Casablanca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/mgdr>

 Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#), [Economics Commons](#), [Marketing Commons](#), [Other Business Commons](#), and the [Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Godefroit-Winkel, Delphine (2022) "An Institutional Perspective on Climate Change, Markets, and Consumption across Three Countries," *Markets, Globalization & Development Review*. Vol. 7: No. 4, Article 4.

DOI: 10.23860/MGDR-2022-07-04-04

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/mgdr/vol7/iss4/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Markets, Globalization & Development Review* by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

Markets, Globalization & Development Review



An Institutional Perspective on Climate Change, Markets, and Consumption across Three Countries

Introduction

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) climate change 2022 report is alarming. Two thousand pages include a massive amount of evidence detailing the scope of human-induced climate change and how the future might be if we keep on with the same habits, and greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, climate change remains an under-explored topic in marketing and consumer behavior (Chandy et al. 2021). This article aims to shed light on consumers' responses to climate change actions and to provide avenues for future research.

Climate change is intrinsically linked to institutional ideologies (Hulme 2009). For instance, climate change may relate to a debate between distinct epistemological perspectives, wherein arguments may include the accuracy of data, or the validity of models. Climate change may also relate to the commodification of the atmosphere and to the efficiency of markets to address environmental concerns. Climate change may also instill new ideas about hyperconsumption and unsustainability of Western lifestyles. Thus, how individuals relate to climate change also varies across institutional contexts, and fosters public debates.

Countries exhibit distinct institutional differences about environment and climate change (Tjernström and Tietenberg 2008). Institutions in France, for instance, have a long history in preserving the natural environment (Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Énergie et de la Mer 2017). In the United States, after decades of denying human impact on climate change, Republicans are shifting their posture. In 2021, many leading Republicans acknowledged anthropogenic climate change (Funk and Hefferon 2019). The combat against climate change may be formally designed at the country level. Morocco for instance has adopted ambitious sustainable plans. It has built one of the largest concentrated solar power plants in South Morocco, and set up a National Climate Plan 2020-2030, to promote the fundamentals of a development with low carbon emissions and resilience to climate change (Ministère de l'Énergie, des Mines et de l'Environnement, Département de l'Environnement 2020).

Most stakeholders who are interested strongly in climate change are experts in environment. Of course, a few managers and consumer researchers are also interested in climate change. More attention, however,

needs to be given to the impact on actions to combat climate change at the micro levels. Indeed, climate change actions might affect consumer attitudes towards their country, their companies, and stores. Managers, marketers, and stakeholders at the meso and macro levels may be interested in how climate change actions might affect their consumers' attitudes towards their country or company. Therefore, scholars and managers need to understand how actions to combat climate change affects consumers, including actions taken at the level of countries, companies, and/or stores.

To understand the responses to climate change actions, we employ institutional theory as our overarching theoretical anchor. Institutional theory provides a valuable framework that explains how actors gradually respond to a blend of pressures within their institutional field (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Researchers interested in institutional theory and environment focused mainly on environmental practices. Attitudes towards marketing actions aiming to combat climate change is an emerging field that we propose to unpack. We argue that it is important to understand the effectiveness of marketing actions to combat climate change across countries, and how these actions are legitimated among individuals.

Relying on institutional theory and conceptual insight from the climate change literature, this manuscript examines climate change from a consumer-based and markets-focused approach. The manuscript builds on three cross-cultural studies in consumer research about the impact, on consumer attitudes, of countries' and organizations' actions to combat climate change (Schill et al. 2018; Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes 2021; Godefroit-Winkel, Schill, and Diop-Sall 2022). It provides a new, market-oriented approach to the relations between markets and climate change.

This manuscript further offers key insight that may help governments and companies to increase their investment and communication about their actions to combat climate change. It further helps managers to understand how affective responses towards a country or an organization may derive from climate change actions. The article concludes by providing an ethical perspective on the relationships between climate change and markets. It discusses the risk of sustained growth and hypocrisy, regarding the climate crisis, and encourages an institutional perspective – as embodied in the business world, educational systems, and consumer research – in the close relations that intrinsically link markets and the natural environment.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory has often been used as a powerful framework to examine consumers' responses to institutional contexts (Zanette and Scaraboto 2019). And it is relevant to address the climate change (Barlett, Tynowack, and Newton 2009) at the meso (company) and macro (country) levels. Specifically, it helps in examining the structures that orient individuals and their relationships with the environment.

Institutions are a set of "cultural-cognitive, normative and regulative elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life" (Scott 2001, p. 48).

Yet, some of these elements raise more attention than others among scholars. Nevertheless, many authors interested in institutional theory agree that social behaviors and related resources are embedded in norms and rules systems and cultural frames. The material and relational elements of social structures are created, empowered, and restrained by the rules that they produce and reproduce (Scott 2005).

Institutional theory provides an interesting theoretical framework to analyze the processes and mechanisms by which organizations produce models of activities, and methods that guide behaviors and attitudes (Scott 2001). Institutional theory stipulates that a specific institutional context creates a homogeneous set of behaviors and attitudes among individuals who are evolving, consuming, living in this context. It allows then a dialogue between the micro (individual), meso (company) and macro (country) levels (Scott and Amarante 2016).

Institutions provide formal rules (e.g., statutes, common laws, regulations), informal constraints (e.g., conventions, norms of behavior, self-imposed rules), and the applications of rules and constraints (North 1992). Formal and informal rules constitute the basis of social systems and shed light, among other factors, on the differences of individuals' attitudes and behaviors across distinct institutional contexts. Institutional theorists refer to three pillars to support institutional systems: the regulative pillar relates to rule setting, monitoring, and sanctioning activities; the normative pillar includes rules that specify legitimate means to pursue valued objectives; the cultural-cognitive pillar relates to shared conceptions that favor a shared understanding of phenomena. Institutions and institutional contexts influence consumer attitudes and behaviors in distinct areas, including climate change issues (Hulme 2009).

Institutional theory posits that actors adopt distinct attitudes and practices due to various pressures (Di Maggio and Powell 1983). For

instance, Nongovernmental Organizations or NGOs (Mamic 2005) and trade unions (Lipschutz 2004) might pressure organizations to behave sustainably. Other studies suggest the influence of national institutional contexts on sustainable corporate decisions (Ortiz-de-Mandojana, Aguilera-Caracuel, and Morales-Raya 2016). Berrone et al. (2013) show that companies facing regulative and normative pressures related to environmental issues are more likely to take innovative environmental decisions. Delmas (2002) suggests that the implementation of International Standards Organization or ISO norms varies across countries according to regulatory, normative and cognitive pillars of the institutional context. Thus, various institutional actors can exert pressures that instill the system structure. To a point, these pressures induce similar patterns of actions or decisions among distinct actors. With time, these patterns become what is legitimate in a specific system (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

Institutional theory can explain how changes in regulations, practices, values, affect decisions regarding “green” sustainable activities (Rivera 2004). Most works focus on stakeholders like companies, firms, or countries (Glover et al. 2014). What remains underexplored is how consumers at the micro level respond to actions to combat climate change within institutional systems. This paper aims to shed light on specific works centered around consumers, as important stakeholders or actors, and their responses to climate change action through the lens of institutional theory.

Hawley (1968) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983) refer to isomorphism to detail the tendency for organizations – within specific institutional contexts – to adopt similar decisions and actions, becoming increasingly similar to each other. They identify three types of isomorphism that relate to pressure: coercive, mimetic, and normative isomorphism. Coercive isomorphism is a change resulting from formal or informal institutional pressures, whereby one organization forces the organizations that depend on it to adopt patterns of action that are similar. For instance, countries and states use numerous forms of coercive isomorphic pressures. The state defines institutional frameworks that influence companies by establishing rules, inspecting the conformity of companies, and handing out rewards or sanctions (Scott 1995). In climate change, organizations like the EU, OECD, UN, have proposed a list of measures that states can apply to combat climate change. In France, for instance, the law *Energie-Climat* of 2019 defines four axes to combat climate change, with various objectives including the reduction of fossil energies by 40% in 2030: progressive abandonment of fossil energy, fight against poorly insulated houses, implementation of new tools for climate policy, gas and electricity control.

Firms are then encouraged by law to convert their fossil energy systems to more sustainable systems.

Mimetic isomorphism is another important institutional isomorphism. Mimesis is copying actions of organizations which are considered to be successful and legitimate (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Mimesis in environmental and climate issues is not an individual action. It implies a reference group, a group of firms in the same sector; and the participant in the reference group might imitate the practices of the other members. For instance, in the French supermarket sector there has been a shift in the recent years in their marketing communication campaigns. French supermarkets traditionally communicated on their low prices (i.e., Intermarché campaign, “tous contre la vie chère,” “all against expensive life”). Today, most of them are extensively communicating about their engagement in more sustainable practices, and combat against climate change. Carrefour France for instance targets carbon neutrality by 2040 (Carrefour 2021).

Another important mechanism is normative isomorphism. Normative isomorphism refers to the rules and norms that introduce a prescriptive, evaluative, and obligatory dimension into social life (Scott 1995). These rules influence organizations. For instance, the importance of sustainable rules and norms transmitted by supranational organizations can have a higher impact when the supranational organization is considered more legitimate.

Isomorphism may occur because actors want to be seen as legitimate within an established institutional system. Actors then tend to find indications – in a given institutional environment – to elaborate appropriate actions and practices, that are thought of as legitimate. Legitimacy is a condition of reflecting perceived consonance with relevant rules and laws – normative support or alignment – with cultural-cognitive framework (Scott 2001). Legitimacy emerges from interactions between individuals and their institutional environment (for a recent perspective on legitimacy and sustainability, see Dholakia and Zilibierberg 2024).

At the macro level, interventions by supranational organizations, countries, and states are helpful in setting avenues for specific issues like climate change. At the meso level, companies may be left with the allocation decisions. At the micro level, consumers may have distinct responses to these actions. A vast array of studies have examined how companies and firms respond to pressures from the state or supranational organizations (e.g., Huq and Stevenson 2020). Other studies have shown how companies respond to social pressure from their customers to engage in more environmental practices (Handelman and Arnold 1999). Few authors,

however, have examined how consumers, as actors in their institutional system, respond to pressures within specific institutional contexts (Jafari, Aly, and Doherty 2022). This paper aims to unpack consumers' responses to actions that combat climate change in three distinct institutional contexts: France, Morocco, and the United States.

Climate Change and Climate Change Actions

There is a long-standing debate about climate change (Hall 2018). Academics, scientists and politicians do not provide any consensual framing of climate change. Nonetheless, they agree that climate change refers to a change in global or regional climate, temperature and weather patterns. According to the United Nations and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2012), the shifts may be due to natural causes, such as variations in the solar cycle, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use. The United Nations among others also acknowledges that human activities are the main factor of climate change due to the burning of fossil fuels - i.e., coal, oil, and gas.

Most countries and organizations engage in actions to combat climate change and communicate about these actions, employing top-down strategies. They target consumers and encourage them to adopt behavioral changes related to greater sustainability (Casado-Asencio and Steurer 2014). Strategies to combat climate change include adaptation and mitigation. Mitigation refers to reducing climate change. It involves reducing the flow of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. For instance, mitigating actions include reducing sources of these gases – i.e., burning of fossil fuels for electricity – or enhancing the spaces that accumulate and store these gases, i.e., oceans, forests, and soils. The main objective of mitigation is to avoid human interference with the climate change system.

Adaptation refers to adapting to life in a changing climate. It involves adjusting to actual or expected future climate. With adaptation strategies, actions aim to reduce people's vulnerability to the harmful effects of climate change – i.e., sea-level encroachment, food insecurity. Actions may also aim to make the most of any potential beneficial opportunities associated with climate change – i.e., longer growing seasons.

We follow Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes (2021) and define climate change actions as the set of actions deriving from the mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Consumers' Responses to Climate Change

While scientists agree that the annual mean land and ocean temperatures are increasing, individuals' perceptions and understanding of anthropogenic climate change are varied and often at odds with each other. Yet, 51% of the world's population thinks that environment and climate issues should be the main priority of governments (Ipsos 2021). There is, however, no clear global, public consensus over climate change: perceptions and beliefs vary across countries and socio-demographic factors. The UNDP report (2021) asserts that a person's education may be the most profound socio-demographic driver of beliefs about climate change, but other institutional factors are also at stake.

Knowledge about consumers' wants and behaviors about climate change has increased over the last decade thanks to various surveys. Overall, 62% of Americans say that climate change is affecting their local community, long periods of hot weather are the most cited manifestations (Funk and Hefferon 2019). Fifty-six percent of Americans think that climate change is the most important issue today (APA 2020). In Morocco, 68% of individuals are anxious about climate change, and they urge governments to take more actions to fight anthropogenic climate change. Further, 44% want a greener agriculture, and greener transportation – i.e., electric buses – and 48% of Moroccans want more solar and wind energy (UNDP 2021). In France, 56% of individuals support investments in green business and jobs (Puget 2020). Eighty-seven percent of French citizens with post-secondary education believe in the climate emergency and human impact. Still, only 12% of French consumers think that technological innovations can limit the human impact on climate change.

Research has shown how social pressures encourage companies to be environmentally conscious (Handelman and Arnold 1999). Further, the literature gathers significant data about what people want in relation to climate change and what they do to engage in sustainable consumption. We know little, however, about how consumers respond to actions aiming to combat climate change, especially when they are taken at distinct levels. Our detailed questions are the following:

- How do consumers respond to climate change actions when they are taken at the country level?
- How do consumers respond to climate change actions when they are taken at the level of their company?
- How do consumers respond to climate change actions when they are taken at the supermarket level?

Building on institutional theory, we assume that consumer responses to climate change may vary across distinct institutional contexts. Thus, this article examines how climate change actions impact consumer attitudes towards a country or an organization – firm or supermarket – across distinct institutional contexts, and countries. Advanced knowledge regarding these questions can help managers to take actions and communicate at the levels that have increased impact on consumers' attitudes and behaviors about climate change.

In the pursuit of this objective, we build our argument on three recent studies that were published in academic journals in management disciplines.

Methodology in the Three Studies

Climate change is a global issue with social and environmental outcomes for both developed and developing countries. To understand how consumers respond to climate change actions, we draw insight from three studies in France, Morocco, and the United States (Schill et al. 2018; Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes 2021; Godefroit-Winkel, Schill, and Diop-Sall 2022). Consumers were asked to consider the actions to combat climate change when they come from their country (Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes 2021), their company (Schill et al. 2018) or their supermarket (Godefroit-Winkel, Schill, and Diop-Sall 2022).

Contexts

France, Morocco, and the United States show distinct institutional contexts regarding climate change. The regulative and normative pillars differ across the three countries, and reflect their positions related to the international climate change agreements. France for instance played a major role as a host of the 2015 Conference of Parties (COP21). The COP participants agreed to keep global warming below 2° of increase compared to preindustrial era, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2016, Morocco hosted the COP22, where participating countries set implementation plans for the Paris Agreement. In 2017, the United States withdrew from Paris Agreement, but rejoined in 2021.

Furthermore, France has a long-institutionalized history – including normative and regulative pillars – regarding environment protection. Since the 1980s, France has initiated a series of energy policy measures, aiming to decrease its dependence on fossil energy and to rely on biomass – organic mass such as garbage, wood, crops, landfill – that is transformed into energy such as gas or alcohol fuels. The French multiyear Energy Plan (PPE) aims to increase its production of heating and cooling energy from

biomass by +36%, from 2019 to 2028, according to the Energy Plan - PPE (Ministère de la Transition Écologique et Solidaire 2018). Today, biomass energy contributes to 55% of energy production in France.

In Morocco, environmental concerns have a long history. That is, Morocco has a strong cultural-cognitive pillar related to issues around the environment and climate change. Moroccan institution, however – normative and regulative pillars at the national level – have invested only recently in climate change combating measures. Morocco's National Plan Against Global warming was institutionalized in 2009 at the COP15. The new Moroccan constitution (2011) includes sustainable development as a right for Moroccan citizens. Morocco ranks seven on the 2021 climate change performance index (Burck et al. 2020) and is the African leader for climate change actions through mitigation strategies. The solar farm Noor in Southern Morocco is one of the largest in the world and provides energy to 650,000 people. Noor solar farm aims to contribute to 52% of Moroccan energy supply by 2030. Furthermore, the National Climate Plan (2020-2030) aims to reinforce Morocco's capacity of producing more green energies and industries. Morocco is also working to reduce greenhouse gas emission by 45.5% in 2030.

Climate change is a highly politicized issue in the United States. American Republicans and Democrats have a long-standing debate about climate change. Since 2021, Republicans no longer deny that the Earth is heating because of human impact, but they are reluctant to abandon oil, gas, and coal for economic reasons (also, because of the political campaign contributions by these sectors). The United States relies predominantly on energy supplied by coal since 20th century. Fossil fuels – petroleum, natural gas, and coal – account for 79% of the energy sources. Renewable energy – biomass, wind, hydroelectric, etc. – accounts for 12% (EIA 2021). Climate change is also a relatively new topic in American institutions. For instance, it has only recently become acceptable to discuss climate change in public forums (Black et al. 2013). States have created new institutions to foster change towards environmental actions. The United States Climate Alliance is a bipartisan coalition of governors committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement. California is a climate change leader with distinct adaptation and mitigation strategies. It aims to decrease greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 (CA.gov 2019).

The three countries under consideration, thus, illustrate distinct forms of pressure emanating from their institutional systems. For instance, Morocco hosts a more mimetic isomorphism. The objectives and norms are set in various sustainable programs. For instance, actions are proposed at

the state and regional levels in the Plan Climat National à l'Horizon 2030. Companies are encouraged to participate and support the program. The regulative system does not directly address private companies. As a result, private companies adopt sustainable practices and norms, based on their belief in the legitimacy of the institutional system to act for a common good.

In France, major companies have invested in Chapter Zero to provide platforms for dialogue, exchange, and development related to the governance of climate issues. Companies are encouraged to adopt the principles of climate governance initiated by the World Economic Forum. At the same time, France applies strict regulations related to climate change (Loi de la transition énergétique) and forces companies to report their green gas emissions publicly. Isomorphism here balances between mimetic and coercive. At the micro level, French consumers display a tendency to challenge the legitimacy of their governance. This has been particularly visible with the yellow-vest movement which started after the announcement of an increase of taxes on fossil energy.

In the United States, the recent social movements have been against the institutions, questioning the legitimacy of the powerful institutions, at the state and country levels. Nevertheless, the recent change of the Republican position, acknowledging human impact on climate change, suggests a mimetic isomorphism as related to climate change issues.

Data Collection in the Three Studies

The objective of the present article is to provide a more holistic understanding of consumer responses to climate change actions while considering actions taken at distinct levels: companies and supermarkets – meso-level, and country – macro-level. In the pursuit of this objective, we rely on three recent studies published in academic journals.

The three studies examined in this paper (Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes 2021; Schill et al. 2018; Godefroit-Winkel, Schill, and Diop-Sall 2022) rely on surveys. Convenience sampling was collected in each country. The data collection was tailored to embrace local traditions in sampling and survey (De Leeuw 2005), with face-to-face interviews with real consumers in France and Morocco and online questionnaires in the United States. Informants were at least 18 years old, with distinct socio-cultural backgrounds.

The survey instruments relied on well-established items from existing literature. Questionnaires were translated in the local language and tested to ensure clear understanding.

In the first study (Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes 2021), data was collected to explore consumer responses to climate actions when

actions are taken at the country level: France, Morocco, the United States. The second study (Schill et al. 2018) uncovers consumer responses to climate change actions when actions are taken by the consumer's company: France, in this case. Finally, the third study (Godefroit-Winkel, Schill, and Diop-Sall 2022) aims to examine consumer response to climate change action when the actions are implemented by the consumer's supermarket: France and Morocco, in this instance.

Study 1: Exploring Consumers' Responses to a Country's Climate Change Actions in France, Morocco, and the United States

Institutional contexts shape and organize consumer attitudes and behaviors among groups (Scott 2001). Within this lens, countries and actions taken at the national level provide structures for homogeneous sets of attitudes and practices to emerge in the context of climate change.

Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes (2021) examine whether and how perceptions of climate change actions influence each country image and consumer attitudes towards it within specific institutional contexts. Through a survey across 1,389 respondents in France, Morocco, and the United States, they uncover a positive relationship between climate change action perceptions and consumers' attitudes towards their country, through the mediation of the country image.

The country image is a cognitive evaluation of a country. It is "the overall impression of a country conveyed by its culture, political system and technological development" (Desbordes 1990, p. 44). Consumers respond to cognitive evaluation by affective evaluations (Brijs, Bloemer and Kasper 2011). Thus, consumers who have a positive evaluation of their country develop stronger affective bonds towards their country.

Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes (2021) show that actions aiming to fight climate change hold the potential to improve consumers' overall attitudes towards their country. The authors also show how consumers' responses vary from one country to another. Indeed, while climate change actions strongly impact consumer responses in Morocco, consumers in France develop weaker positive attitudes towards their country when they perceive climate change actions taken at the national level (see Appendix 1). In the United States, consumers' level of response to climate change actions taken at the national level is medium.

These results account for differences among consumers' responses to climate change actions in distinct countries, revealing local specificities. Moroccan consumers attribute more importance to actions to combat

climate change when they emanate from their national institutions (i.e., governments) than France or the United States. This result emphasizes the importance of institutional factors. Morocco has a strong cultural-cognitive pillar about its understanding of governmental decisions, specifically in relation to climate change. Moroccan consumers care about the climate change actions proposed by their government (HCP 2016). In the United States, individuals also have a deeper understanding of their governmental actions as compared to France. In contrast, French consumers tend to negotiate norms and regulations, or to reject governmental decisions. The French *gilets jaunes* (yellow vest) movement illustrates the sharp French responses to environmental actions taken at the national level. The protest movement indeed started after France announced transition to green energy.

Study 2: Exploring Employees' Responses to Their Company's Climate Change Actions in France and Morocco

As noted in the previous section, actions to combat climate change has less impact in France when actions emanate from the national level. In this second study (Schill et al. 2018), the authors examine employees' affective responses to their company's actions to combat climate change. They conducted a quantitative survey in France among 310 respondents. The study was further complemented by another sample of 144 respondents collected in Morocco (Sadiki, Schill, and Godefroit-Winkel 2016).

The findings uncover that the actions to combat climate change taken at the company level do not directly impact employees' affective responses in France. The effect is indirect, mediated by employees' organizational identification.

In contrast, Moroccan employees are directly impacted when their company invests in actions to fight against climate change. They demonstrate higher levels of affective response towards their company when this latter is engaged in combat against climate change.

These results complement previous knowledge on the role of institutional factors. In Morocco, the cognitive-cultural factors are more embedded in environmental issues. Moroccans are more responsive to actions aiming to combat climate change and demonstrate higher levels of affective response towards the institution that engage in environmental actions, whether it is the government or a company.

In France, the results show that climate change actions have a lower impact on French employees' affective response. In France, the cultural factors seem more embedded in power games than in environmental or

climate issues. The results of the study (Schill et al. 2018) highlight the complexity of French people's relations to their institutions.

The third study examines how consumers respond to their supermarket's actions to combat climate change.

Study 3: Exploring Consumers' Responses to Their Supermarket's Climate Change Actions in France, Morocco

While French consumers tend to challenge decisions taken at the level of their company or country, little is known about their response towards climate change actions taken by retailers and supermarkets specifically.

Godefroit-Winkel, Schill, and Diop-Sall (2022) investigated consumers' affective reactions to their supermarket actions to combat climate change. They ran a survey among 327 consumers in France and 444 consumers in Morocco. They found no significant difference between France and Morocco in the effect of consumers' perceptions of supermarket climate change actions and consumers' attitudes towards their supermarket. Moroccan and French consumers have more positive attitudes towards their supermarket when the latter engage in actions to combat climate change. Thus, while French consumers are not receptive to climate actions when it emanates from the government or their (employer) companies, they are more responsive when actions are initiated in the retail landscape.

Further, the authors examined how emotions mediate the relation between climate change actions and attitudes towards the supermarket. Surprisingly, they found that Moroccan consumers develop negative emotions when they perceive that their supermarket engages in actions to combat climate change. French consumers only experience positive emotions towards their supermarket when it combats climate change.

Institutional factors may explain these interesting results. In the Global South, sustainable waste management and recycling are often performed in poor informal settings, such as shantytowns. People in charge of managing waste or engaged in recycling of used artifacts are often individuals with limited financial resources who live in unhealthy conditions. In Morocco, for instance, recycling of household garbage is mostly performed by waste workers (Corteel and Le Ley 2011). These men and women live on the margins of urban areas, and remain excluded from the wider Moroccan society, because of the unclean nature of their work, and the poor condition of their living spaces such as slums and makeshift houses (Florin and Azaitraoui 2017). Negative attitudes and negative emotions are intrinsically linked to actual waste management actions in the Global South (Florin 2016; Fahmi and Sutton 2010).

Implications for Managers and Stakeholders

Climate change is a real important issue for the future of our planet. Yet, we know little in terms of the potential for marketers and managers to enhance and participate in the fight against climate change (Chandy et al. 2021). The three studies under consideration in the paper provides elements of answers.

First, international marketers interested in the country-of-origin effect could benefit from supporting climate change actions taken at the national level. Indeed, as shown in study 1, consumers develop positive attitudes towards their country when it engages in actions to combat climate change. Thus, products and brands made in countries which combat climate change should benefit from a competitive advantage if they communicate about their country of origin and efforts to combat climate change.

Second, general managers and human resource managers interested in increasing their employees' engagement towards their company could encourage their company to support and invest in climate change actions. Marketing managers could then develop an internal communication strategy on their company's actions to combat climate change. Joint efforts – investment in climate change actions and internal communication on these actions – will increase employees' affective engagement towards their company. As Study 2 suggests, employees develop more affective responses towards their company when they perceive their company's efforts to combat climate change.

Finally, institutions and local specificities play an important role on the outcomes of climate change actions on consumers' attitudes. Normative and cultural-cognitive pillars – related to environmental protection, climate change, and shared understanding or trust in their governmental decisions – influence consumers' responses to climate change actions. For instance, French consumers display a stronger tendency to negotiate norms and regulations. Though France is actively involved in the fight against climate change, the impact of actions to combat climate change taken at the company or national level has less impact on consumers' attitude in France than in Morocco for instance. In Morocco, the government is actively involved in the fight against climate change and large local companies may benefit from their shared efforts to combat climate change in line with governmental guidelines for environmental protection and climate change.

Thus, efforts should be made to enhance and promote actions against climate change, with very likely spillover benefits in terms of consumers' attitudes towards institutions.

The findings of Study 3, however, suggest some limits. The normative and cultural-cognitive specificities around waste and waste

management in countries of the Global South like Morocco may be a challenge for local retailers. Since waste management is often associated with negative images in the Global South, consumers may also experience negative emotions, alongside positive emotions, when they perceive that their local retailer is involved in waste management.

Ethical Issues, Corporate Hypocrisy, and Consumerism

The findings of the three studies suggest that companies should engage in climate change actions to improve attitudes towards their products, brands, or company. Managers, however, should develop actions with care. The development of actions and communications about climate change is not without ethical complexity.

First, considering climate change as a new asset to enhance a product, brand, or company image may encourage managers to communicate about environmental actions – regardless of the actuality of the company’s effective real endeavors and efforts to combat climate change. The risk here is associated with corporate hypocrisy (Wagner, Lutz, and Weitz 2009). Corporate hypocrisy occurs when consumers or employees perceive discrepancies between companies’ discourses and actions. It is the belief that “a firm claims to be something that it is not” (Wagner, Lutz, and Weitz 2009, p. 79). In the case of climate change, corporate hypocrisy reflects the public ethical judgment of pro-climate endeavors. Thus, attention should be paid to communicate about real actions and provide a holistic view on companies’ actions. More regulations – regulative pillars – about communications can be expected, especially in the Global South.

Second, managers may be tempted to communicate about actions to combat climate change with only the aim of stimulating demand for their products (see also Dholakia and Ziliberberg 2024). This is not without risk. Indeed, an increased demand may lead to more production, more waste, and could backfire in terms of environmental degradation. Reinforced by a capitalist view, with increased production and sustained growth, managers could use climate change as a communication asset to increase their production and sales turnover, encourage consumerism, and indeed contribute to climate and environmental degradation (see Varman and Belk 2022, in this issue of MGDR, for a movement in India concerned about such effects). There is thus a need for more consideration and reconsideration of the functioning of markets in relation to our natural environment – the normative and cultural-cognitive pillars.

A Call for More Cross-Fertilization Between Climate Change Actions and Institutional Pillars

Over the last decade numerous studies have shown the many attempts of communities and individuals to move towards a more sustainable consumption (Prothero and MacDonagh 2015). Gorge et al. (2015) for instance show how activist circles, at the beginning of the 2000s, influenced by Illich (1973), forced individuals to reassess their own needs, and to move beyond the traditional dichotomy between need versus false need, or un-need. The emergent alternative paradigms have the potential to challenge the dominant unsustainable beliefs and practices that endanger the future of the planet. Individuals and communities hold the potential to counterbalance unsustainable paradigms and can be agents of change. Continued micromarketing scholarship can support these new collective imaginaries and foster a collective knowledge of more sustainable practices (Gorge et al. 2015; Prothero and MacDonagh 2015). A virtuous isomorphism is possible here. Of course, such practices – e.g., toward sustainable ultra-localism (see Varman and Belk 2022, in this issue) – are challenging in individual and institutional sense.

In this context, consumer researchers, teachers, and marketers can be agents of change. They can raise awareness in terms of the relation between human behaviors and natural environment, to sensitize individuals to the climate crisis, and also to provide food for thought and avenues for future research on climate change and markets.

Overall, too little about environmental issues is taught in schools and in universities. From a cultural-cognitive perspective, the environment and climate issues are often perceived as political issues and pushed to the margins of the educational system (Saylan and Blumstein 2011). The responsibility, however, is not just institutional; it also lies in the hand of individuals. Professors, researchers, and parents should encourage the young to tackle climate change issues in their local environment. The new generations should learn how the regulative and normative pillars function regarding climate change issues. They should also learn how they can act at the local and national levels to change the norms and sanctions – the normative and regulative pillars.

We may be, indeed should be, willing to develop alternative models in our schools, universities, and business schools. How did the young learn to aspire and work for more profit? How did the young come to support increased consumption? The quest for more profit and growth was maybe initiated at the very heart of our educational systems. Thus, the climate change crisis and environmental issues do not lie in the sole hands of

powerful stakeholders. Many individuals can be agents of change and show the new generation the importance of nature and its preservation for the future of our planet and humanity.

References

- APA (2020), "Majority of US Adults Believe Climate Change is Most Important Issue Today," *American Psychology Association* (accessed February 06, 2021), [Available at: <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2020/02/climate-change>].
- Barlett, Jennifer L., Stephane Tywoniak, and Cameron J. Newton (2009), "Towards a Model of the Institutional Logics of Climate Change," *Proceedings of EGOS 2009, 25th European Group for Organizational Studies Conference*, Barcelona, July 2-4.
- Berrone, Pascual, Andrea Fosturi, Liliana Gelabert and Luis R. Gomez-Mejia (2013), "Necessity as the Mother of 'Green' Inventions: Institutional Pressures and Environmental Innovations," *Strategic Management Journal*, 34 (8), 891-909.
- Black, Brian C., David M. Hassenzahl, Jennie C. Stephens, Gary Weisel, and Nancy Gift (2013), *Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science and History*, Oxford, UK: ABC-Clio.
- Brijs, Kris, Josée Bloemer, and Hans Kasper (2011), "Country-Image Discourse Model: Unraveling Meaning, Structure and Function of Country Image," *Journal of Business Research*, 64 (12), 1259-1269. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.01.017>
- Burck, Jan, Ursula Hagen, Niklas Höhne, Leonardo Nascimento and Christoph Bals (2020), "Climate Change Performance Index", *CCPI*, German Watch, Bonn.
- Carrefour (2021), "Carrefour se donne l'Objectif d'atteindre la Neutralité Carbone d'ici 2040" *Communiqué de presse* (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at : <https://www.carrefour.com/sites/default/files/2021-11/CP%20Carrefour%20se%20donne%20l%27objectif%20d%27atteindre%20la%20neutralité%20carbone%20d%27ici%202040.pdf>]
- CA.gov (2019), "California Climate Strategy" (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at : <https://www.climatechange.ca.gov/>]
- Casado-Asencio, Juan and Reinhard Steurer (2014), "Integrated Strategies on Sustainable Development, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Western Europe: Communication rather than Coordination," *Journal of Public Policy*, 34 (3), 437-473. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X13000287>
- Chandy, Rajesh K., Gita V. Johar, Moorman Christine, and John H. Roberts (2021), "Better Marketing for a Better World," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 85 (3), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429211003690>

- De Leeuw, Edith D. (2005), "To Mix or not to Mix Data Collection Modes in Surveys," *Journal of Official Statistics*, 21 (2), 233-55.
- Delmas, Magali A. (2002), "The diffusion of environmental management standards in Europe and the United States: An institutional perspective," *Policy Sciences*, 35 (1), 91–119. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016108804453>
- Desbordes, René D. (1990), *Development and Testing of a Psychometric Scale to Measure Country-of-Origin Image*, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International.
- Dholakia, Nikhilesh and Cristian Zilibierberg (2024), "Change and Legitimation Narratives in the Intertwined Market Discourses of Sustainability and Neoliberalism", in Annamma Joy (ed.), *Critical Perspectives in the Study of Art, Fashion and Wine: Sustainability and Artification*, Berlin: de Gruyter (forthcoming).
- DiMaggio, Paul J. and Walter R. Powell (1983), "The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields," *American Sociological Review*, 48 (2), 147–160. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095101>
- EIA, U.S. Energy Administration Information (2021), "U.S. Energy Facts Explained," *U.S. Energy Administration Information*, (accessed February 20, 2023), [available at: <https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/us-energy-facts/>].
- Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Énergie et de la Mer, en charge des Relations Internationales sur le Climat (2017), "Les Français et la Consommation responsable, Vers des Achats plus Respectueux de l'Environnement ?" Report (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at: <https://www.statistiques.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2018-10/datalab-essentiel-97-francais-consommation-responsable-mars2017.pdf>]
- Fahmi, Wael and Keith Sutton (2010), "Cairo's Contested Garbage: Sustainable Solid Waste Management and the Zabaleen's Right to the City," *Sustainability*, 2 (6), 1765-1783. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su2061765>
- Florin, Benedicte (2016), "Nothing Goes to Waste!: Trash Collection in Cairo, Casablanca and Isanbul," *Techniques and Cultures*, 65-66. <https://doi.org/10.4000/tc.8020>
- and Mustapha Azaitraoui (2017), "The Small Hands of Moroccan Recycling," *The Conversation*, (accessed February 20, 2023), [available at: <https://theconversation.com/the-small-hands-of-moroccan-recycling-74878>].

- Funk, Cary and Meg Hefferon (2019), "US Public Views on Climate and Energy," *Pew research center* (accessed February 20, 2023), [available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2019/11/25/u-s-public-views-on-climate-and-energy/>].
- Glover, Jane L., Donna Champion, Kevin J. Daniels, and Andrew J.D. Dainty (2014), "An Institutional Theory Perspective on Sustainable Practices across the Dairy Supply Chain," *International Journal of Production Economics*, 152, 102-111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2013.12.027>
- Godefroit-Winkel, Delphine, Marie Schill, and Fatou Diop-Sall (2022), "Does Environmental Corporate Social Responsibility increase loyalty?," *International Journal of International of Retail & Distribution Management*, 50 (4), 417-436. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-08-2020-0292>
- Gorge, Hélène, Maud Herbert, Nil Özçaglar-Toulouse, and Isabelle Robert (2015), "What do we really need? Questioning consumption through sufficiency," *Journal of Macromarketing*, 35 (1), 11-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146714553935>
- Hall, Michael C. (2018), "Climate Change and Marketing: Stranded Research or a Sustainable Development?" *Journal of Public Affairs*, 18 (4), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1893>
- Handelman, Jay M. and Stephen J. Arnold (1990), "The Role of Marketing Actions with a Social Dimension: Appeals to the Institutional Environment," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (3), 33-48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251774>
- Hawley, Amos (1968), Human Ecology, in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills, New York: Macmillan.
- HCP, Haut Commissariat au Plan (2016), "Enquête Nationale sur la Perception des Mesures du Développement Durable, Synthèse des Premiers Résultats," Rabat.
- Hulme, Mike (2009), *Why we Disagree about Climate Change: Understanding Controversy Inaction and Opportunity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huq, Fahian A. and Mark Stevenson (2020), "Implementing Socially Sustainable Practices in Challenging Institutional Contexts: Building Theory from Seven Developing Country Supplier Cases," *Journal of Business Ethics*, 161, 415-442. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3951-x>
- Illich, Ivan (1973), "Tools for Conviviality," New York: Harper and Row.
- IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2012), "Glossary of Terms," in *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to*

- Advance Climate Change Adaptation*, Christopher B. Field, Vicente Barros, Thomas F. Stocker, Qin Dahe, David J. Dokken, Kristie L. Ebi, Michael D. Mastrandrea, Katharine J. Mach, Gian-Kasper Plattner, Simon K. Allen, Melinda Tignor, Pauline M. Midgley, eds. Cambridge UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 555-564.
- IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2022), “Climate Change 2022, Mitigation of Climate Change,” *Working Group III contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_FullReport.pdf].
- Ipsos (2021), “Obs’COP 2020 Observatoire international climat et opinions publiques, Le baromètre de la perception du changement climatique dans 30 pays, ” (accessed August 12, 2020) [available at : <https://www.edf.fr/observatoire-opinion-rechauffement-climatique>].
- Jafari, Aliakbar, Marwa Aly and Anne M. Doherty (2022), “An Analytical Review of Market System in Consumer Culture Research: Insight from the Sociology of Markets,” *Journal of Business Research*, 139, 1261-1274. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.10.040>
- Lipschutz, Ronnie D. (2004), “Sweating it out: NGO campaigns and trade union empowerment,” *Development in Practice*, 14 (1/2), 197–209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0961452032000170767>
- Mamic, Ivanka (2005), “Managing global supply chain: The sports footwear, apparel and retail sectors,” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 59 (1), 81–100. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-005-3415-y>
- Ministère de l’Énergie, des Mines et de l’Environnement, Département de l’Environnement (2020), “Plan National Climat A l’Horizon 2030,” (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at : http://www.4c.ma/files/ugd/3c9136_b08a13993f714dfb93cdaa1f12a8b319.pdf]
- Ministère de la Transition Écologique et Solidaire (2018), “French Strategy for Energy and Climate, Multi Annual Energy Plan,” (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at : <https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/PPE-Executive%20summary.pdf>]
- North, Douglas (1992), “Institutions, Ideology, and Economic Performance,” *Cato Journal*, 11 (3), 477-96.
- Ortiz-de-Mandojana, Natalia, Javier Aguilera-Caracuel and Mathilde Morales-Raya (2016), “Corporate governance and environmental

- sustainability: The moderating role of the national institutional context,” *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 23 (3), 150-164. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1367>
- Prothero, Andrea and Pierre McDonagh (2015), “Introduction to the special issue: Sustainability as Megatrend II,” *Journal of Macromarketing*, 35 (1), 7-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146714556818>
- Puget, Yves (2020), “90% des consommateurs attendant des marques qu’elles s’engagent,” *LSA*, (accessed February 20, 2023), [Available at: <https://www.lsa-conso.fr/90-des-consommateurs-attendent-des-marques-qu-elles-s-engagent,340296>]
- Royaume du Maroc, Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement (2011), “La Constitution,” (accessed February 20, 2023) [available at: http://www.sgg.gov.ma/Portals/0/constitution/constitution_2011_Fr.pdf]
- Rivera, Jorge (2004), “Institutional Pressures and Voluntary Environmental Behavior in Developing Countries; Evidence from the Costa Rican Hotel Industry,” *Society and National Resources*, 17 (19), 779-797. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920490493783>
- Sadiki, Abdellatif, Marie Schill, and Delphine Godefroit-Winkel (2016), “Les Entreprises et la Lutte contre le Réchauffement Climatique au Maroc: Engagement et Perceptions des Employés”, *Conférence des Présidents d’Universités, 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*, Marrakech, Morocco, November, 7-16.
- Saylan, Charles and Daniel T. Blumstein (2011), *The Failure of Environmental Education (And How We Can Fix It)*, Oakland University of California Press.
- Schill, Marie, Delphine Godefroit-Winkel and Mine Ü. Hughes (2021), “A Country-of-Origin Perspective on Climate Change Actions: Evidence from France, Morocco, and the United States,” *Journal of International Marketing*, 29 (1), 23-38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069031X20963712>
- Schill, Marie, Laetitia Lethielleux, Delphine Godefroit-Winkel, and Monique Combes-Joret (2018), “Action de l’Entreprise dans la Lutte contre le Réchauffement Climatique: Effets sur l’Identification Organisationnelle et l’Engagement Organisationnel des Salariés,” *Revue de Gestion des Ressources Humaines*, 2, 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.3917/grhu.108.0003>
- Scott, Richard W. (2001), *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests and Identities*, London: SAGE publications.

- (2005), *Institutional Theory: Contributing to a Theoretical research Program in Great minds in Management: The Process of Theory Development*, Ken G. Smith and Michael A. Hitt, eds. Oxford [u. a.]: Oxford University Press, 460-484.
- and Juliana M. Amarante (2001), "Institutional Theory's Past and Future Contributions to Organization Studies," *Brazilian Administration Review*, 13 (3), 1-6.
- Tjernström, Emilia and Thomas H. Tietenberg (2008), "Do differences in attitudes explain differences in national climate change policies?," *Ecological Economics*, 65 (2), 315-325.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2007.06.019>
- UNPD, United Nations Development Programme (2021), "People's climate vote," *UNDP and University of Oxford*, (accessed February 20, 2023), [available at: <https://www.undp.org/publications/peoples-climate-vote>]
- Varman, Rohit and Russell W. Belk (2022), "Privileging Localism and Visualizing Nationhood in Anti-Consumption," *Markets, Globalization and Development Review*, 7 (4), Article 2.
- Wagner, Tillman, Richard J. Lutz, and Barton A. Weitz (2009), "Corporate Hypocrisy: Overcoming the Threat of Inconsistent Corporate Social Responsibility Perceptions," *Journal of Marketing*, 73 (6), 77-91.
<https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.73.6.77>
- Zanette, Maria C. and Daiane Scaraboto (2019), "'To Spanx or not to Spanx': How Objects that Carry Contradictory Institutional Logics Trigger Identity Conflict for Consumer," *Journal of Business Research*, 105, 443-453.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.02.065>

Appendix 1. Moderating effect of the institutional context (Schill, Godefroit-Winkel, and Hughes 2021)

	France N = 579	Morocco N = 350	United States N = 460
Country's climate change marketing actions → Attitudes toward the country ($\Delta\chi = 8.28$, $df = 2$, $p < .05$)	$\gamma = .23$ ($p < .001$)	$\gamma = .50$ ($p < .001$)	$\gamma = .33$ ($p < .001$)
Model fit indices	$\chi^2 = 484.95$, $df = 213$, $p = .000$; RMSEA = .030; CFI = .98; TLI = .97; $\chi^2/df = 2.28$		
Predictive power (R^2)	0.18	0.29	0.29