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Public image the motivation behind global businesses carbon-cutting, report finds

29th March 2010



Climate change efforts within businesses around the world are predominately driven by public relation efforts, according to a report by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Its *After Copenhagen: Business and Climate Change* report, conducted in December in the wake of the UN climate summit, found 35 per cent of executives said their firms always take climate change efforts into account when it comes to public relations.

The report found that this was higher than for any other business consideration with climate change being important to 24 per cent of companies' business strategy and for 17 per cent of their risk management efforts.

Iain Scott, senior editor at the Economist Intelligence Unit, said climate change efforts can be fuelled by activities of rival competitors.

'Those that are publicly listed and are more subject to regulation are more likely to be taking action,' Scott said at a press briefing launching the report.

This motivation is despite 59 per cent of the 500 executives that took part seeing cutting carbon as a way to gain a competitive advantage, the report which was supported by 1E, IBM, the Carbon Trust and Hitachi said.

'In addition, a wide range of businesses - from King Fisher, a retail group, to 3M, Siemens and GE, three manufacturing conglomerates - have built major businesses on the back of new environmental products and services,' the report said.

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