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### **Electricity consumers in regional Australia: social acceptance of coal-fired power and renewable energy**

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Public policy in many nations is seeking to transition energy production away from fossil fuels and towards renewable energy sources. Reviews of the literature have identified that only partial attention is paid to the concept of social acceptance. Hence, this work explores public opinions regarding climate change and renewable energy in Australia. Respondent-completed questionnaires from 325 Queenslanders reveal positive attitudes towards renewable energy. Overall, respondents agree that climate change is occurring and that society has a responsibility to act to minimise its effects. Surprisingly, consumers who support coal-fired power show strong support for renewable energy, despite being undecided on the climate change issue and not perceiving a connection between electricity usage in the home and climate change. Consumers who are opposed to coal-fired power show low support for all fossil fuels, despite the fact that they will continue to underpin the Australian energy system for some time to come. In addition, demographic variables, notably gender and education, along with political affiliation, are associated with varying levels of support for particular energy technologies. Policy makers should heed the study's findings in order to build legitimacy for an energy transition in Australia.