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Executive Summary

Research Aim: To understand our clients' concerns regarding current global ethical issues.

It is important that we keep up to date with the specific issues that concern our clients to ensure that we are offering them the most appropriate financial solutions.

We intend to use the results of the survey to influence our own practices. We will also distribute this survey report to the investment managers that we work with in order to inform them of the opinions of our engaged cohort.

This year we chose to focus on the Climate Crisis and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Our survey was sent out to 259 clients and we received 51 responses.

Key findings:

- The level of concern around the climate crisis is high with 94% of respondents being very concerned and the remaining 6% being somewhat concerned.
- This concern is particularly pronounced in our older clients – 29.4% of respondents aged 61-70 and 43.1% of those aged over 70 are very concerned.
- Our clients are most likely to make environmentally conscious purchases which reflects a preference for individual, consumer driven action.
- Participation in activism or demonstrations is quite low.
- The climate issue that is of the highest concern is biodiversity loss and rising sea levels (18%) followed by extreme weather events, government inaction, and climate related inequality each with 16%.
- Our clients have demonstrated a strong preference for investments with clear environmental impact. Renewable energy ranks the highest (49%) followed by habitat and environmental protections, and battery and clean energy enabling techniques.
- Our clients also want their investments to be transparent and require specific examples of companies in their portfolio helping make a difference, proof that their investment manager is using their power as a shareholder and impact reports.
- Only one of our clients is excited about the growth of AI – 45% are cautiously optimistic and 41% are concerned.
- Daily use of AI is limited. Navigation software is used the most with virtual assistants being used the least.
- Ethical concerns are significant with misinformation being rated as the biggest risk followed by military and autonomous weapons and job loss and inequality.
- We were interested to find that our clients are generally receptive to the use of AI in our practices. In particular, meeting transcriptions, generating letters and reports and researching for our newsletters.
- The additional concerns that worry our clients are inequality, single use plastic, politics, Israel/Gaza, injustice and biodiversity.

This research offers initial insights into the views and concerns of ethical investors. The information identified provides useful information for financial professionals to highlight specific areas of concerns. Please see our full report for more details.