

Environmental activism and climate change strategies

Researching attitudes to CCS at
Climate Camps and Green Party gatherings

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E& E Seminar
14 February, 2011

Plan of the presentation

- Research design and method
- Subjects: climate camp
- Preliminary findings from survey
- Understanding environmentalist stance to CCS

Research aim & design

Aim 1: to gain information on and understanding of perspectives and rationalities amongst environmentalist groups regarding CCS in UK and beyond

Aim 2: To assess existing communication material globally on CCS

Wider aim: Understand frames of reference of energy/climate politics in wider terms than 'policy makers', inside as well as outside institutionalised politics.

Background

- CCS is almost purely a climate technology
- CCS is also an 'end of pipe' solution
- How will environmentalists react to CCS?

- How much do they know about CCS?
- How do they evaluate climate technologies in general?

Approach

- 1) Attend meetings where environmentalist activists gather: surveys (quant.). Offer a workshop on CCS with a technical expert ease access and engage them in debate (qual.).
- 2) Run similar workshops at (Green) political party conferences
- 3) Gather publicly accessible material from environmental NGOs concerning CCS, e.g., Greenpeace, Forum for the Future, WWF, FoE
- 4) Conduct interviews with activists, environmental NGO representatives (qualitative).

Climate Camps

Event	Dates	Location	Participants	Event details
Welsh Climate Camp	Aug 2009	near Ffos-y-Fran mine, Merthyr Tydfil. Wales	David Reiner, Hauke Riesch, Mike Stephenson (BGS)	20-25 activists took part in a workshop led by Reiner with expert contribution from Stephenson. 12 Questionnaires were returned. Discussion not recorded.
Nordic Climate Camp	14-20 July, 2010	Skaane, Southern Sweden	Olaf Corry, Filip Johnsson (Chalmers University of Tech)	20-30 activists took part in a workshop led by Corry. Johnsson provided expert's account and a debate ensued. 13 Questionnaires were returned. Discussion could not be recorded.
Swiss Climate Camp	22 July – 1 Aug	Gals, Switzerland	Olaf Corry, Lasse Wallquist (ETH-Zurich)	20-30 activists took part in a workshop led by Corry where Wallquist provided an expert's account. 19 questionnaires were returned. Discussion recorded by climate campers.
German Klima camp	20-29 Aug	Erkelenz-Borschemich, Germany	Olaf Corry, Gabriella von Goerne (ex-Greenpeace Germany,)	7 activists took part in a workshop led by Olaf Corry. Gabriella von Goerne provided an expert's account of CCS as a technology. A total of 7 questionnaires were returned. Discussion not recorded.
UK Climate Camp	21-24 Aug	Edinburgh	Olaf Corry	Around 30 activists took part in a workshop led by Corry. No final answer from Climate Camp organization received, so Corry went alone without an expert to see whether he could get permission on site. This was granted by those present, but later the issue became the subject of a complaint from one Climate Camper who felt protocol had not been observed. 17 questionnaires were returned.

+ 4 gatherings where invitation was not forthcoming (Belgium, France, Wales 2010 and Australia)

Party Conferences

Event	Dates	Location	Participants	Event details
Conservative Party Conference	3-6 Oct, 2010	Birmingham, England	Olaf Corry, Mike Stephenson (British Geological Survey)	Workshop on CCS organised as a 'Fringe Event' at Conservative Party Conference. Mike Stephenson gave a talk, but due small number of participants, questionnaires were not filled in. Discussion with Taxpayers' Alliance representative provided interesting points.
Scottish Green Party Conference	6-7 Nov, 2010	Edinburgh, Scotland	Olaf Corry, David Reiner, Stuart Haszeldine (U Edinburgh), Patrick Harvie, MSP	Revised design: A 'local' speaker added, questionnaire process conducted before and after rather than during the event. Advertisement placed in programme, Over 80 participants attended. A total of 51 questionnaires were returned
Green Party of England & Wales Spring Conference	28 Feb 2011	Cardiff, Wales	Olaf Corry, David Reiner,, Green Party representative TBC, Mike Stephenson (British Geological Survey).	Scheduled event. Presentation on We have booked a stall from the 27 th -28 th



Climate Camp, RBS, Edinburgh. 2010

Photo: OC



Climate Camp, RBS, Edinburgh. 2010

Photo: OC



**Climate Camp UK, 2010.
Royal Bank of Scotland, Edinburgh**

Photo: OC



Outside Climate Camp UK 2010, RBS land.

Photo: OC



Demonstration against our project at Swiss climate camp workshop

Climate camp video

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISCywc1kJp
o&feature=fvw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISCywc1kJp
o&feature=fvw)

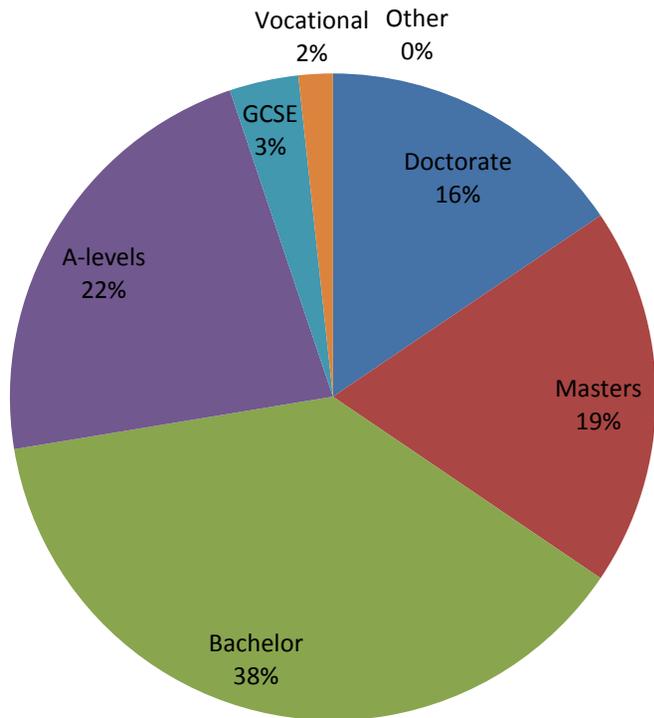
Climate camp social identity

- Positive self: “Change is wrought by people who are at first considered insane dreamers, but who have the courage to disobey and deviate from the norm”.
- Negative identification: “We reject a society that exploits people and planet in the interests of private profit and privilege”
- “RBS is currently financing the largest and most destructive industrial project on the planet [tar sands]”.
- Legitimisation: “There needs to be a place where we speak as though politics didn’t exist – where only the science counts”.
- Strategy: “The only way to prevent catastrophic climate change is to stop burning fossil fuels by leaving them in the ground and building alternatives. Not just an alternative energy supply, but an alternative society”.

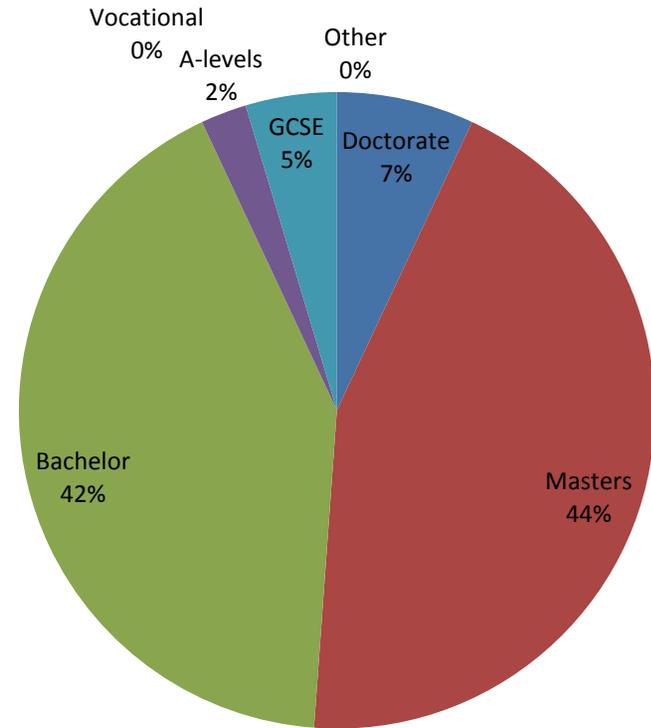
Source: Materials from Camp for Climate Action, Edinburgh

Highest achieved educational qualification

Education level CC



Education level GP



Average degree or equivalent and above

England: 16.6%

CC: 73%

Scotland: 15.4%

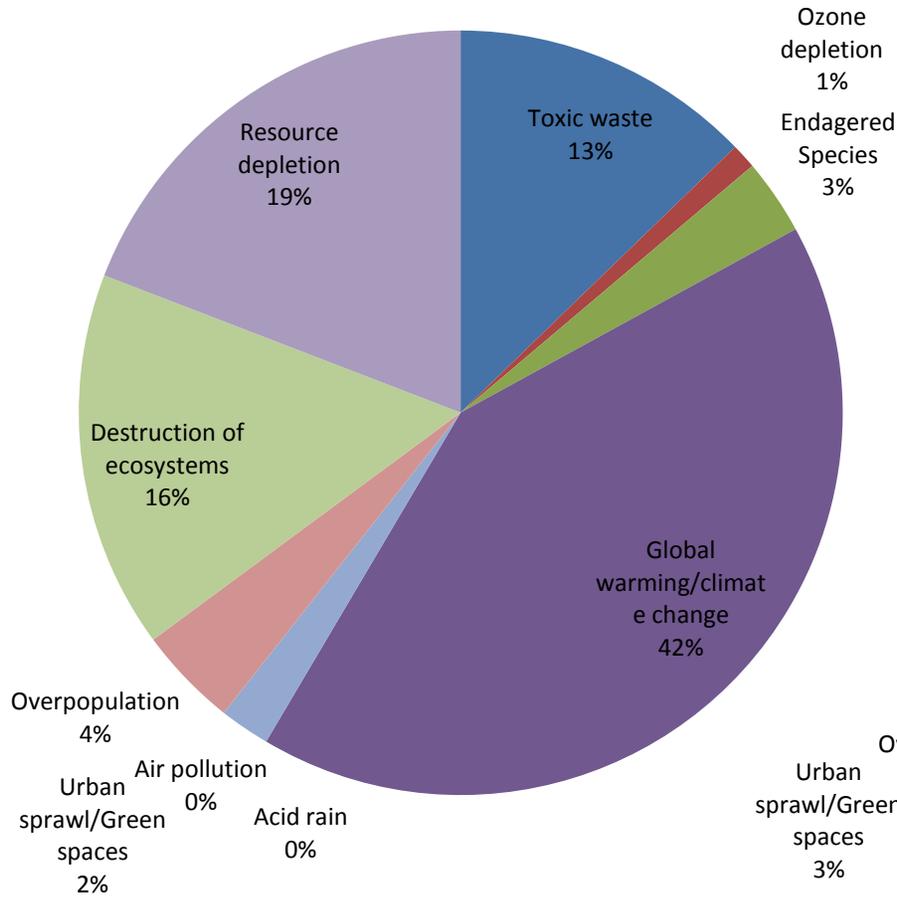
GP: 93%

London: 24.7%

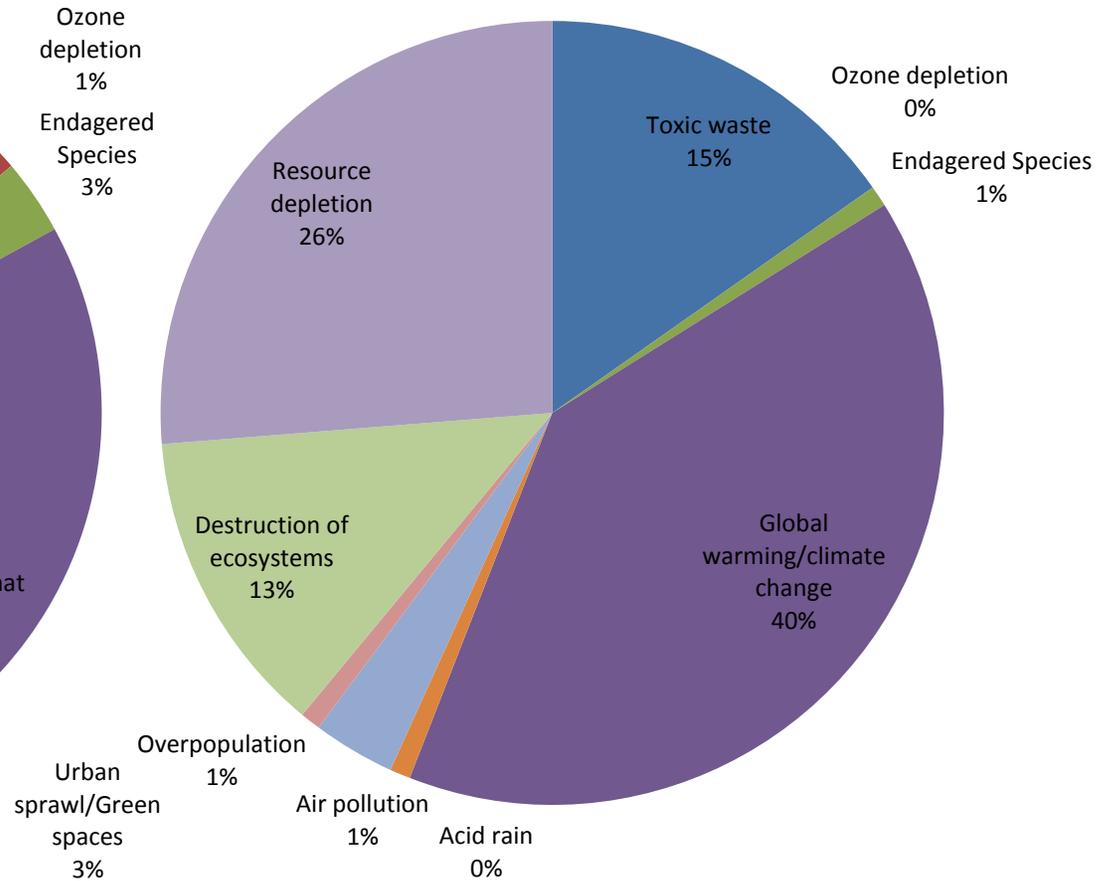
Cambridge: 41%

Top environmental problems

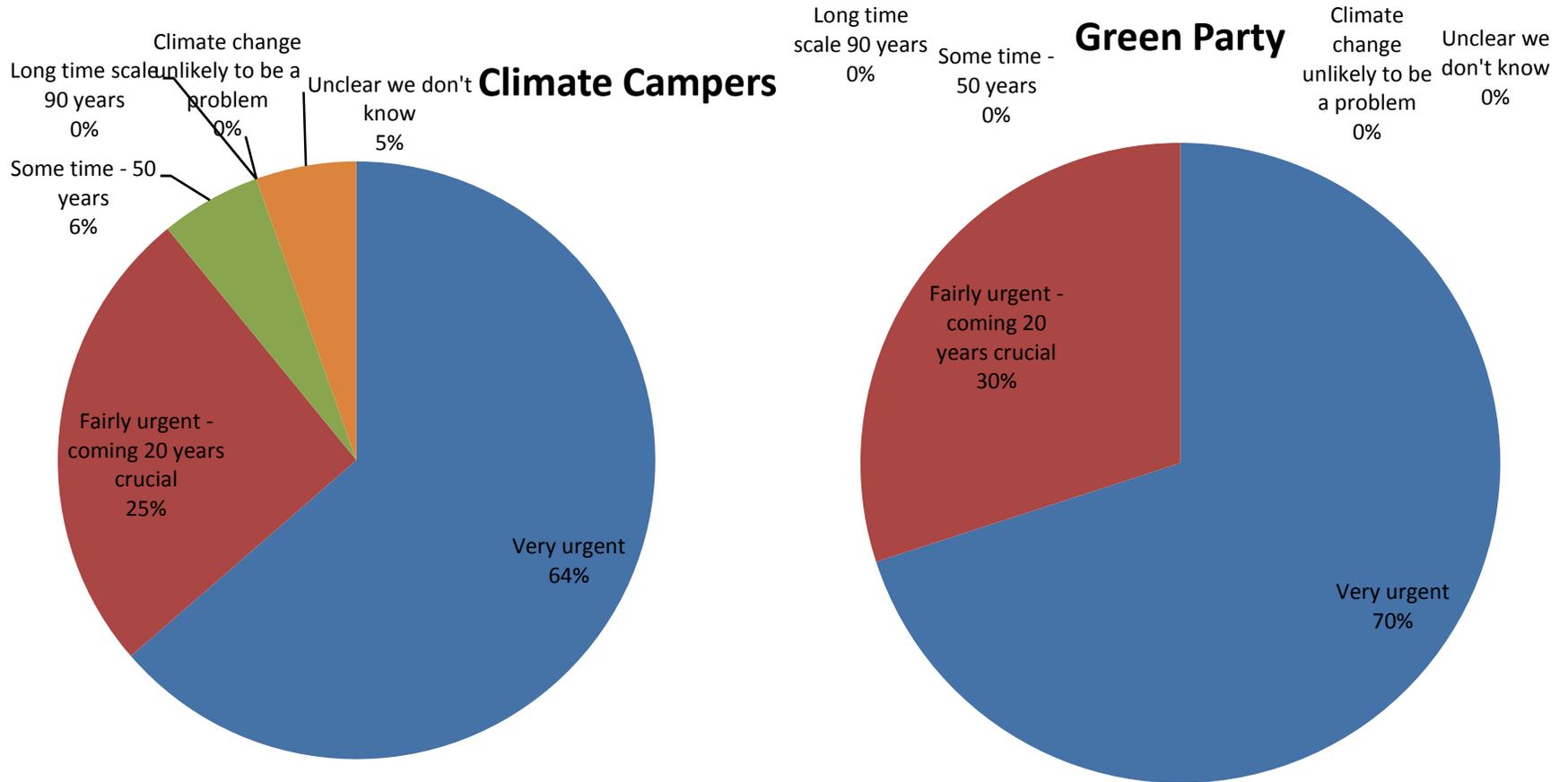
Climate Campers



Green Party

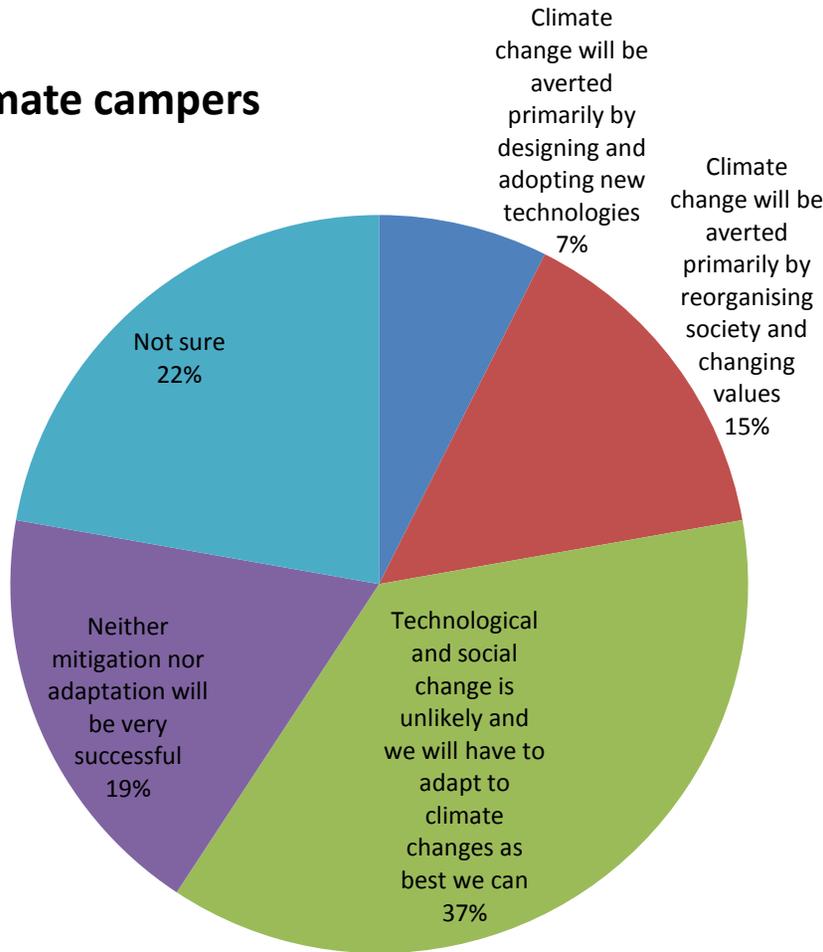


Perceived urgency/timescale of climate change problem

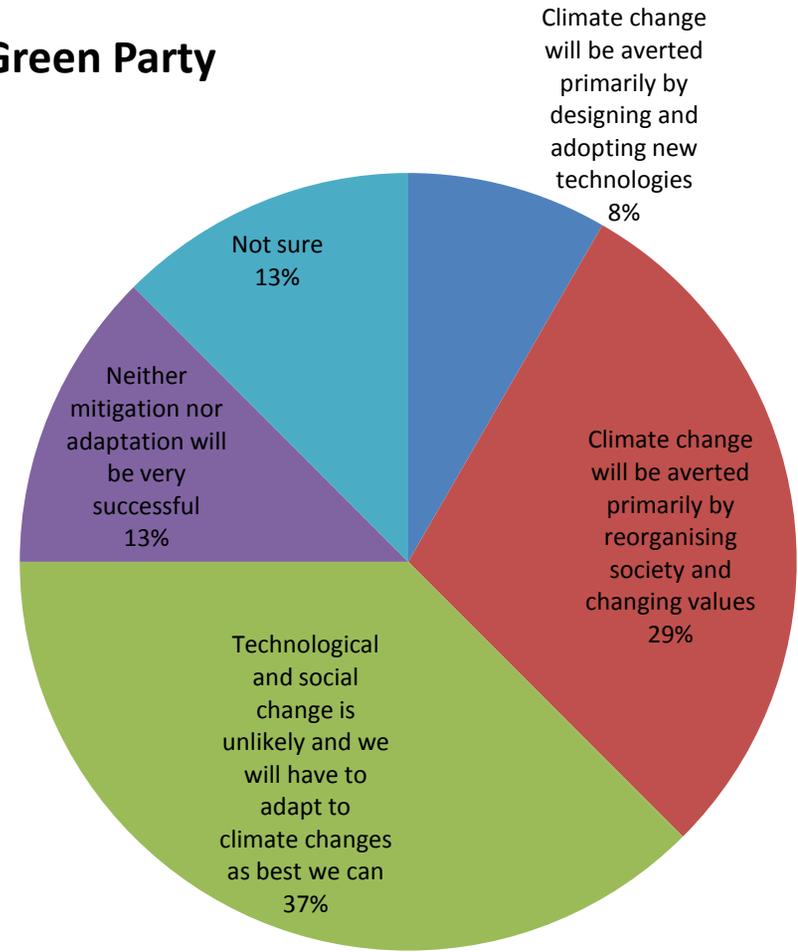


What is the most likely future scenario?

Climate campers

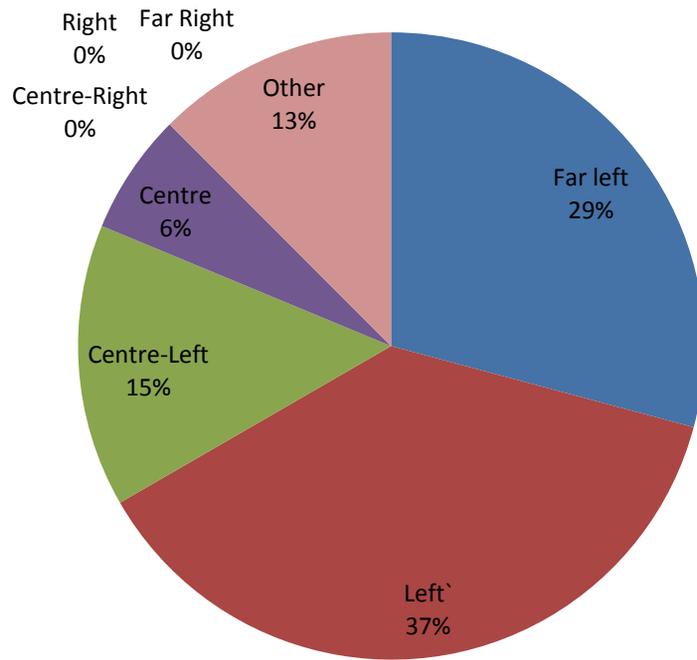


Green Party

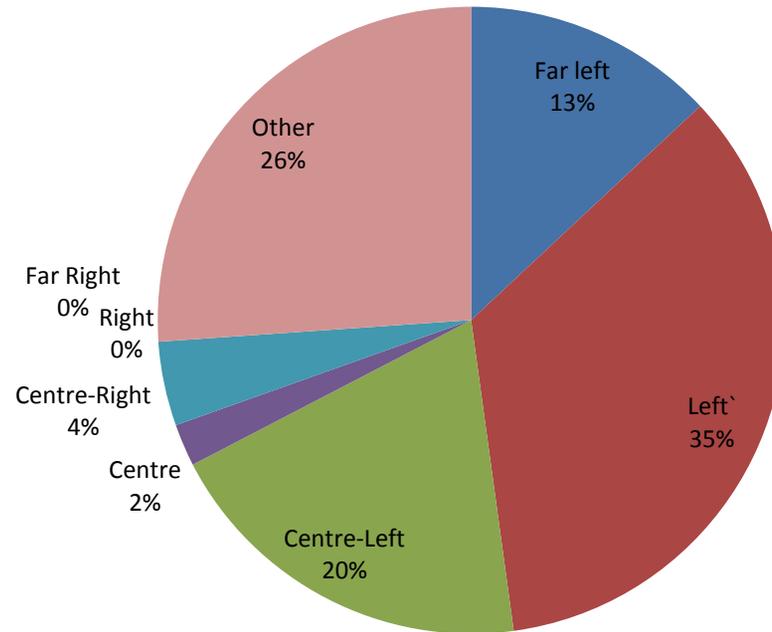


Self-definition on political spectrum

Climate Campers



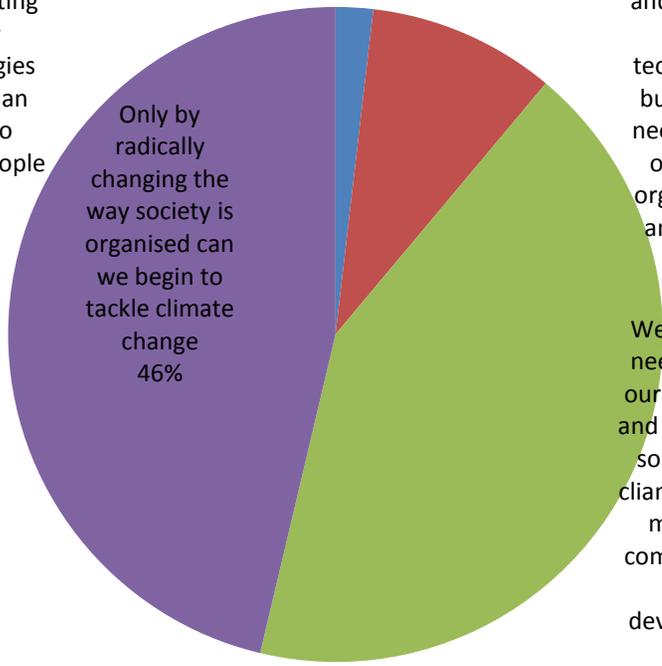
Green Party



Preferred strategy: social or technological change?

We should avert climate change by developing and adopting better technologies rather than trying to change people
2%

Climate Campers



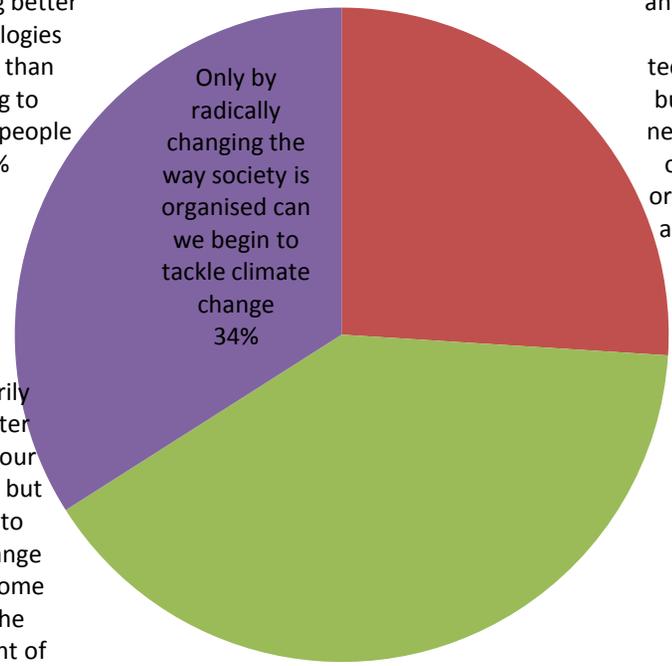
Only by radically changing the way society is organised can we begin to tackle climate change
46%

We should primarily avert climate change by developing and adopting better technologies but we also need to alter our social organisation and values
9%

We primarily need to alter our behaviour and values, but solutions to climate change must also come through the development of new technology
43%

We should avert climate change by developing and adopting better technologies rather than trying to change people
0%

Green Party

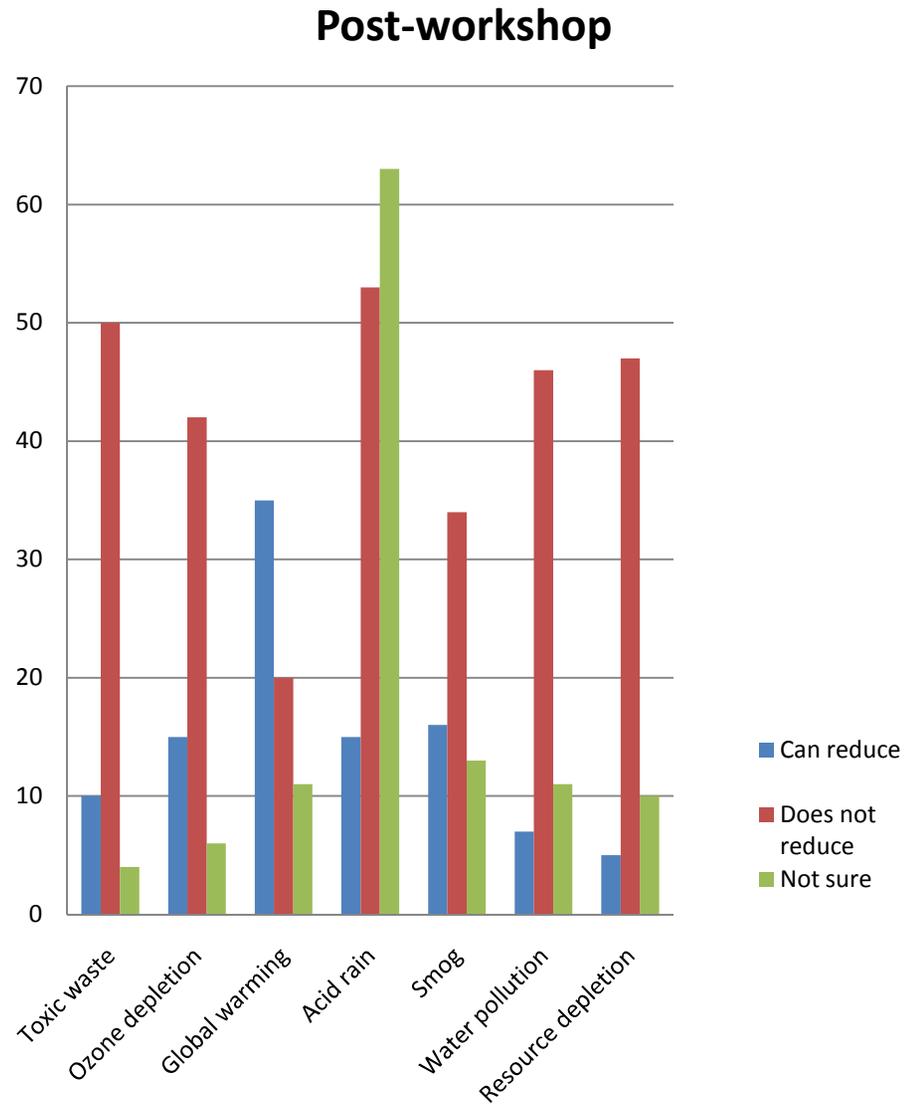
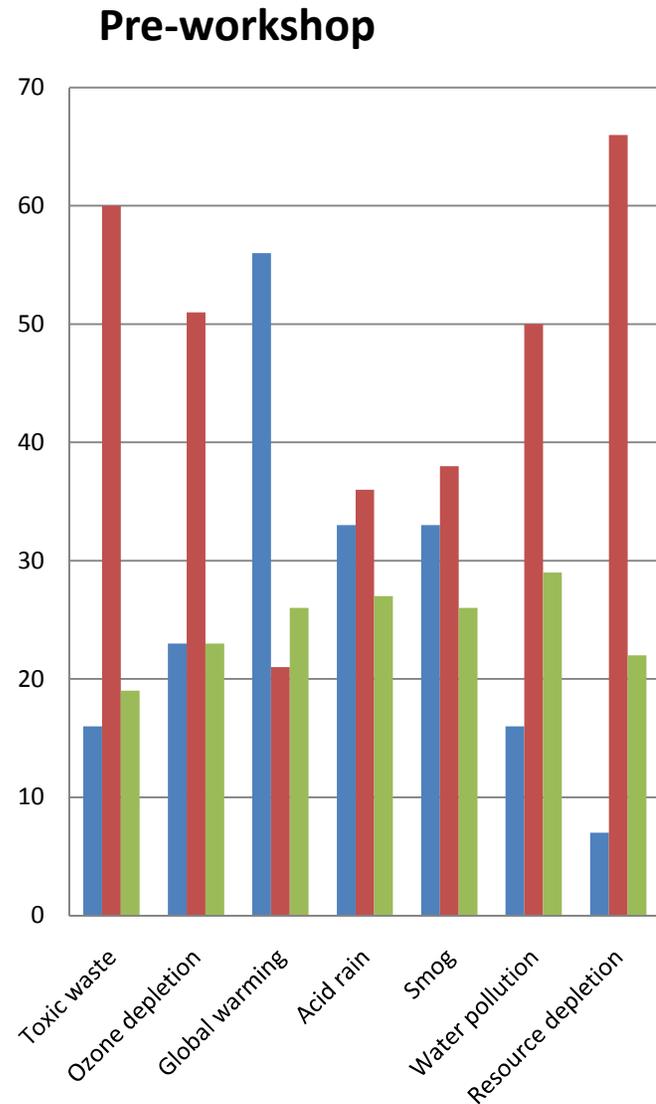


Only by radically changing the way society is organised can we begin to tackle climate change
34%

We primarily need to alter our behaviour and values, but solutions to climate change must also come through the development of new technology
40%

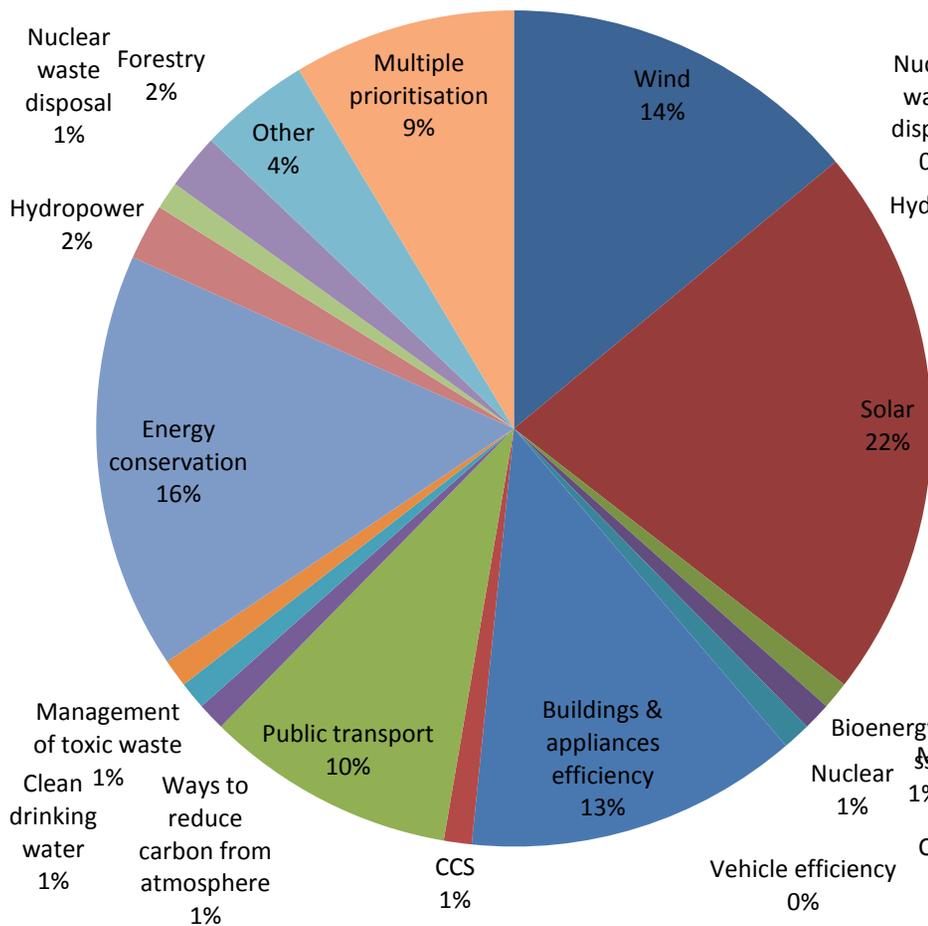
We should primarily avert climate change by developing and adopting better technologies but we also need to alter our social organisation and values
26%

In your opinion CCS can reduce which of the following environmental concerns...?

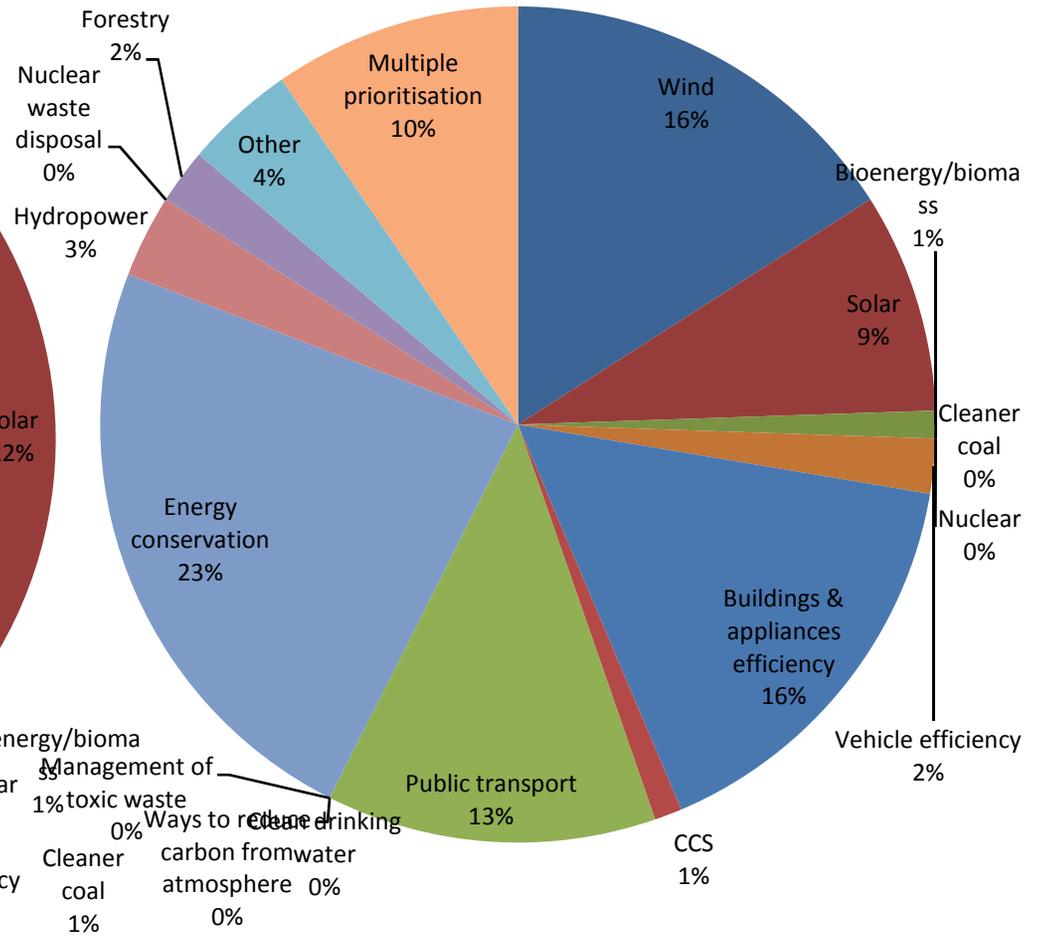


IF your governments had \$5bn to spend on energy, what do you think should be the top two priorities?

Climate Campers

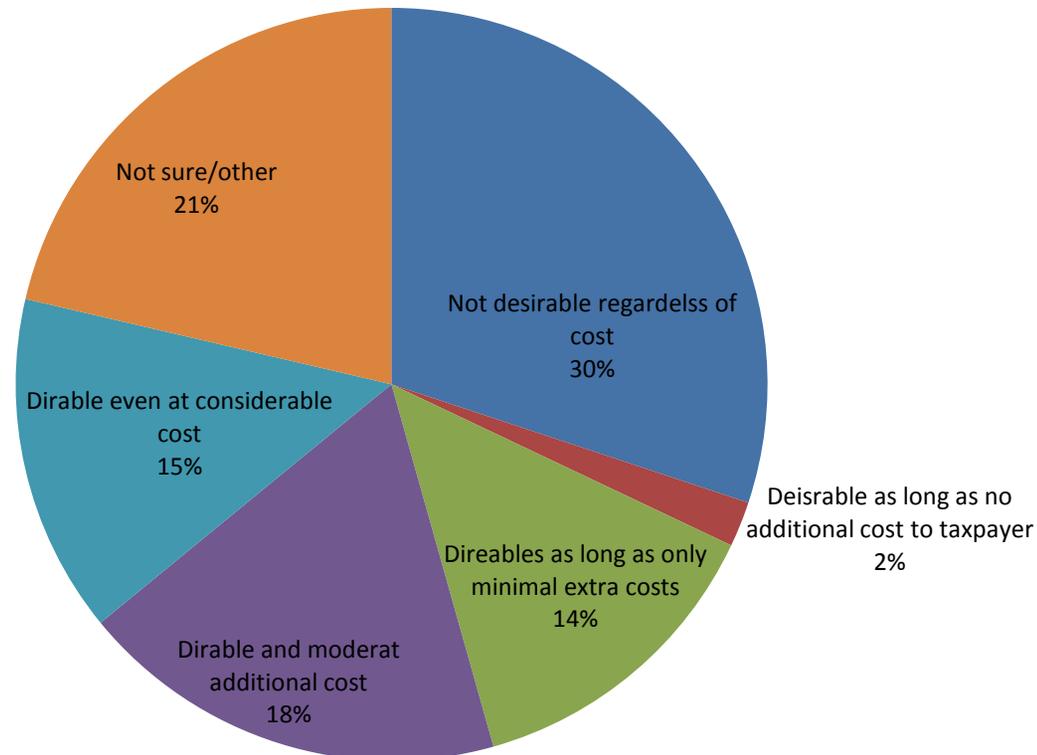


Green Party



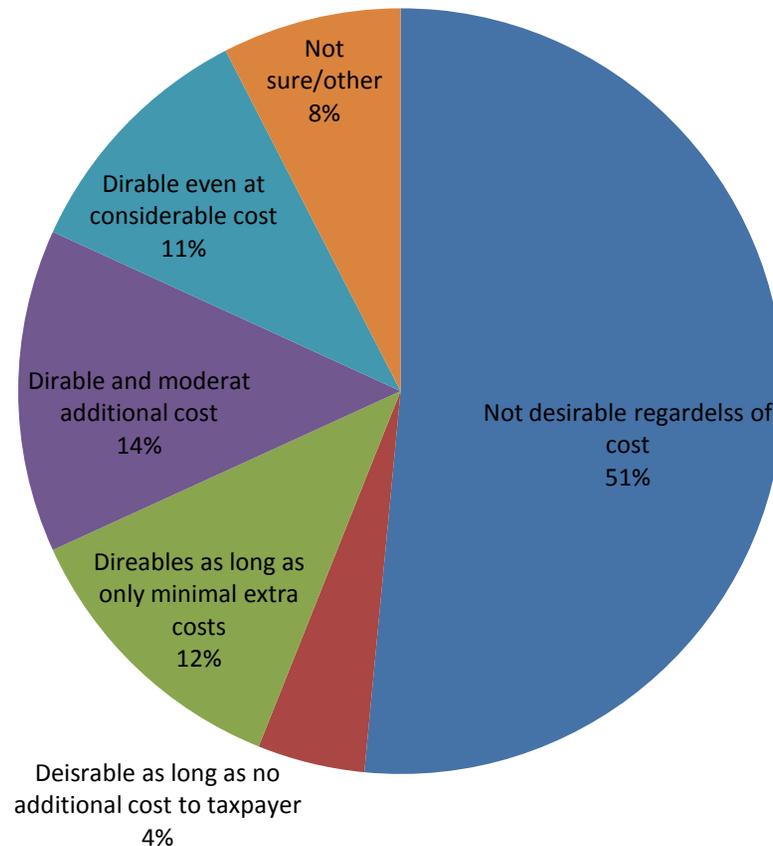
**The EU has recently committed to building
10-12 demonstration plants for CCS by 2020.**

**Do you believe this goal is:
(pre-workshop)**



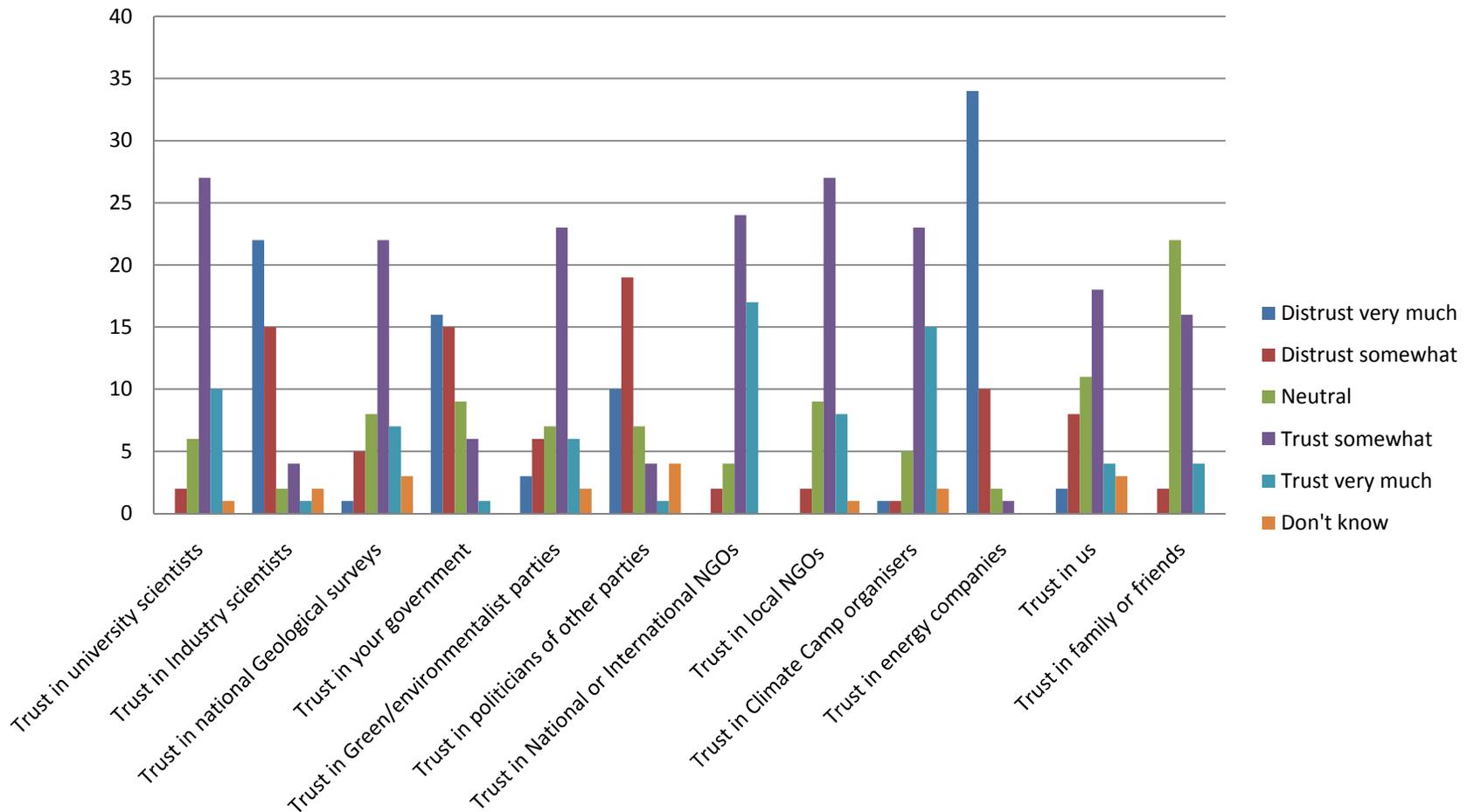
**The EU has recently committed to building
10-12 demonstration plants for CCS by 2020.**

**Do you believe this goal is:
(post-workshop)**



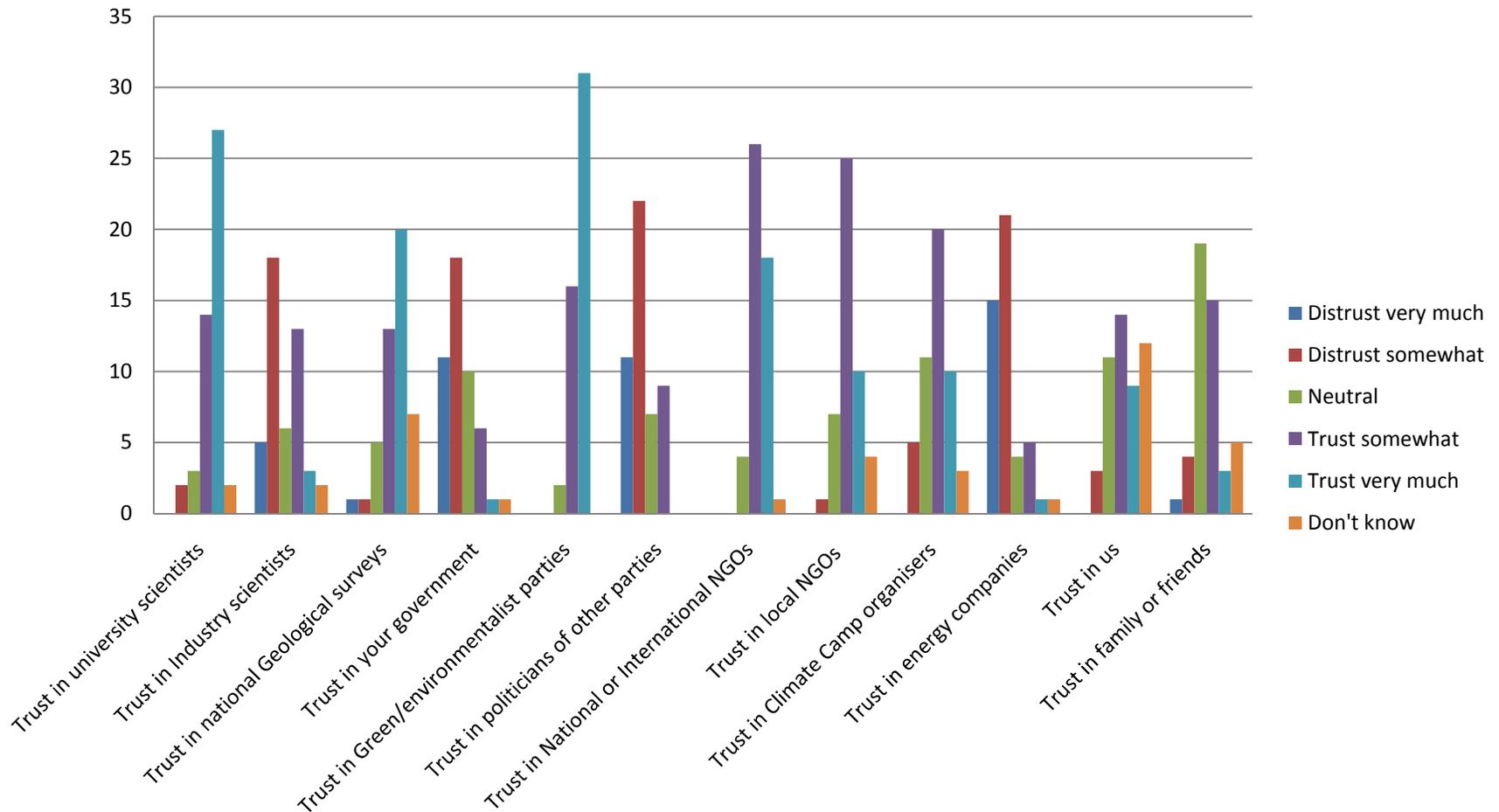
To what extent do you trust the following sources of information to give you accurate information on CCS?

Climate campers' trust



To what extent do you trust the following sources of information to give you accurate information on CCS?

GP trust



Selected Written Comments on Questionnaire: Climate Campers

- 'Don't assume business as usual the future will be another economic system'
- 'CCS is a false climate solution. There isn't time for CCS to stop us reaching the CC tipping point.'
- The promise of CCS is legitimising the building of more coal fire/gas/biomass power stations and business as usual. We need to reduce demand for energy as we cannot have infinite growth on a finite planet
- I am concerned you are presenting this as a developed technology when it isn't. Present with a longer warm-up, anarchists never run on time. No space to focus on explicit anti-capitalist, anarchist agenda. Whole process needs to be much more participatory.

Selected Written Comments on Questionnaire: Green Party

- Very interesting and educational
- Excellent workshop
- Very interesting and enjoyable
- Enjoyed the workshop, have warmed towards CCS as an interim measure for existing sites
- Very enjoyable
- Very interesting
- Excellent speakers
- My main concern is the level of disagreement among experts-there seems to be no consensus
- Questions too broad, need divided into subcategories
- Net energy issues-using more energy to continue with centralised generation

Why the general scepticism towards CCS?

- ‘CCS is typical green wash’
- Storage space is a limited resource
- We don’t need a ‘bridge’ to post-fossil fuel society as we already have the technology
- Renewables, change of lifestyle and lower energy consumption are necessary and better
- More coal fired power stations built with reference to being ‘CCS ready’
- Will it ever work? Will it take too long to roll out?

Why the general scepticism towards CCS (continued)?

- Risks of storage are big/unknown
- Continues centralised of energy production (efficiency concerns and suspicion of big corporations, democratic element)
- Focuses only on CO₂ problem – mining and burning huge amounts of fossil fuel is harmful in other ways
- Will high enough percentage of the CO₂ be sequestered (costly and difficult)?
- Carbon prices are too low to make it attractive on large scale. Business will always try to avoid it.
- CCS will create a new business community = a new set of special interests

Possible positives on CCS

- We can't tell China and India not to industrialise. They have to find their own way and CCS could be something for them (focus on poverty and justice)
- CCS with biomass possibly interesting (reduces CO2 levels)
- CCS possibly OK for steel industry CO2 emissions
- May be necessary to avoid nuclear

Similes & Metaphors

“We are creating a problem for the future instead of investing in what we already know works”

“CCS is like low energy light bulbs – it is a distraction from the real issue”

“CCS is like the banks working on a bubble of borrowed money. It borrows time from the future”

“CCS is just like nuclear. It stores up problems for the future and nobody wants to have it anywhere near themselves”

“It’s like sweeping dirt under the carpet” / “sticking your head in the sand”

“It’s shit. No it’s worse than shit”.

“It’s like having fat removal surgery. It doesn’t solve the cause of the problem, but it makes a real mess”

“[CCS] means staying in an abusive relationship just because you have to pay the rent”.

Summary of survey findings so far

- Green activists are very well educated
- Climate change is seen as the no.1 environmental problem
- CC and GP differ on urgency of climate change problem
- Focus is on “ecology” rather than “environment”, (two anomalies -- toxic waste is ranked surprisingly high and overpopulation low)
- Social change is considered more likely to solve problems than technological solutions, especially by climate campers
- Only roughly half think CCS can help combat climate change
- CCS is not seen as a solution to any other problems but creates problems
- Workshop on CCS appears to *increase* scepticism
- Trust in university scientists is very high
- CCS is seen as a false solution

Special Thanks to:

- Prof Mike Stephenson (British Geological Survey/University of Nottingham)
- Prof Stuart Haszeldine (University of Edinburgh/SCCSC)
- Prof Filip Johnsson (Chalmers U of Technology)
- Lasse Wallquist (ETH-Zurich)
- Dr Gabriela von Goerne (ex-Greenpeace)
- Peta Ashworth and Anna Carr (CSIRO)