



Australian
National
University

Climate Update 2019

Communicating climate change: Appeals to the public(s)

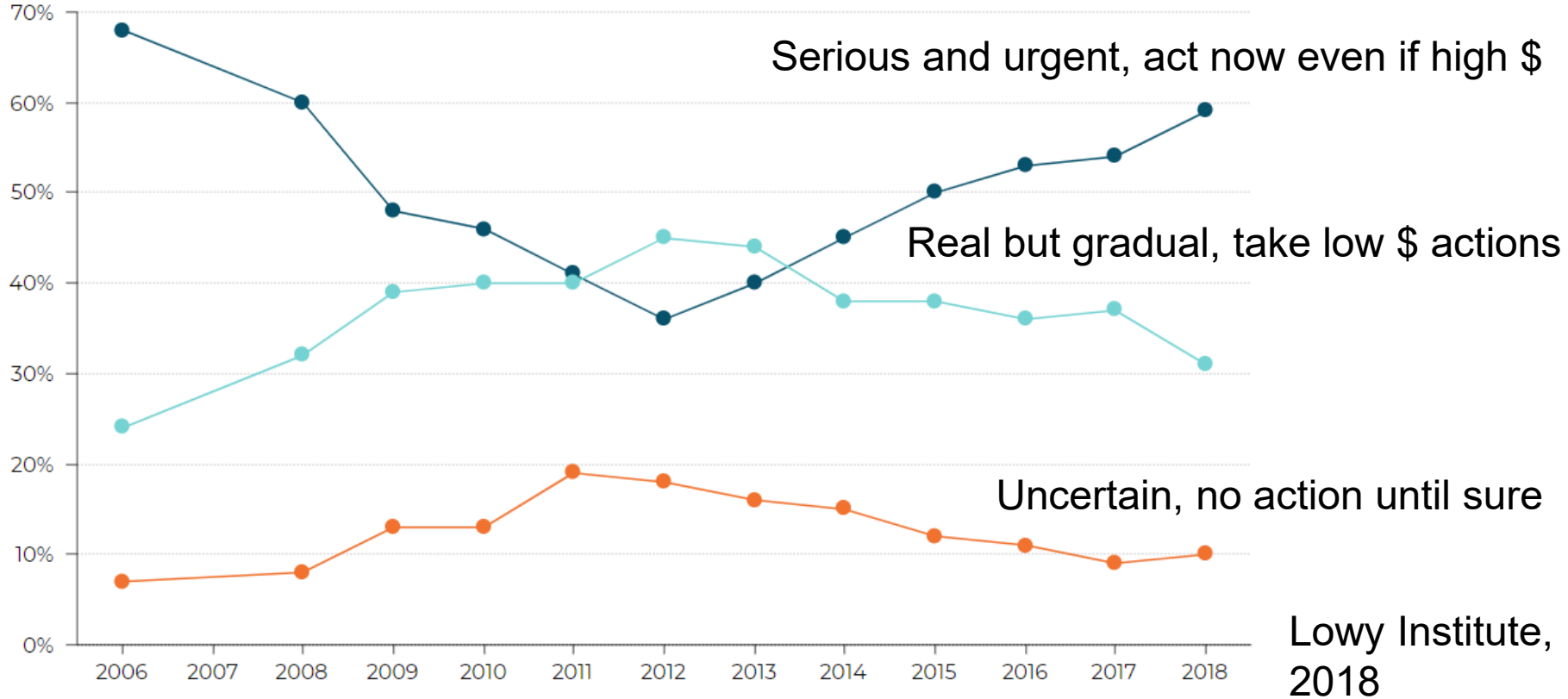


Dr Bec Colvin

ANU Climate Change Institute

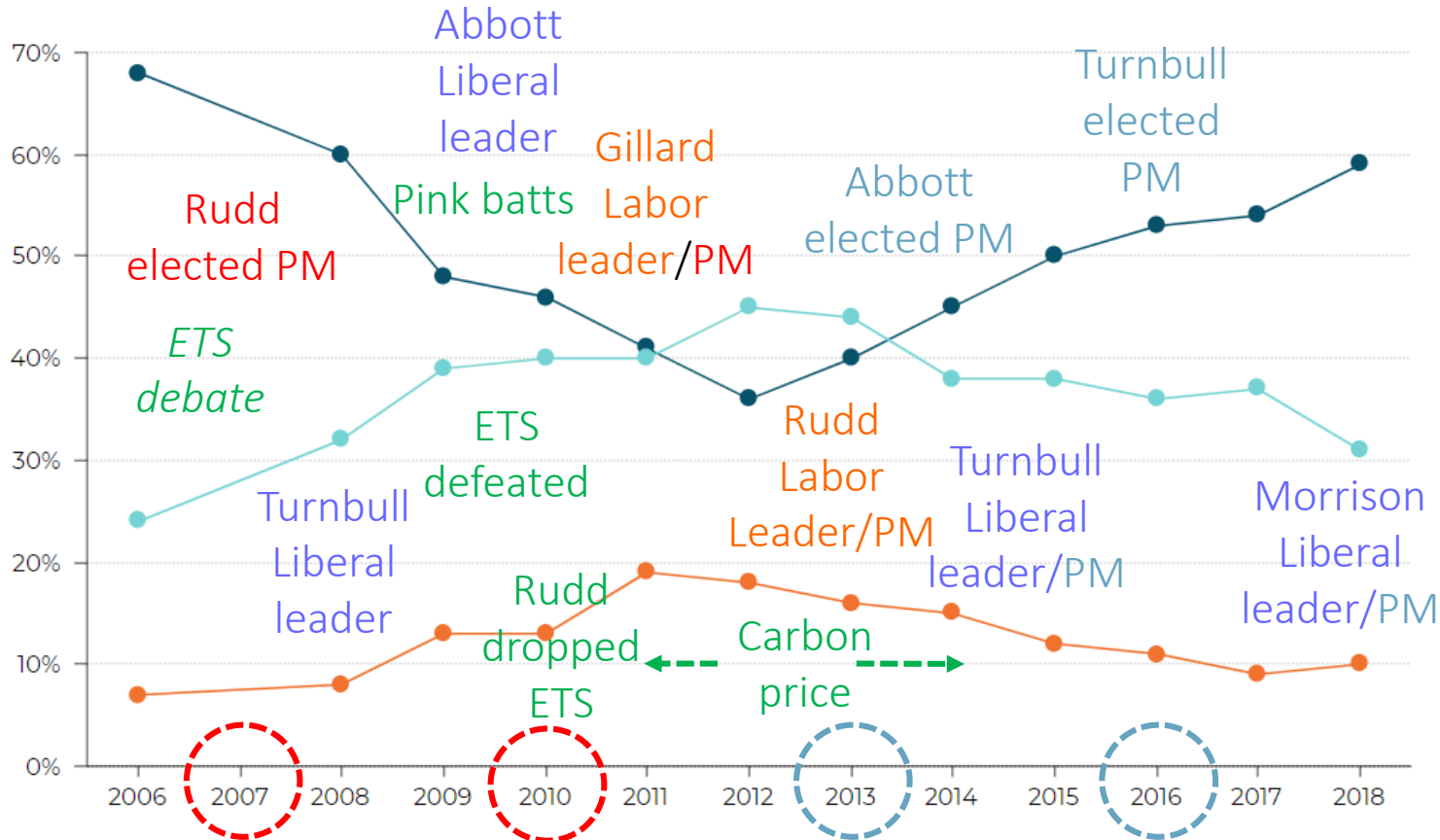
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Australian public opinion





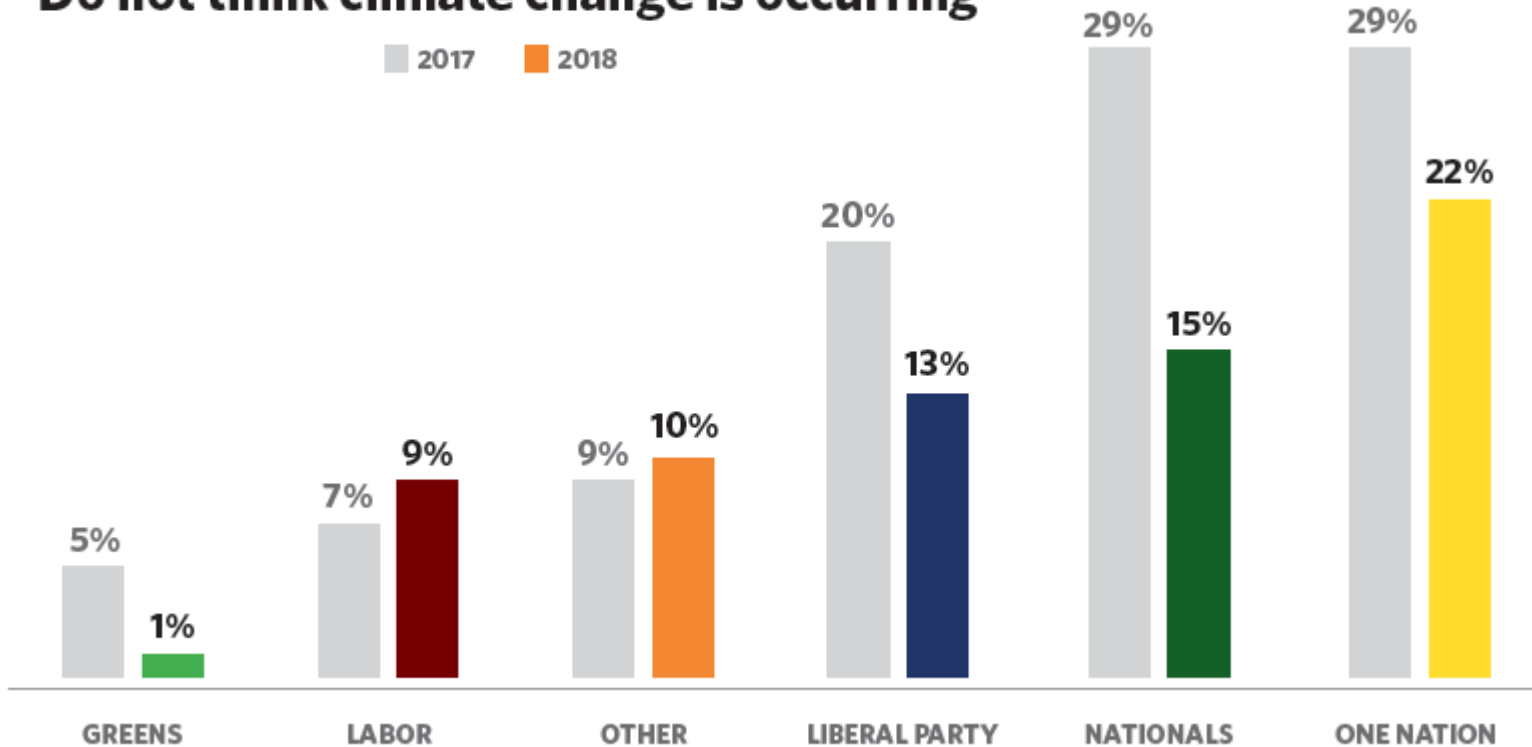
Australian public opinion



Lowy Institute, 2018

Do not think climate change is occurring

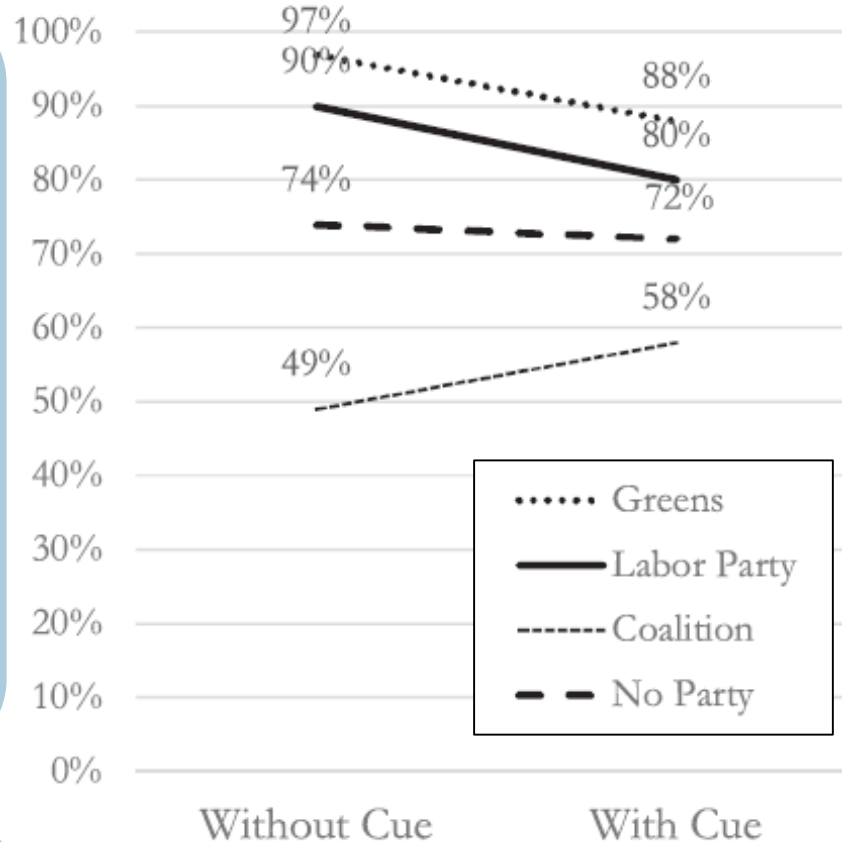
■ 2017 ■ 2018



The Australia
Institute, 2018

Political leader influence

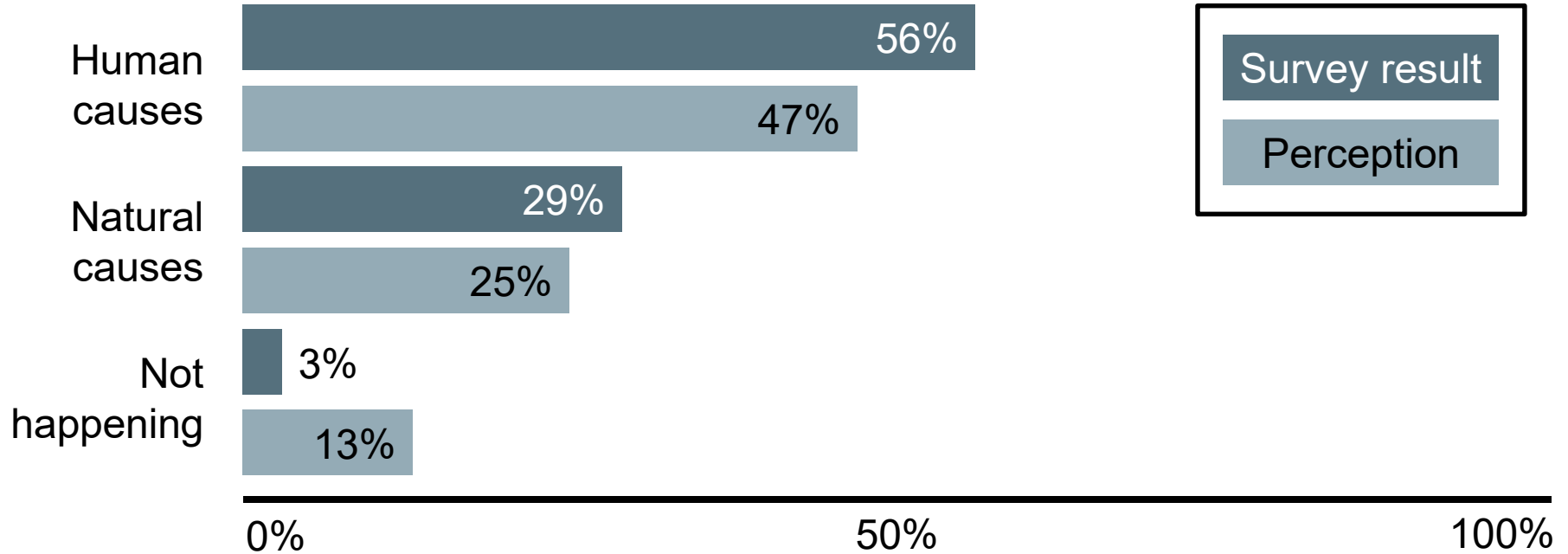
We would like to know what you think about the proposal to create an emissions trading scheme in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. * Do you support or oppose this proposal?



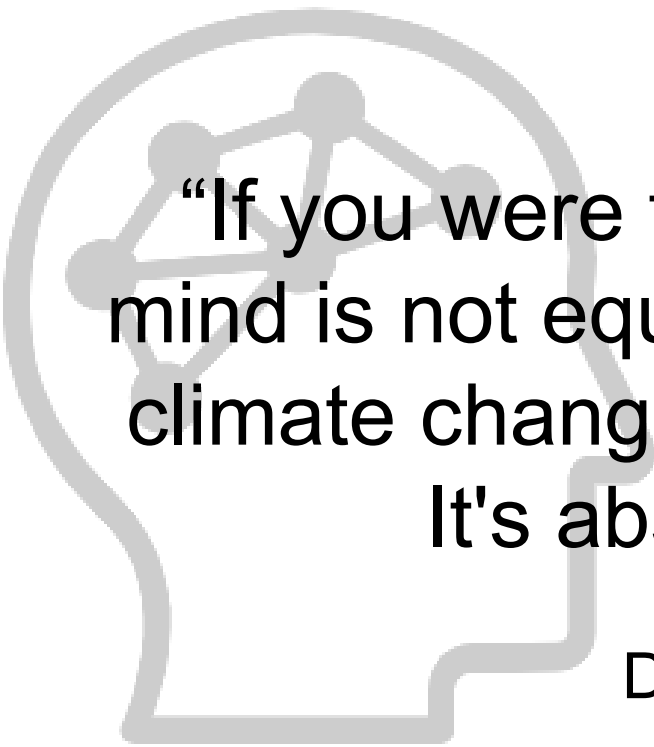
Both Labor Party leader Bill Shorten and Liberal Party Leader Malcolm Turnbull have favoured this approach.

Kousser & Tranter 2018

Cause of climate change



Data from The Australia Institute, 2018



“If you were to design a problem that the mind is not equipped to deal with, you know, climate change would fit the bill. It's distant. It's abstract. It's contested.”

Daniel Kahneman on Hidden Brain, 2018

Climate change is fascinatingly terrible

Abstract

- Invisible
- Vague reference
- Rare

Distant

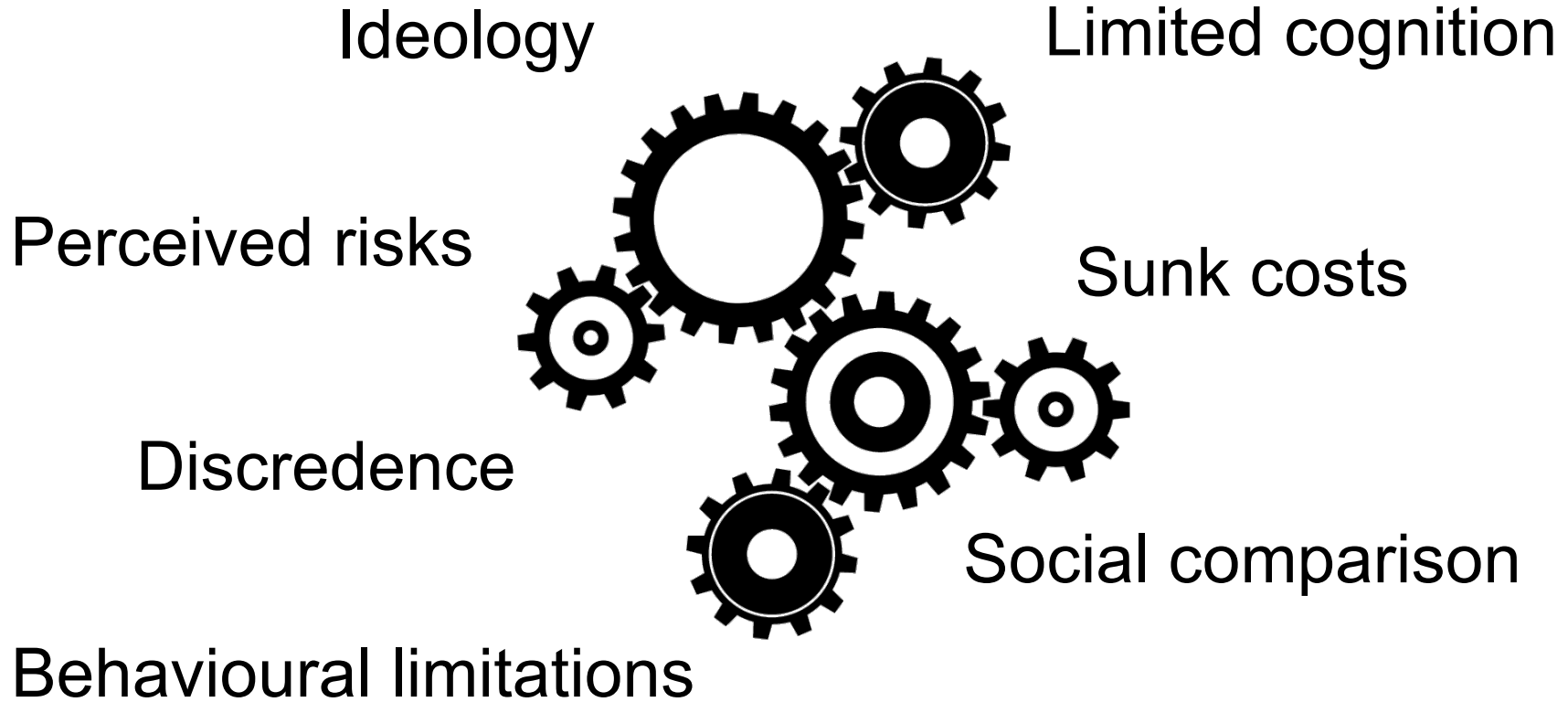
- Time
- Space



Contested

- Uncertainty
- Politicised
- Conflictual
- Painful

Psychological barriers

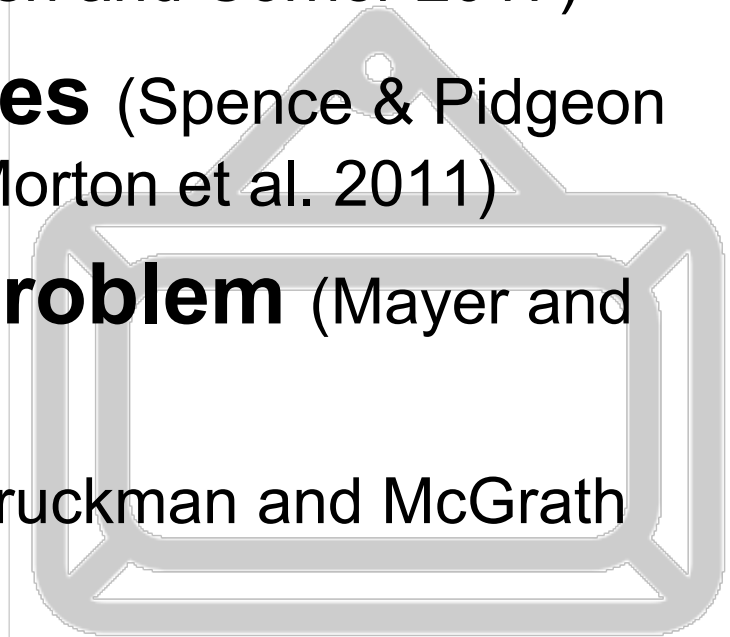




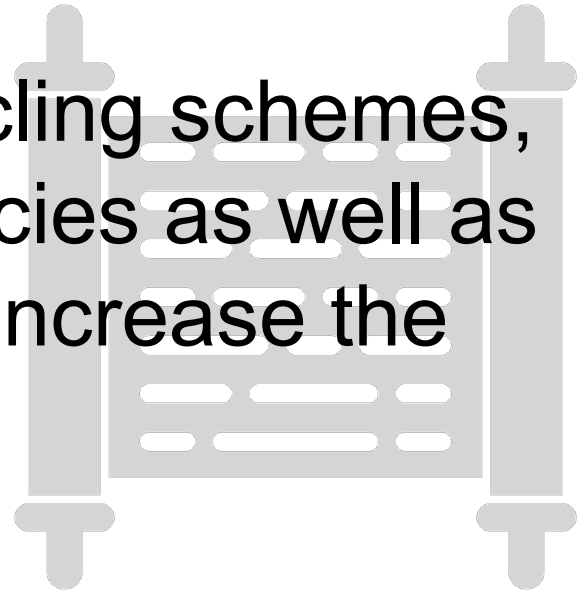
Climate change is a political object



- **Patriotism or waste reduction, not ‘climate justice’** (Whitmarsh and Corner 2017)
- **Gains, rather than losses** (Spence & Pidgeon 2010; Gifford & Comeau 2011; Morton et al. 2011)
- **Difficult, yet solvable problem** (Mayer and Smith 2019)
- **Avoid identity-threat** (Druckman and McGrath 2019)



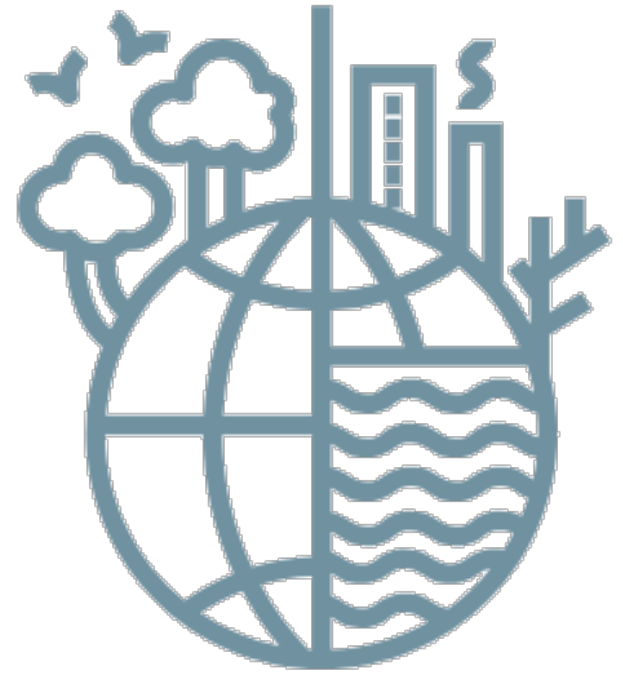
- Climate policies can be perceived as negative for employment.
- Policies need revenue recycling schemes, industrial and retraining policies as well as compensation packages to increase the support for such policies.



Vona 2019

How we motivate behaviour change

- Perceiving that others are doing something (“descriptive norms”)
- Unpleasant state of mind, to be reduced (“negative affect”)
- Self efficacy
- Outcome efficacy



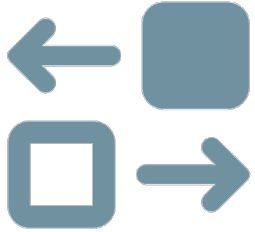
van Valkengoed and Steg 2019

How we overcome polarisation

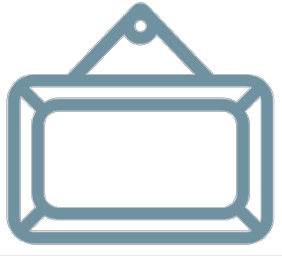


- Use *in-group* messengers
- Forge a shared, overarching identity (“superordinate”)
- Link identity with desired norms and behaviours
- Encourage cross group contact & collaborative decisions

Fielding and Hornsey 2016; Colvin et al. 2015



Avoid ideological bundling



Recognise framing is powerful



Think about the messenger

Colvin et al. *forthcoming*



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Thank you



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