



Public participation in climate change research & policy

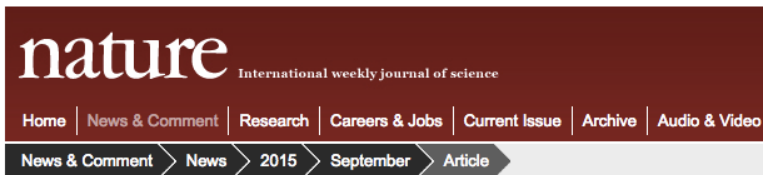
Prof. Lorraine Whitmarsh
Director - CAST



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Participation in policy and science

- 'Participatory turn' in science and policy
 - Challenges to scientific hegemony (incl. **reproducibility crisis**) – other forms of knowledge (lay, indigenous) valid
 - **Controversies, tech risks, env problems** – reconsider science-policy relationship / reflexivity
 - Need to reduce distance from experts and non-experts (e.g., **citizen science, co-production**) – **democratise expertise**



NATURE | NEWS



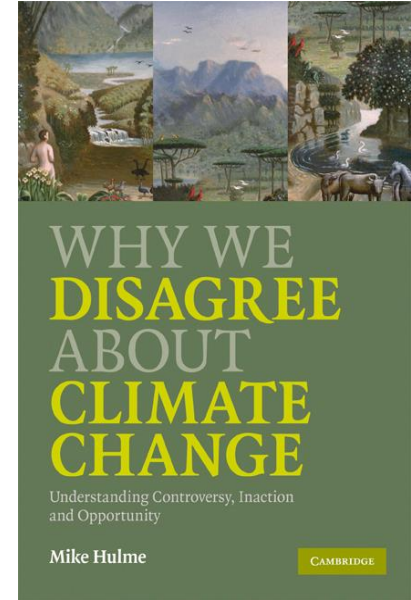
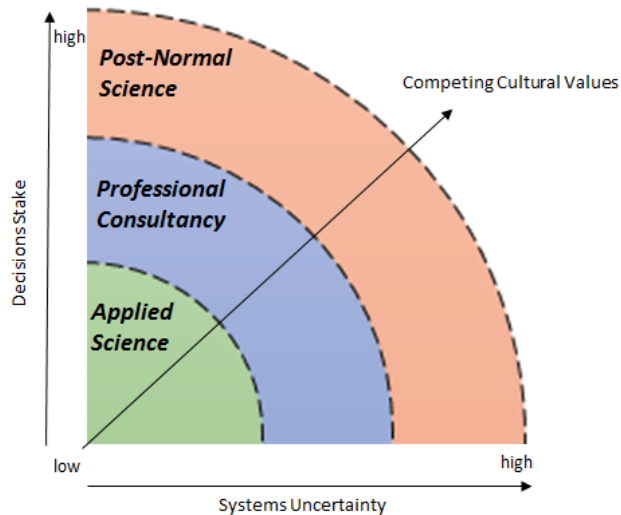
Over half of psychology studies fail reproducibility test

Largest replication study to date casts doubt on many published positive results.



'Post-normal' science & climate change

- 'Post-normal' ('mode 2') science = more **socially-accountable** than traditional scientific models of knowledge production
- Where 'facts uncertain, values in dispute, stakes high and decisions urgent' involving '**extended peer community**'
- **Transdisciplinarity** (i.e., going beyond academia)



- **Climate change =** complexity, ambiguity, subjectivity

Public participation in decision-making

- Rationales for participation:
 - (a) **normative** (people affected *should* have a say),
 - (b) **instrumental** (e.g., to persuade, improve reputation),
 - (c) **substantive** (improve the quality of decision-making)
... i.e., **better and fairer decisions**

- **Perceived fairness is one of strongest predictors of policy support** (Whittle et al., 2018; Jagers et al., 2010)
...so participation is critical for workable policies

- **Benefits:** expose values and identify priorities, find common ground, build trust, empower, support policy development and assessment

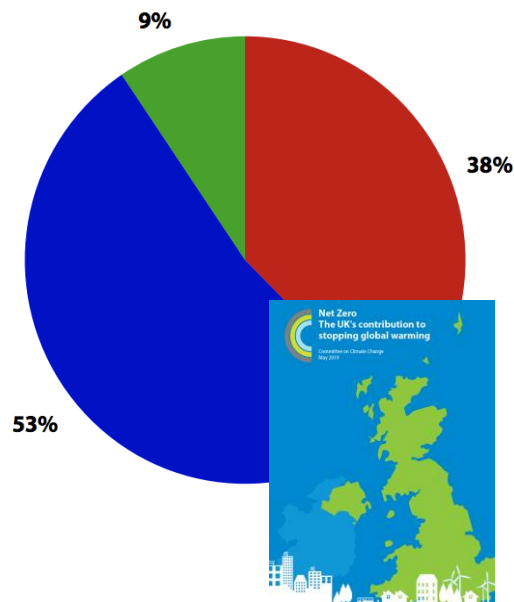
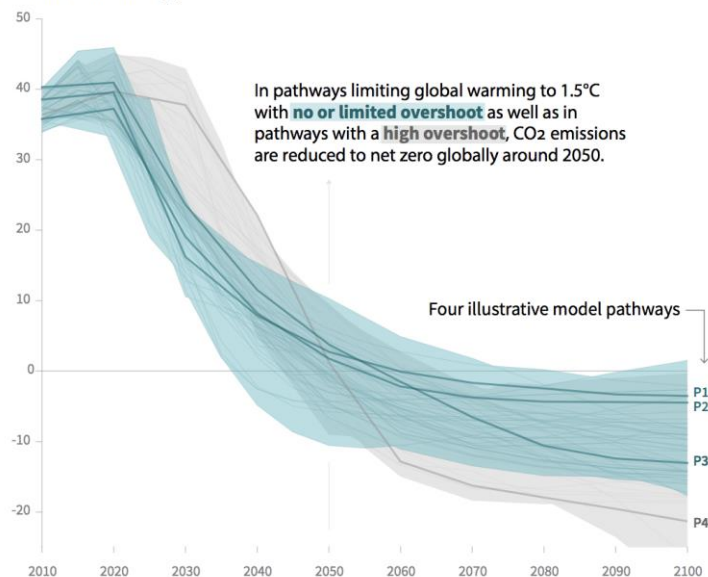


Need for urgent social change



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Billion tonnes of CO₂/yr



■ Low-carbon technologies or fuels not societal / behavioural changes

■ Measures with a combination of low-carbon technologies and societal / behavioural changes

■ Largely societal or behavioural changes

- Climate change is an **urgent** issue (IPCC, 2018)
- **Social and behavioural change** is essential and a **large** component of mitigating climate change (CCC, 2019)

Citizen engagement vital for radical change ... also builds political mandate



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1.5° future?



4° future?

Climate Assembly UK
THE PATH TO NET ZERO

About News

Climate Assembly UK

January

24th–26th

February

7th–9th

February/March

28th–1st

March

20th–22nd

The UK is committed to reaching [net zero greenhouse gas emissions](#) by the year 2050. **Climate Assembly UK** will bring together people from all walks of life and of all shades of opinion to discuss **how** the UK should meet this target.

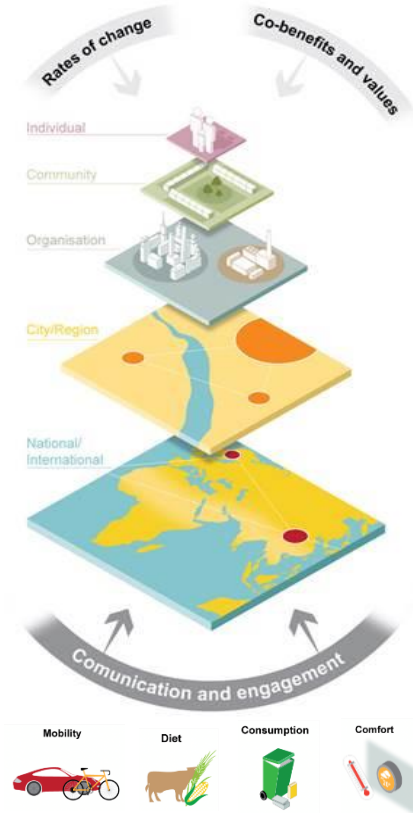
Climate Assembly UK will have over 100 members, who together are [representative of the UK population](#). These assembly members will come from 30,000 households [randomly selected](#) from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The assembly members will meet over four weekends in Spring 2020. They will hear balanced evidence on the choices the UK faces, discuss them, and make recommendations about what the UK should do to become net zero by 2050.

[Find out more about how this works](#)



People as agents of change



- Social/behavioural change is not just about citizen/consumer action
- Individual and collective action across a **range of contexts and roles**
- Direct and indirect emission reductions

CAST: Co-design and co-delivery

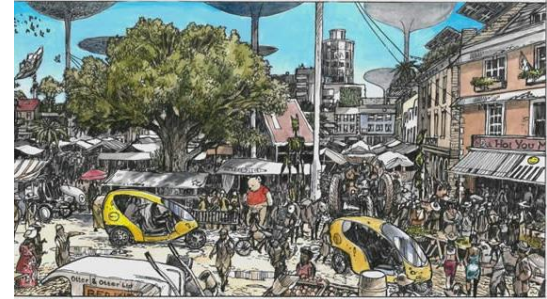
Visioning - *What could low-carbon transformed futures look like?*

- ❑ Public & stakeholder deliberative workshops
- ❑ Scenarios & modelling



Trialling - *How can we accelerate transformations?*

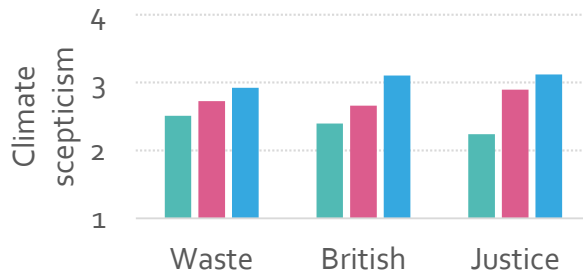
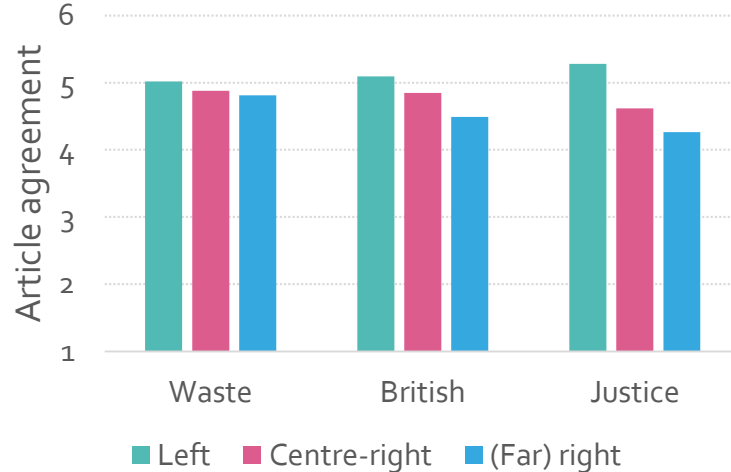
- ❑ Individual
- ❑ Household
- ❑ Organisations
- ❑ City-level
- ❑ Government-led



Effective communication targets audience values



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Segmenting audiences by their politics shows left-leaning prefer 'justice' narratives of climate change, while right-leaning prefer 'waste' or patriotism framed messages

Talking about co-benefits (e.g., community, health, finances) of action generally resonates more than environmental rationale

Participatory solutions



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Possible.

Inspiring climate action

THE CHALLENGES ABOUT

JOIN US

DONATE



Community action
e.g., 10:10's *Solar Schools*
(2,370 panels installed)

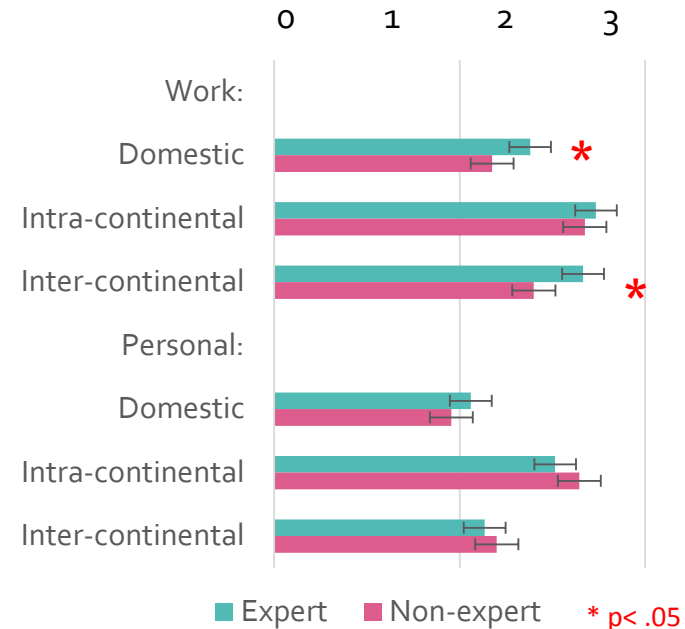
Participation, autonomy and group-defined goals are key to effective behaviour change interventions
(Geller et al., 1990)

Reflexivity

What is the role of researchers in a climate change transition?

- Work-related travel (e.g., conferences), esp. flying, likely to be main carbon emitting activity from research (Rosen, 2017)
- Climate scientists who reduce their carbon footprint are **more credible** and more likely to **inspire behaviour change** amongst the public than those who don't reduce their emissions (Attari et al., 2016) – **lead by example?**
- **Our recent international study found climate scientists (esp senior ones) fly more than other academics**
- **We need to decarbonise research... and 'walk the talk'**

Frequency (per year): Never (0) to 6+ trips (6)



Conclusion

- ❑ **Normative, substantive and instrumental** benefits of participation
- ❑ Climate change is a **complex, value-laden** issue... tackling it requires **radical social change**
- ❑ So **public participation** in is vital – both in defining solutions (e.g., via citizen assemblies) and delivering them (in households, communities, workplaces, political contexts, etc.)
- ❑ **Democratising expertise** means scientists should:
 1. **Collaborate** with publics and stakeholders to
 - (a) define low-carbon society and policies, and
 - (b) test out and evaluate low-carbon solutions
 2. **Be reflexive** and self-critical (walk the talk)
 3. **Co-production**: include publics/SHs in every stage of research (e.g., placements, advisory board, citizen's panel, seedcorn fund, workshops)





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