



Climate of Change Survey 2018 Briefing

January 18, 2019

Pivotal moment: 2019

- Government inaction amid rise of populism, polarization
- IPCC, fall 2018: need to *transform economies* now
- Incremental progress is no longer good enough; but...
- Elections in Canada could lead to more incrementalism

Good news

- Bump in salience of climate change
- Beliefs about climate change are shifting
- Opportunity to engage pocket of progressive voters
- But need to use words wisely

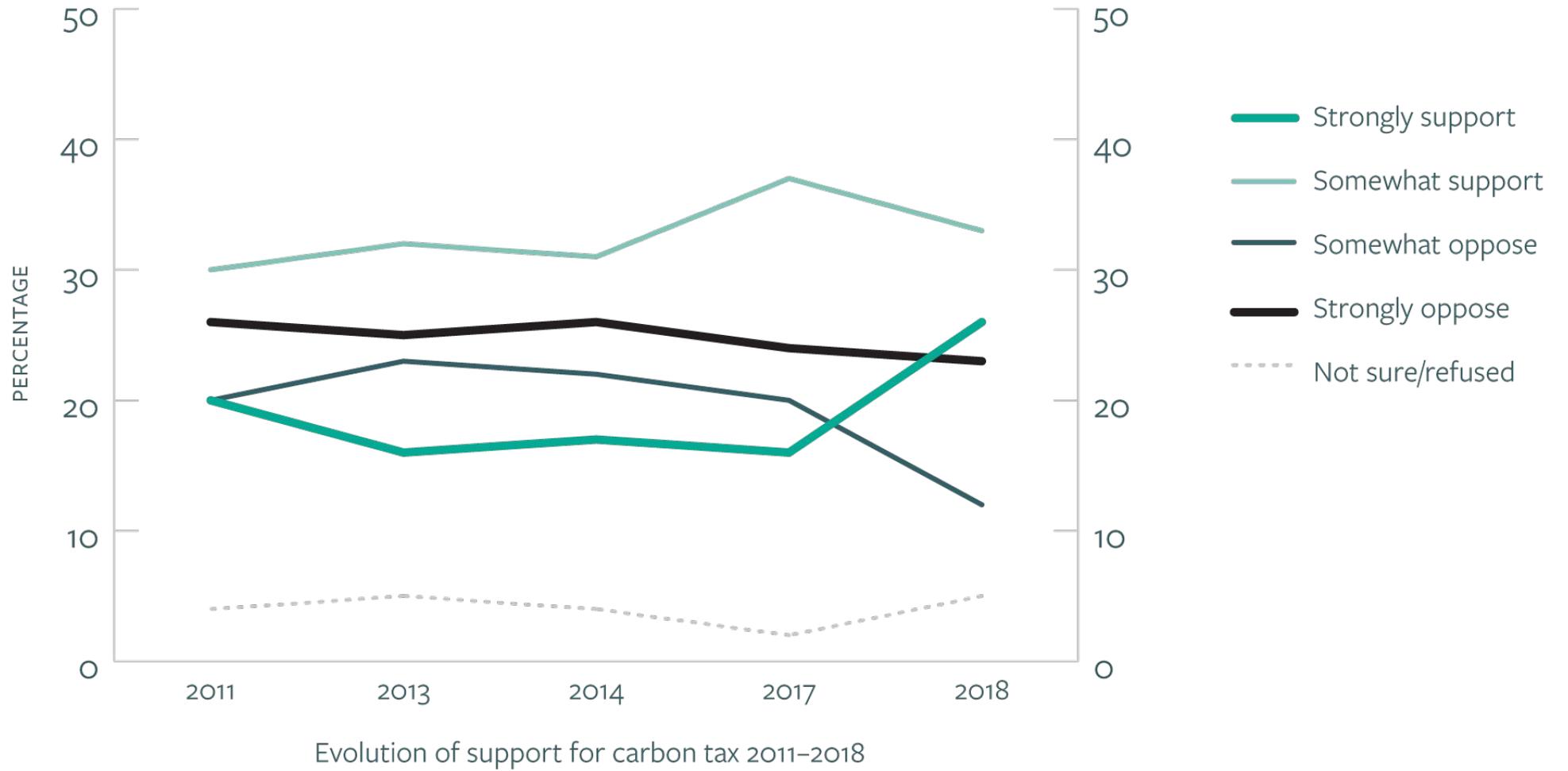
Powerful words: Talking to Canadians about climate action

CLIMATE OF CHANGE SURVEY 2018
COMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING

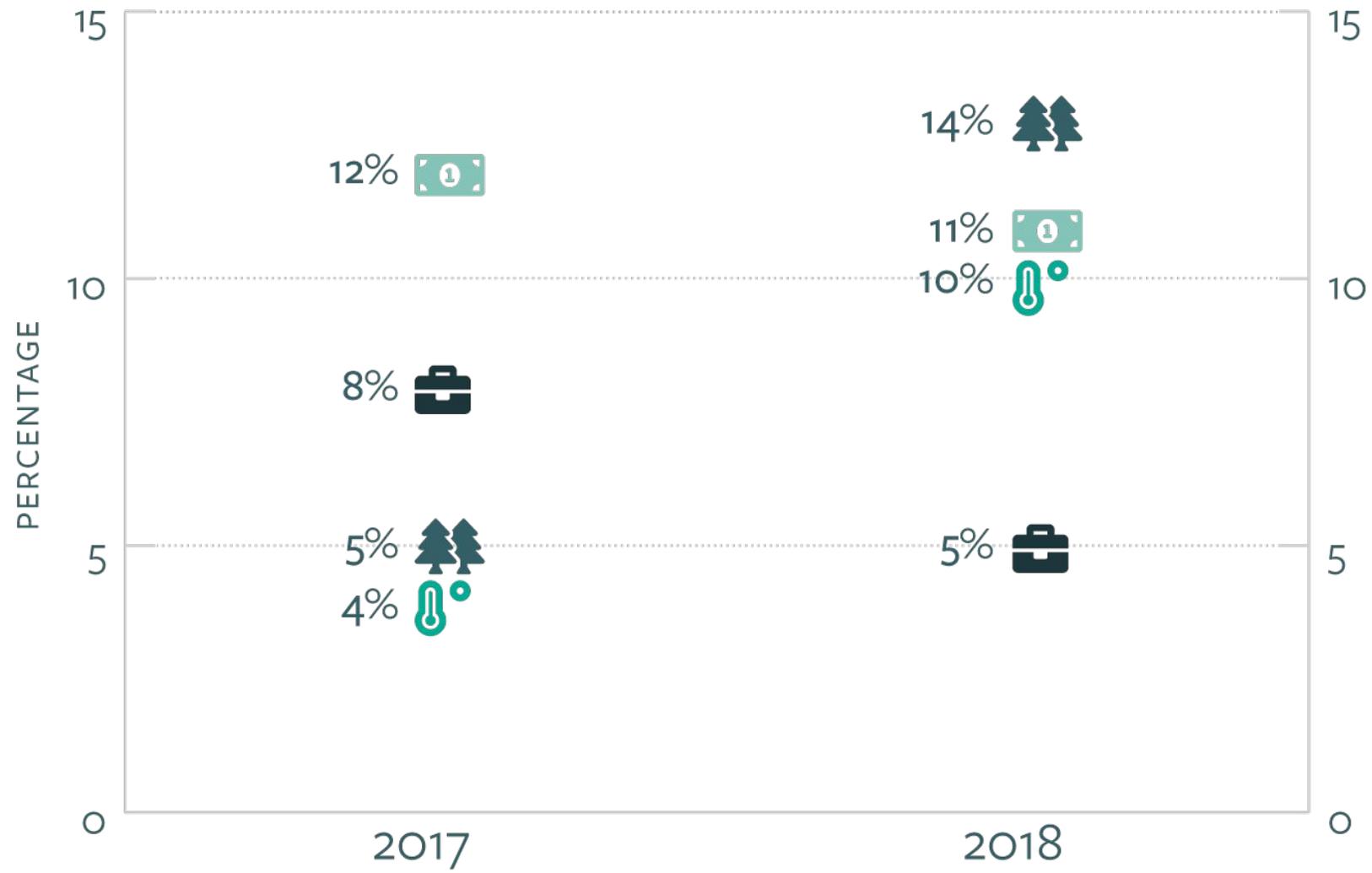
Dr. Erick Lachapelle, EcoAnalytics Research Partner,
Université de Montreal

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Increasing support for carbon pricing



“In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing Canada today?”



Climate change



Environment

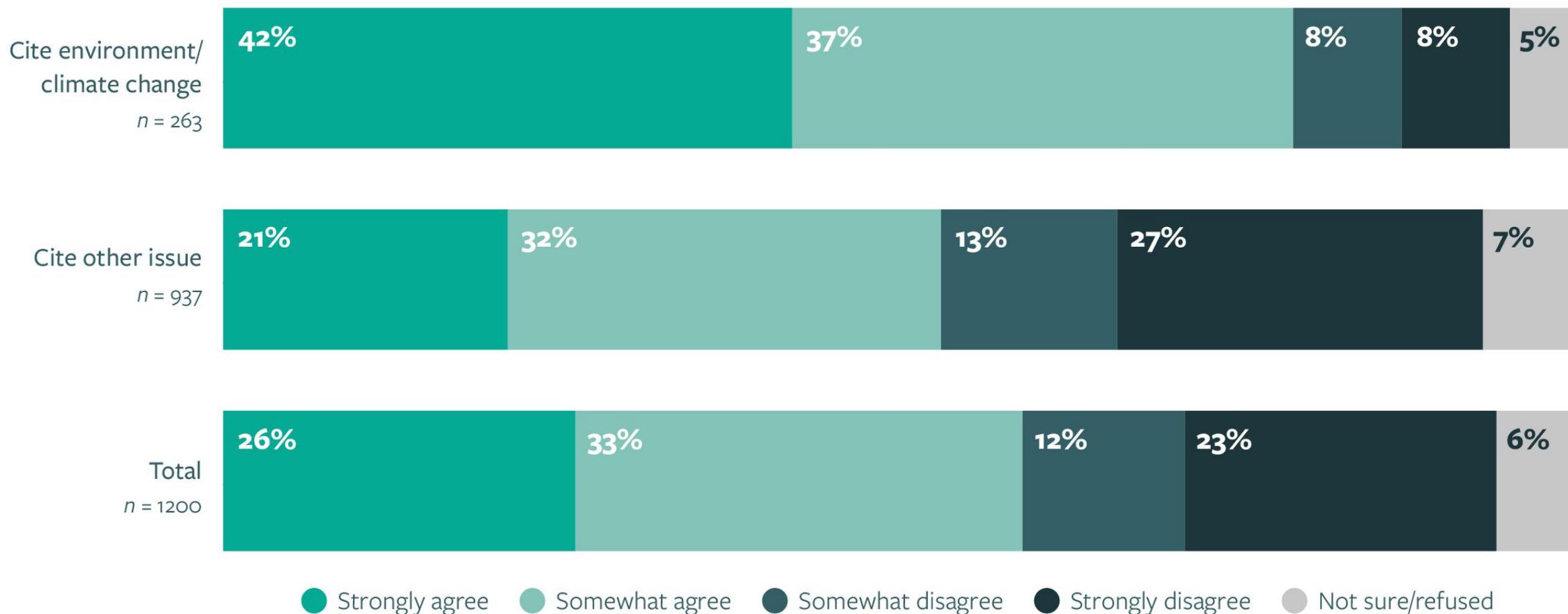


Economy



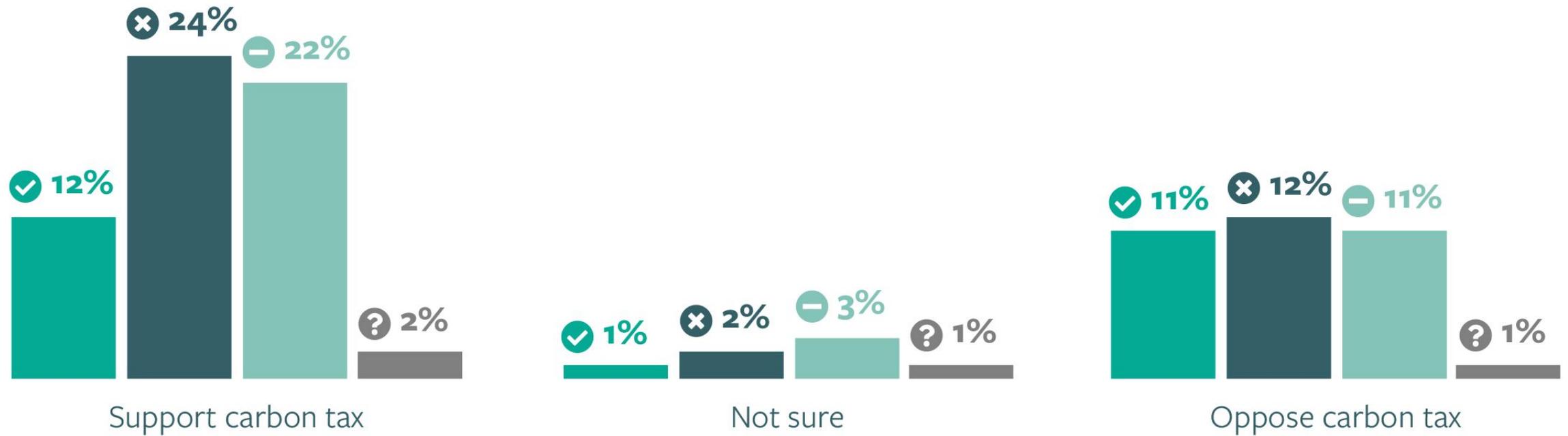
Jobs

Support for taxing fossil fuels among those who cite, and do not cite, the environment or climate change as Canada's most important problem.



Question: In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing Canada today? And; Based on what you know, do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose putting a price or tax on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas in order to reduce carbon emissions in Canada?

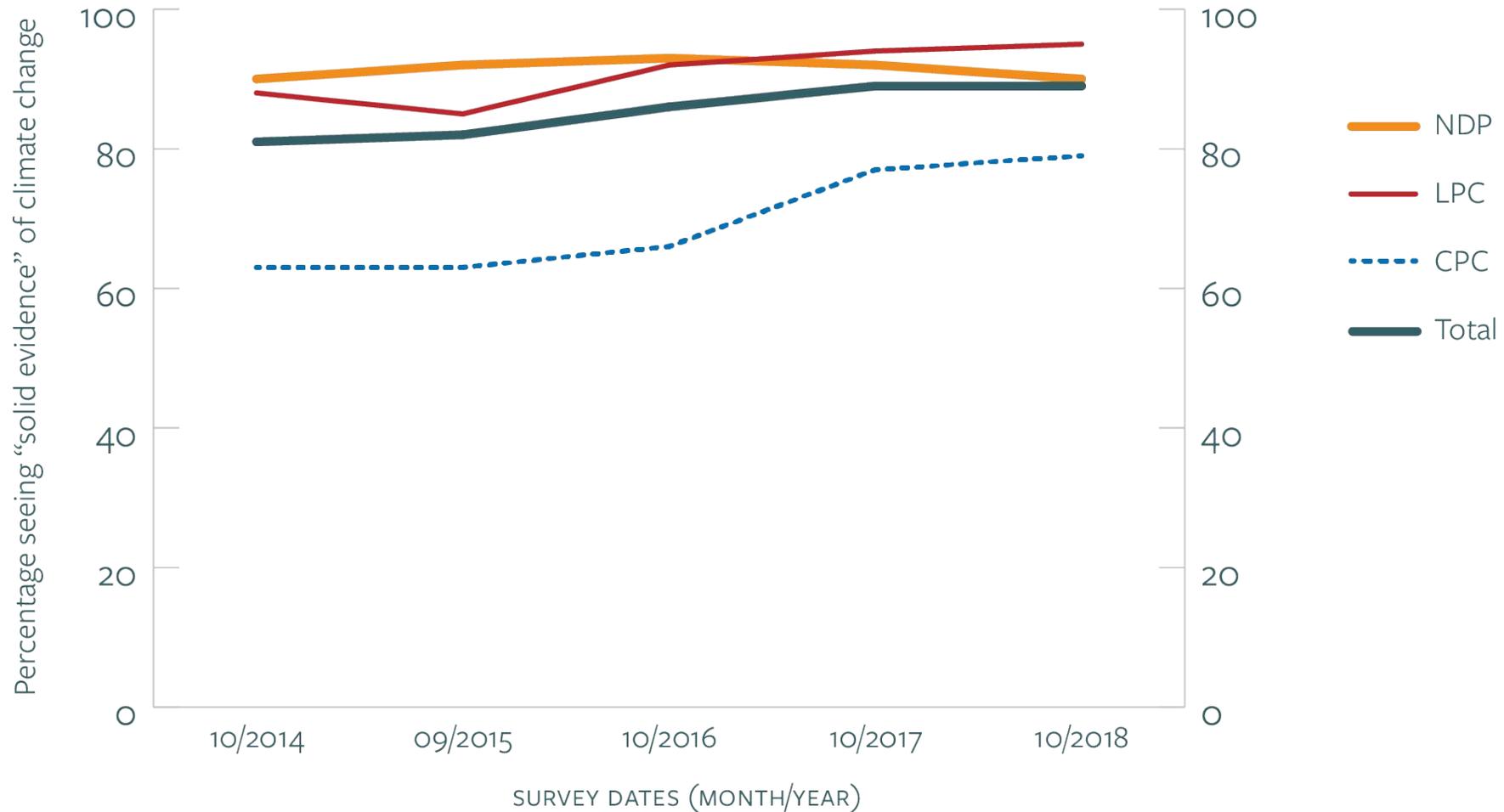
Not all pipeline supporters oppose a federal carbon tax



Support/oppose Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX):

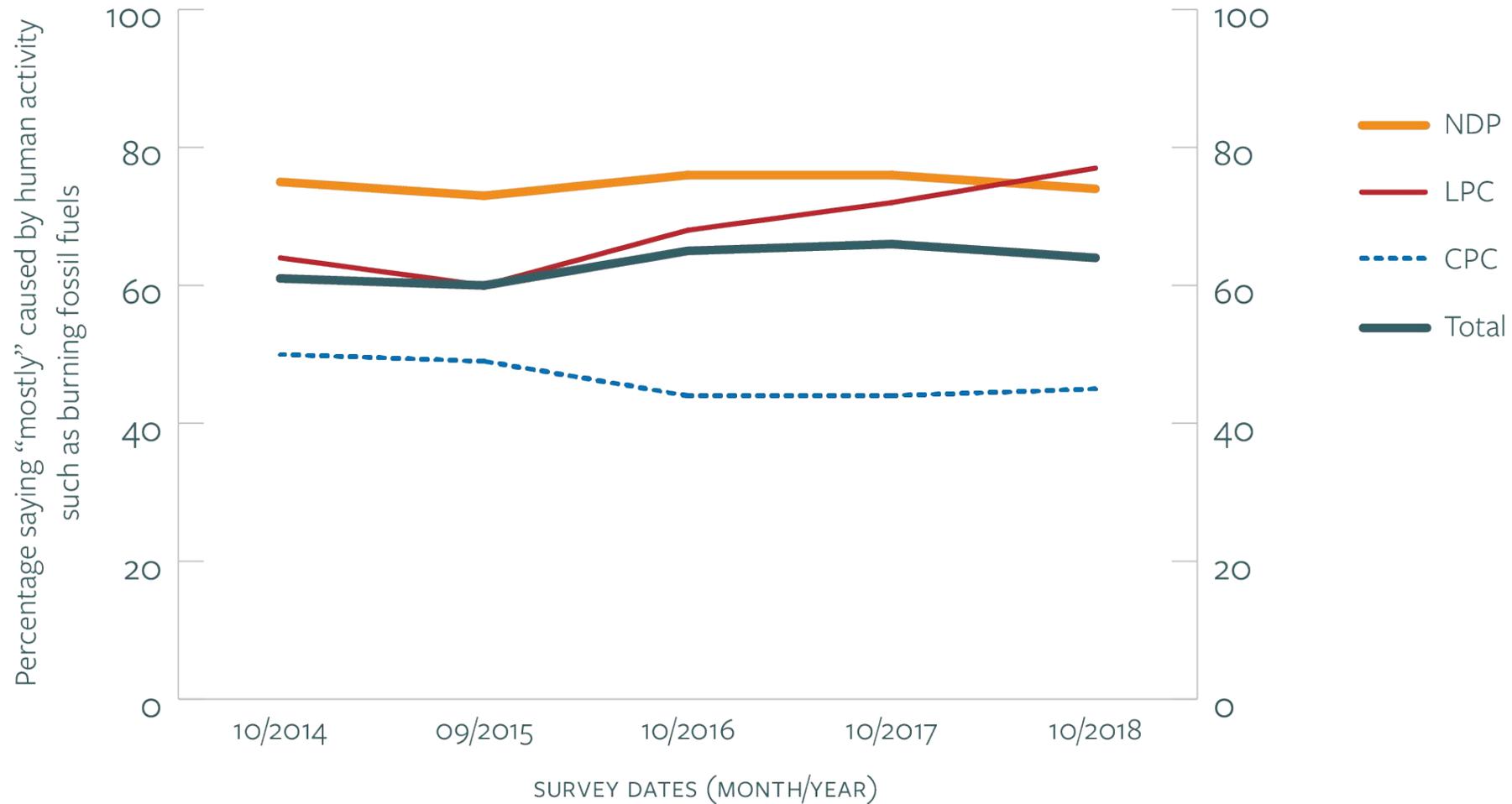
✓ Support ✕ Oppose − No opinion ? Not sure

Belief in global warming among Conservatives is growing



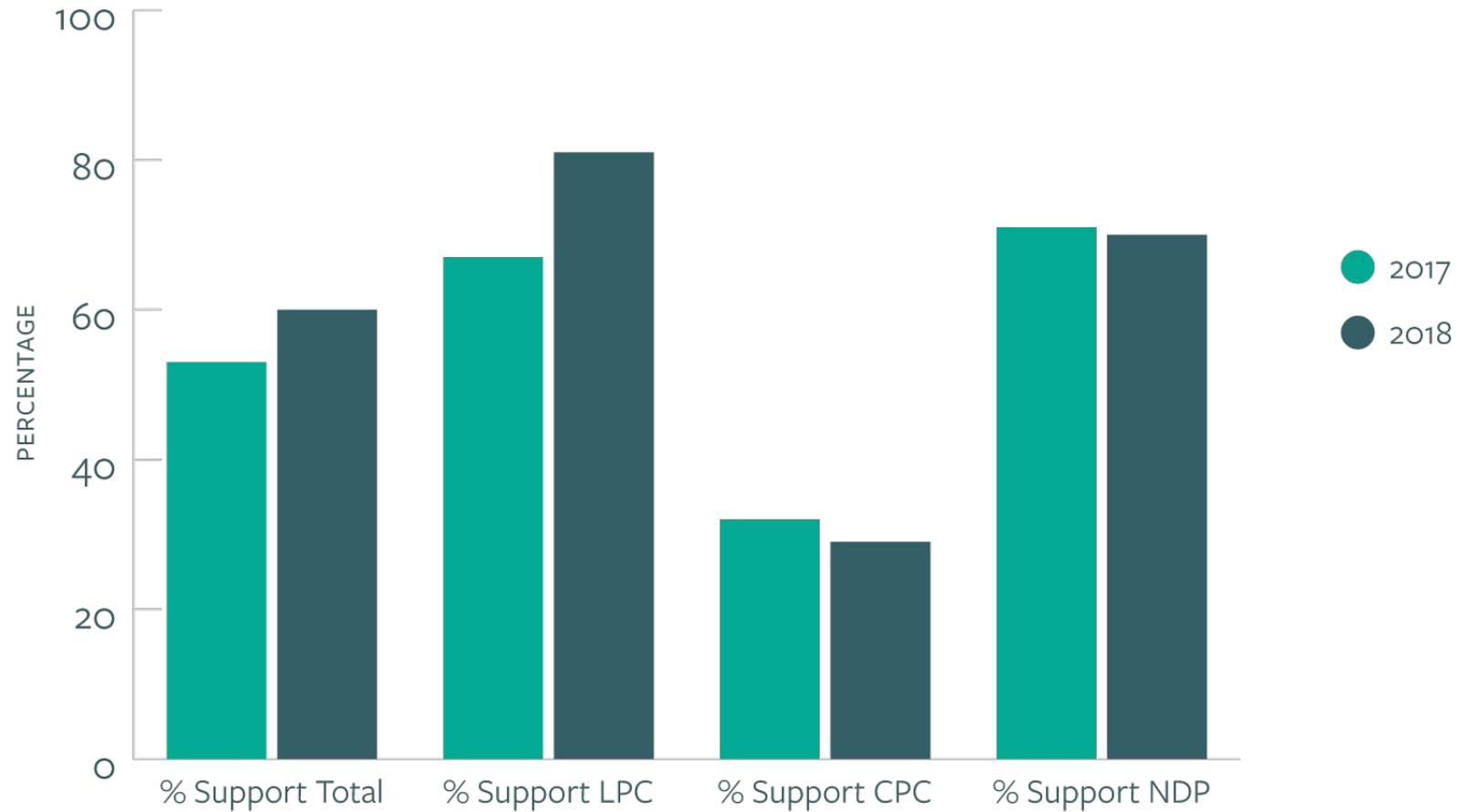
Question: Is there solid evidence that the average temperature on earth has been getting warmer over the past four decades?

Politicization of climate issue is also on the rise



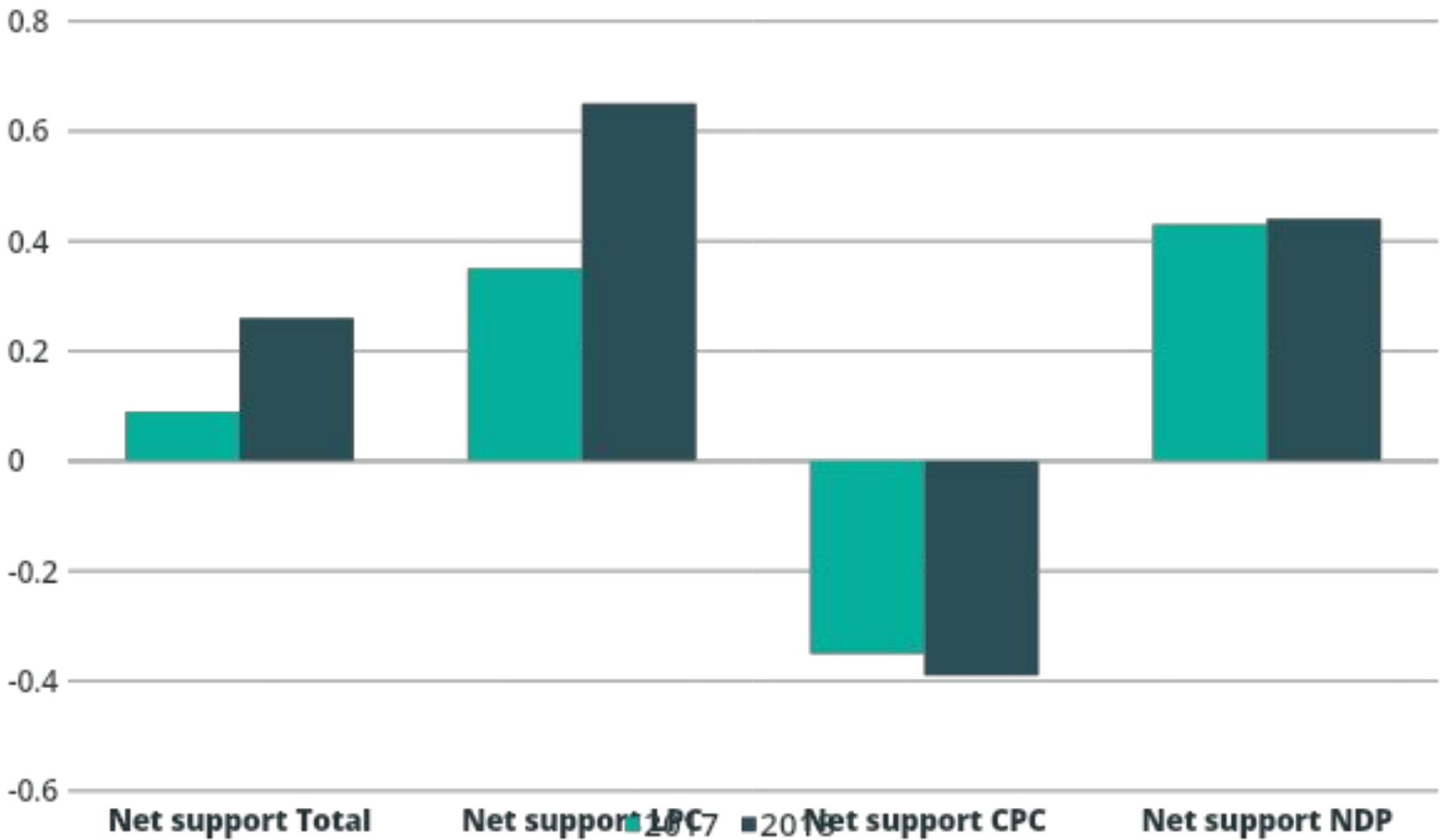
Question: Is the earth getting warmer because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels, or mostly because of natural patterns in the earth's environment?

Support for carbon tax increasing among Liberals, in particular

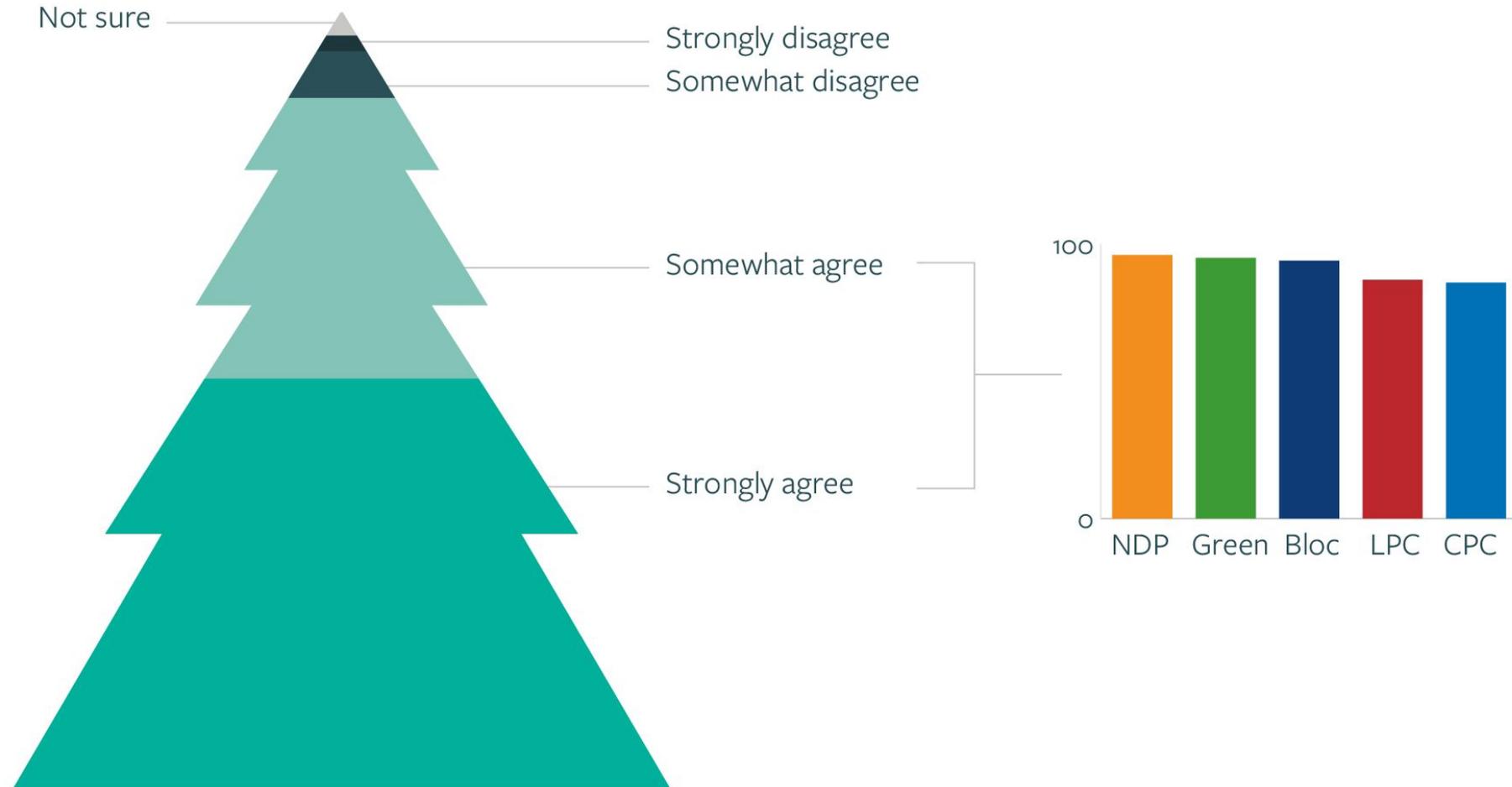


Support for carbon tax by vote intention

Net support for carbon pricing by federal political leaning, 2017-2018



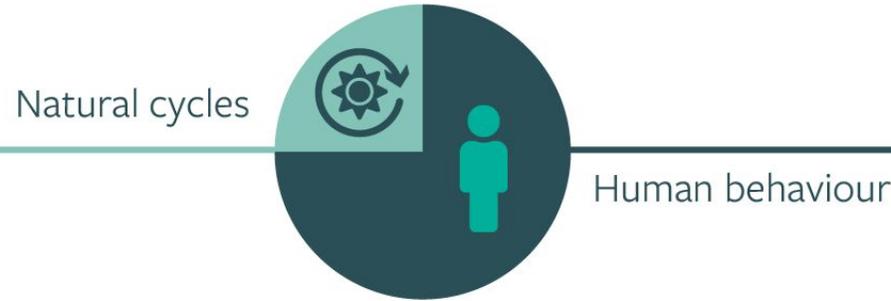
...But we all support tree-planting



Question: Agree/Disagree: Planting more trees can help reduce the threat of climate change. (n = 1200)

Climate change is mainly a result of...

- Maintain cap-and-trade
- Impose a carbon tax
- Let the federal gov't figure it out



How should Ontario comply with Paris commitment?



2018 PC voters



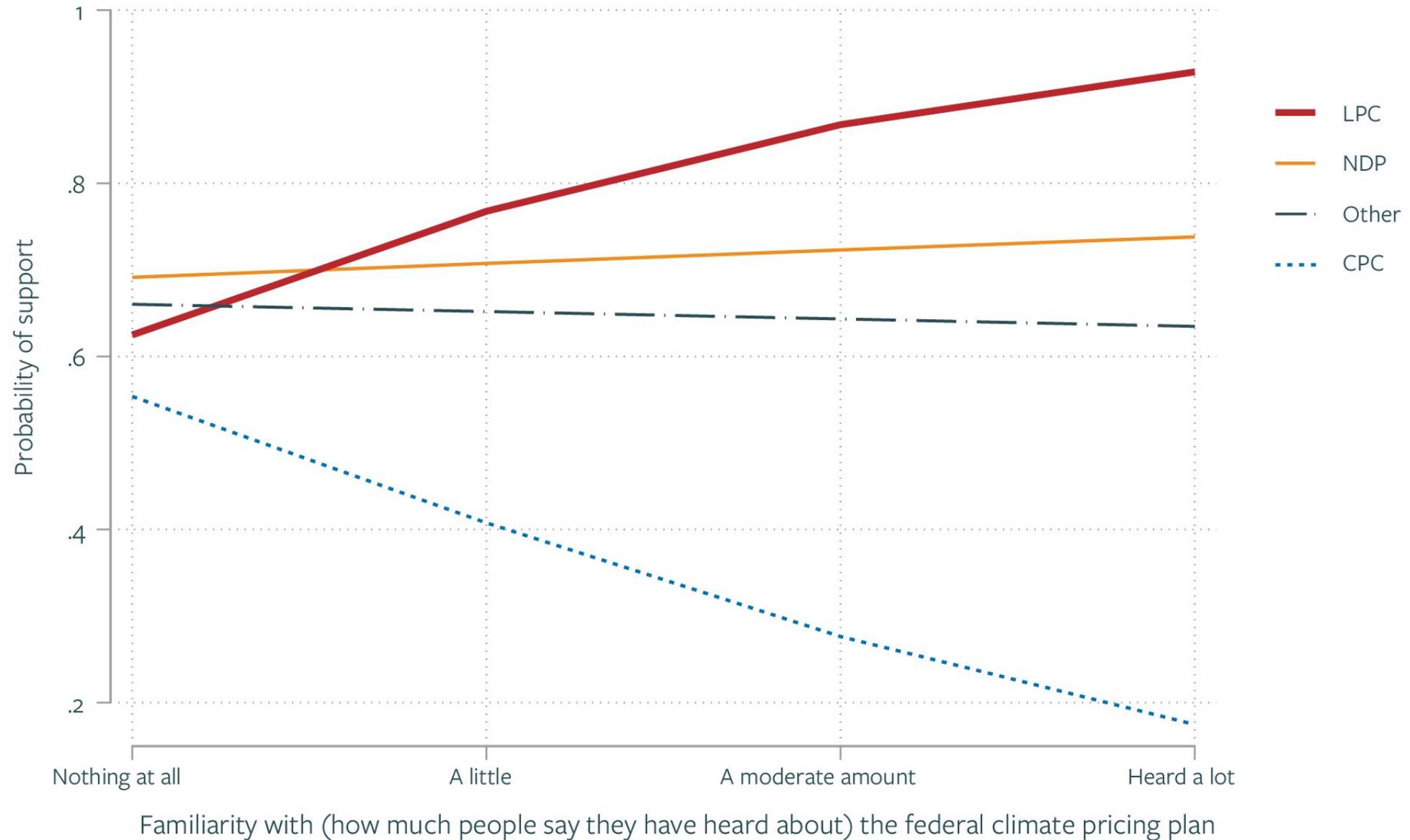
Over the past year, has your hydro bill:



Recommendations

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Engage centre-left progressives and centre-right conservatives



Crank the heat, connect to local impacts

Turn up the heat: find ways to talk about climate change, often

- When climate change is salient, people care more, they are more supportive of policy action
- Ramp up discussion of climate change threats, especially to human health and locally relevant
- Consider polarization and politicization: work to engage unfamiliar conservatives and liberals, as well as New Democrats, Greens, undecided voters, and youth

Connect impacts of extreme weather in Canada to warming planet

- Show images of local impacts WITH PEOPLE
- Highlight how climate change will affect the places we love
- Don't lead with carbon pricing and economic arguments

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Choose your words wisely

- Many Canadians not ready to accept climate change is a **“public health emergency”**
 - Experiments show significantly less agreement with the statement that “more intense heat waves, floods, and wildfires make climate change a public health emergency [issue]” than describing climate change as a threat to human health. Make the link to health effects
- More of us prefer to diversify rather than “transition” away...
 - Experiments show significantly more agreement with the statement that “Canada needs to quickly diversify its energy sources [**transition away from fossil fuels**] toward more renewable energy.”
 - But regional effects. When talking to supporters of renewable energy or British Columbians the word “transition” is just as effective as “diversify”

Identify targets, including Conservatives

Know your targets when talking about carbon pricing

- It's not easy crafting national messages when there are regional differences. Suggest going with the least risky frame: threat to public health and/or diversification

Don't give up on Conservatives

- Many remain not opposed in principle to carbon pricing, other action
- Support of cap and trade still strong in ON
- But after exposure to negative tax-grab, unfair, ineffective messaging Conservatives grow to oppose carbon pricing. Reaching unfamiliar Conservatives before negative exposure could be beneficial

New research

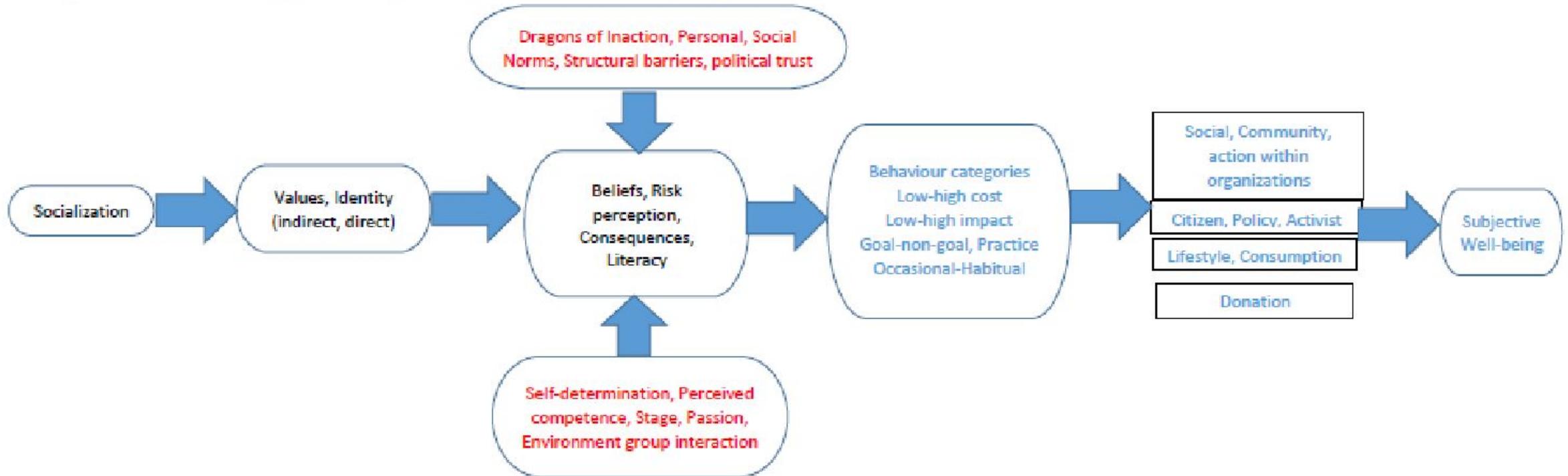
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March-April 2019

SSHRC Members Survey	General Population Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Values and behaviour of Canadian supporters of eNGOs• Members of major eNGOs• 1.1 million member contacts• Fielded March-April 2019• Consultations re survey imminent, data sharing focus this week, University ethics approval nearly complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Values and behaviour of Canadians more generally• Online national sample, 3,000• Mirrors SSHRC Members Survey• Fielded at same time as Members

Variables and moderators impacting values & behaviour

Simplified conceptual model depicting comprehensive exploration of the environmental values-behaviour gap (dependent variables (blue), independent variables (predictors, black), and moderators (red))



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Content for next briefing?

- Soft support and pockets of progressives who could be engaged
- Focus on how to engage youth, Conservatives and other target segments
- OR focus on other segments and levels of engagement (who is discussing climate, taking action, wants more government action?)
- Effects of experience with flooding in NB, wildfires in BC, etc.
- Politics of Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion and carbon pricing
- Fatalism and efficacy

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Questions?

