

Social Acceptance of Evolving Technologies

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*Positive Energy
Trust in Transition*

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Dude, what happened to my social licence?



Energy development and social acceptance

1. Clustered sources of trust / distrust



Methods



Online survey of panelists

- **46,040 email solicitation by polling firm**
- **3,851 surveys started**
- **3,000 surveys completed**
- **quotas for age, gender, region, language, income, education and urban/rural distribution**



Trust in sources for energy-related information

Trust of Outsiders

(trusting, neutral)

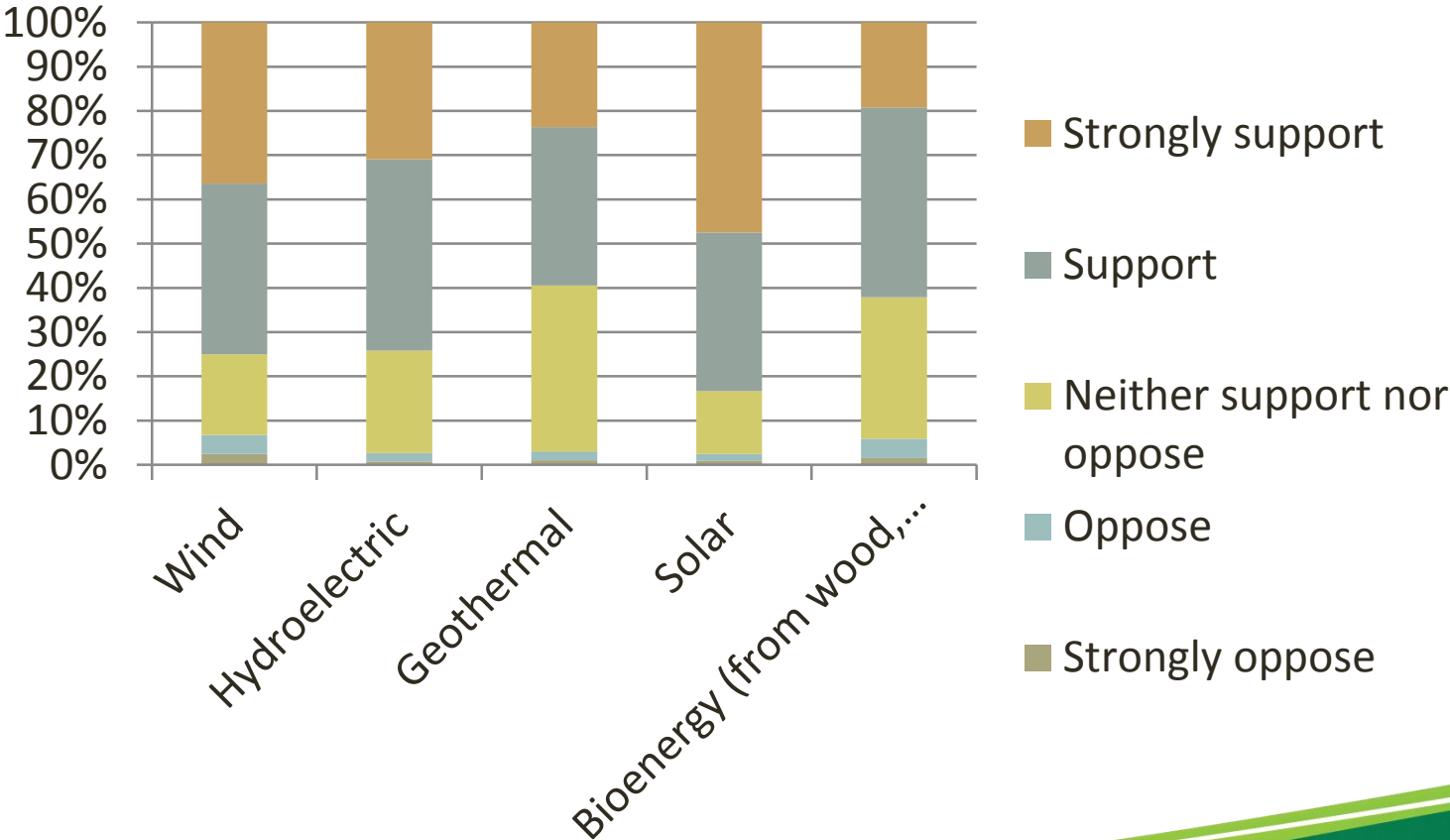
Academics/schools and scientific institutions	61%, 33%
Friends and family	55%, 40%
Consumer associations	42%, 8%
Environmental groups	37%, 44%

Trust of Insiders

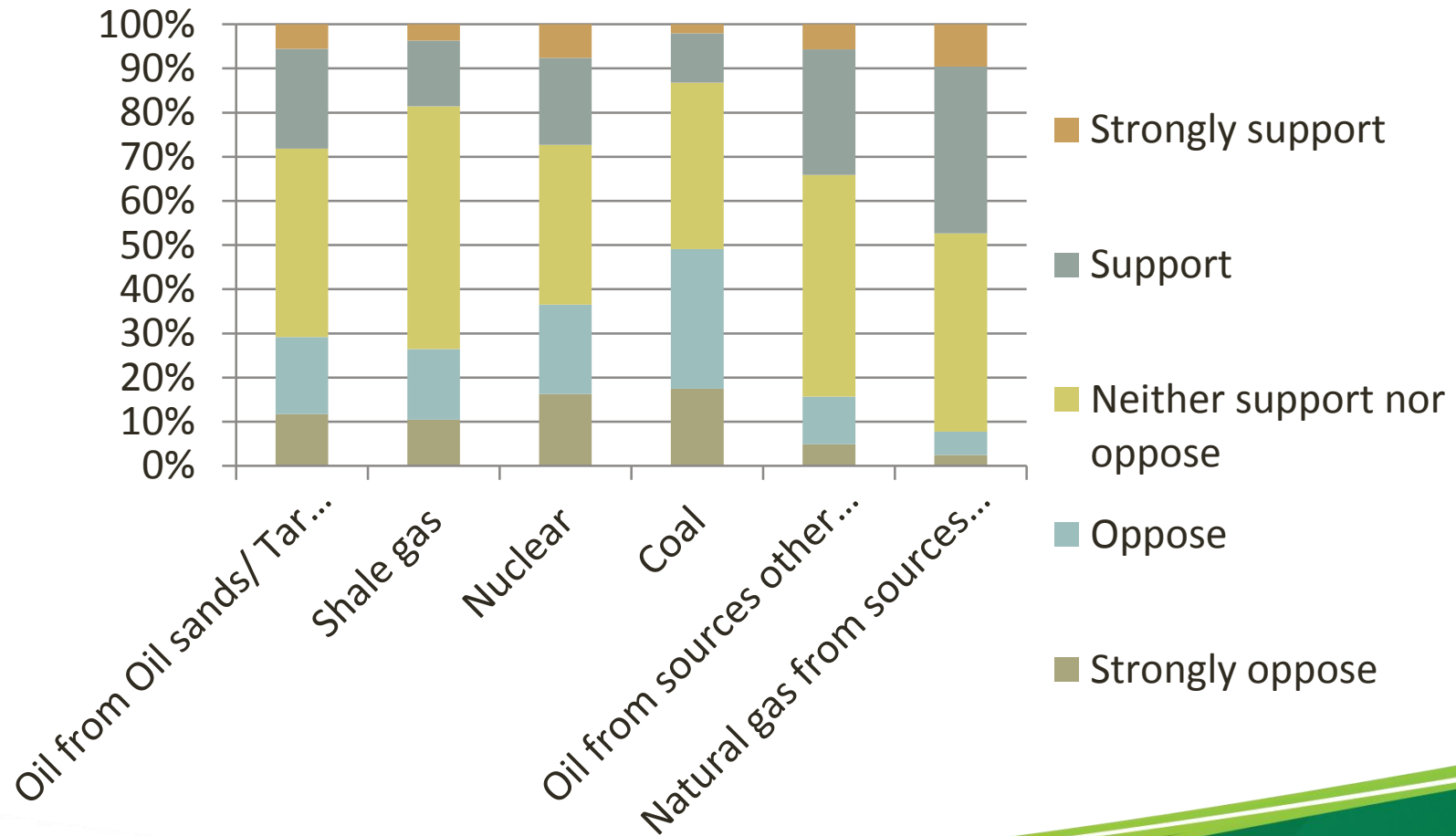
(trusting, neutral)

Energy regulators	23%, 50%
Government departments /ministries of energy	24%, 43%
Energy utilities	19%, 45%
Retailers of electronics, lighting and appliances	19%, 45%
Energy industry assoc.	18%, 49%

Support and opposition to renewable sources of energy, nationwide



Support and opposition to non-renewable sources of energy, nationwide



Energy development and social acceptance

1. **Clustered sources of trust / distrust**
2. **Pockets of serious resistance to renewables**



“Having clean energy is never bad. But...there is a balance in how far do you want to go to trash our economy to do so? And I know that’s a political kind of government slogan or whatever, but when I look at it, and this is perhaps more of my view here...is that climate change is happening, but what is actually happening...like what does that mean? Climate change...is it cooling? Is it warming? Is it evolving?” (Alberta Landowner)



Energy development and social acceptance

1. **Clustered sources of trust / distrust**
2. **Pockets of serious resistance to renewables**
3. **Social acceptance = meaningful political processes**

Article

The Troubling Logic of Inclusivity in Environmental Consultations

Science, Technology, & Human Values
2017, Vol. 42(1) 144-165
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Citizen Engagement

A call for better political processes –

“The technical debate—and the implicit promise that “more research” will tell us what to do—vitiates the will to act. Not only does the value dispute remain unresolved, but the underlying problem remains unaddressed.” Sarewitz (2004)

New Brunswick Electrical Energy Futures Jury



[http://energytransitions.ca/
citizen-jury-on-energy-
futures/](http://energytransitions.ca/citizen-jury-on-energy-futures/)



Research Questions

1. Clustered sources of trust / distrust

1. How do we integrate / build bridges between trusted and distrusted agents in political processes?

2. Pockets of serious resistance to renewables

2. Can we re-imagine Canadian economies (including rural) with individual livelihoods as a focal point?

3. Social acceptance = meaningful political processes

3. What are processes of meaningful engagement to scale up on energy development issues?



Thank you
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Project website:
energytransitions.ca



Social Sciences and Humanities
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