



“How democratic processes can deal with complex long-term issues”

**John Thwaites
Chairman, Monash Sustainability Institute and
ClimateWorks Australia**

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Climate Futures Pathways for society Forum
Wellington New Zealand**

The political challenge of climate change

CLIMATE CHANGE

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Poll shows strong support for carbon cuts

By environment reporter [Sarah Clarke](#)

Posted Tue Apr 27, 2010 8:21pm AEST

A new poll shows that nearly three-quarters of Australians support action to cut the nation's growing carbon emissions before a global agreement is reached.

But nearly a third of those surveyed do not want to pay for the cuts.

The poll, commissioned by the Lowy Institute, surveyed more than 1,000 people.

It found 72 per cent of Australians agree the country should take action to cut its greenhouse gas emissions before a global agreement is reached.

But 33 per cent do not want to pay extra on their electricity bill for the action.

Lowy Institute spokesman Michael Wesley says those surveyed want the Government to pick up the cost of climate change.

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RELATED STORY: [Government admits failing to sell ETS](#)

The political challenge of climate change

POLITICAL BRAWL HURTS CONFIDENCE

Put carbon tax on hold: big business

RED MAYER
SIOBHAN RYAN

BIG business will press Julia Gillard to delay the start of her carbon tax planned for July 2008 next year and demand she top the compensation offered to markets by Kevin Rudd's late 2007 climate change plan.

The move is flagged as a substitution to the government's key climate change committee in a body representing more than 20 leading Australian companies.

It warns that the current plan to transition from a fixed price to an emissions trading scheme in three to five years fails to provide business with the necessary lead-



words from last month — wanted to be concerned over budget and tax issues, and rising petrol prices.

"We expect that the key negotiators for business will, what is highlighted by the government's fixed-

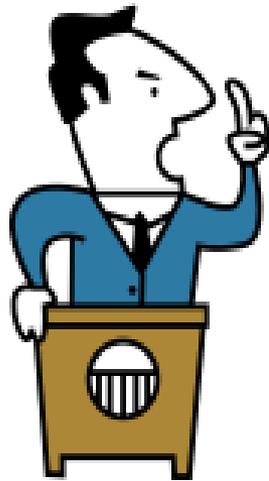
Mr Abbott's visit came as Independent Tony Windsor accused the government of failing to properly sell the carbon pricing scheme, blaming pressure from the Greens for the announcement of a plan with 100% retail.

Labour minister Doug Cameron urged the Prime Minister to move quickly on revealing the details of the plan's structure but saying the debate would be "quite easy" to win when the public was better informed. Australian Workers Union boss Paul Howes called for the details to be released quickly so he could talk to his members and industry.

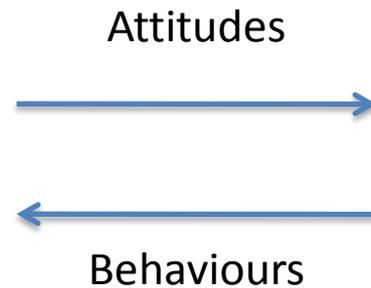
The Australian understands the decision to re-launch the plan as

Dealing with complex long term issues

Political Strategy



Community engagement and behaviour change



Complex long term issues

- “Wicked problems”
- Difficult implementation
- Short term pain for long term gain

Examples of complex long term issues

- Hawke/Keating economic reforms
- National compulsory superannuation
- Climate change
- Drugs
- Water reform
- Disadvantage and inequity
- Planning more sustainable cities

Politics: The nature of modern government



- Power at the top
- Intense time pressure
- 24 hour media power
- Polls
- Permanent conflict
- Wedge politics
- Continuous campaigning
- Campaigning by the media
- Expectations of stakeholders
- Power of special interests
- Dominance of market economics
- Complexity
- Importance of the trusted adviser

Key political factors

- Contest of leaders
- Credibility and trust
- Seizing the middle ground
- Convergence of philosophy – but exaggerated partisanship



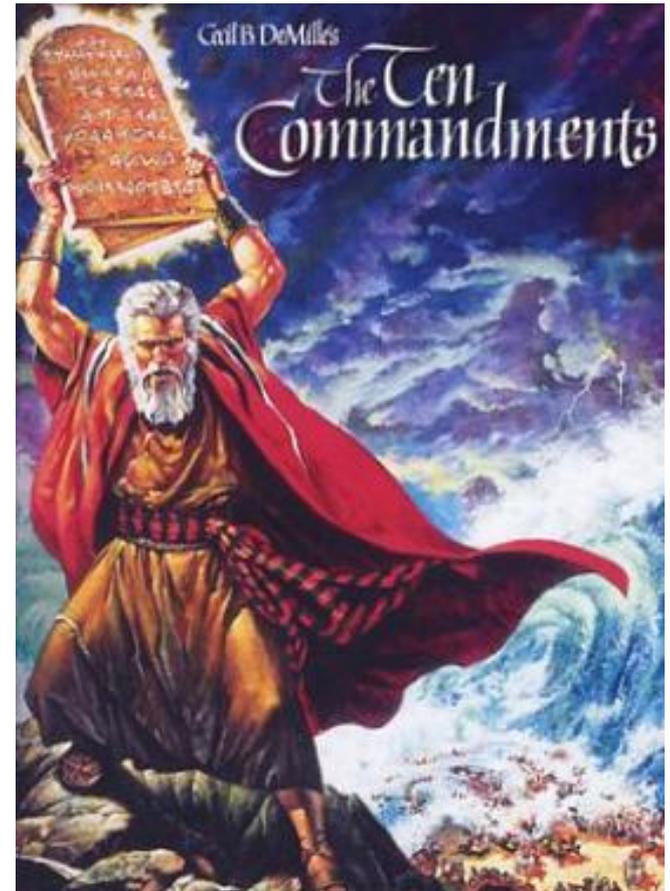
The numbers are often close - persistence, resilience and hard work pay off

Factors affecting difficulty of achieving the change?

- Size of the change
- Complexity
- Level of community support
- Vested interests - powerful opponents/supporters
- 'elite' opinion
- Media
- Opposition stance - partisanship
- Parliamentary situation

Ten Commandments of political success

1. Be a leader
2. Have the courage of your convictions



Climate Change and leadership



Rudd talked up the fight against climate change as the “greatest moral challenge”

Decision to defer ETS until 2013 triggered massive drop in public support – lost credibility

ETS backflip was Kevin Rudd's death warrant

By Steve Lewis | The Daily Telegraph | June 24, 2010 12:00am 22 comments

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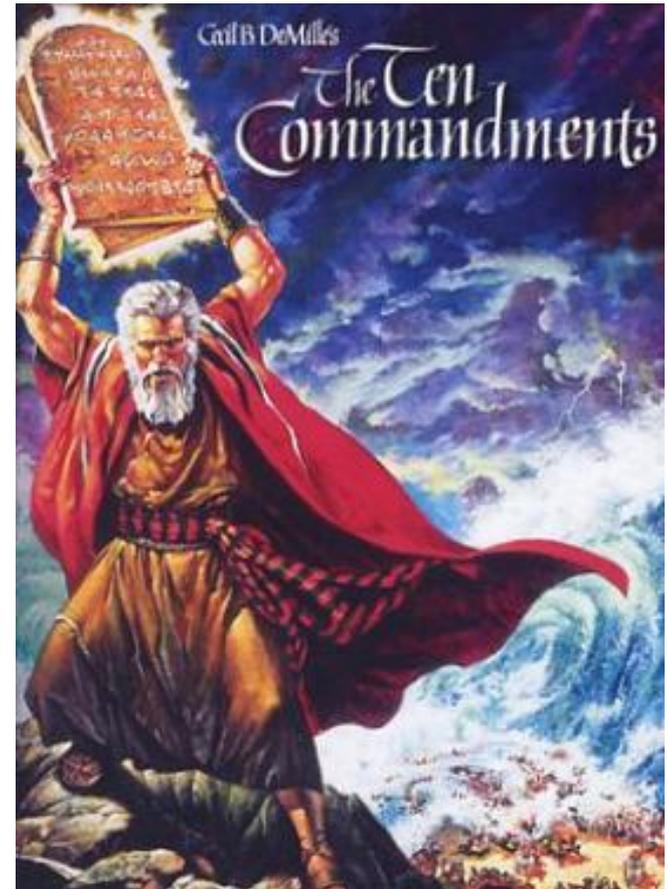
Kevin Rudd caused his own downfall with the climate change backflip. Picture: Kym Smith

- Confidence dropped after backflip
- Supporters viewed him as a phony

Sometimes political leaders have to lead despite perceived lack of popularity of position – what influences this?

Ten Commandments of political success

1. Be a leader
2. Have the courage of your convictions
3. Be trusted
4. Know what you want to achieve
5. Communicate, persuade, educate
6. Engagement - develop plan collaboratively



Communication: the power of language

- Paul Keating
 - “banana republic”
- Lincoln
 - “a house divided”
- The importance of ‘framing’ issues
 - Kevin07 “new leadership on climate”
 - “CPRS – a great big new tax”

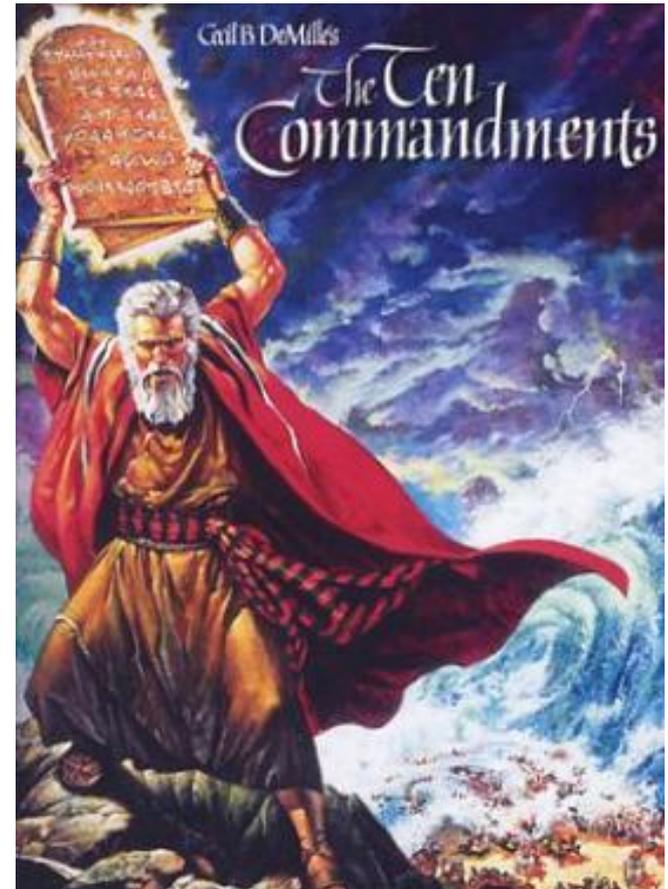
Engagement strategy

- Can the problem be solved by government alone?
- What is the purpose of the engagement?
 - inform
 - consult
 - build political support
 - collaboration
 - empowerment



Ten Commandments of political success

1. Be a leader
2. Have the courage of your convictions
3. Be trusted
4. Know what you want to achieve
5. Communicate, persuade, educate
6. Engagement - develop plan collaboratively
7. Know what stakeholders want to achieve
8. Do a deal – trade offs
9. Be persistent
10. Make sure you keep the numbers



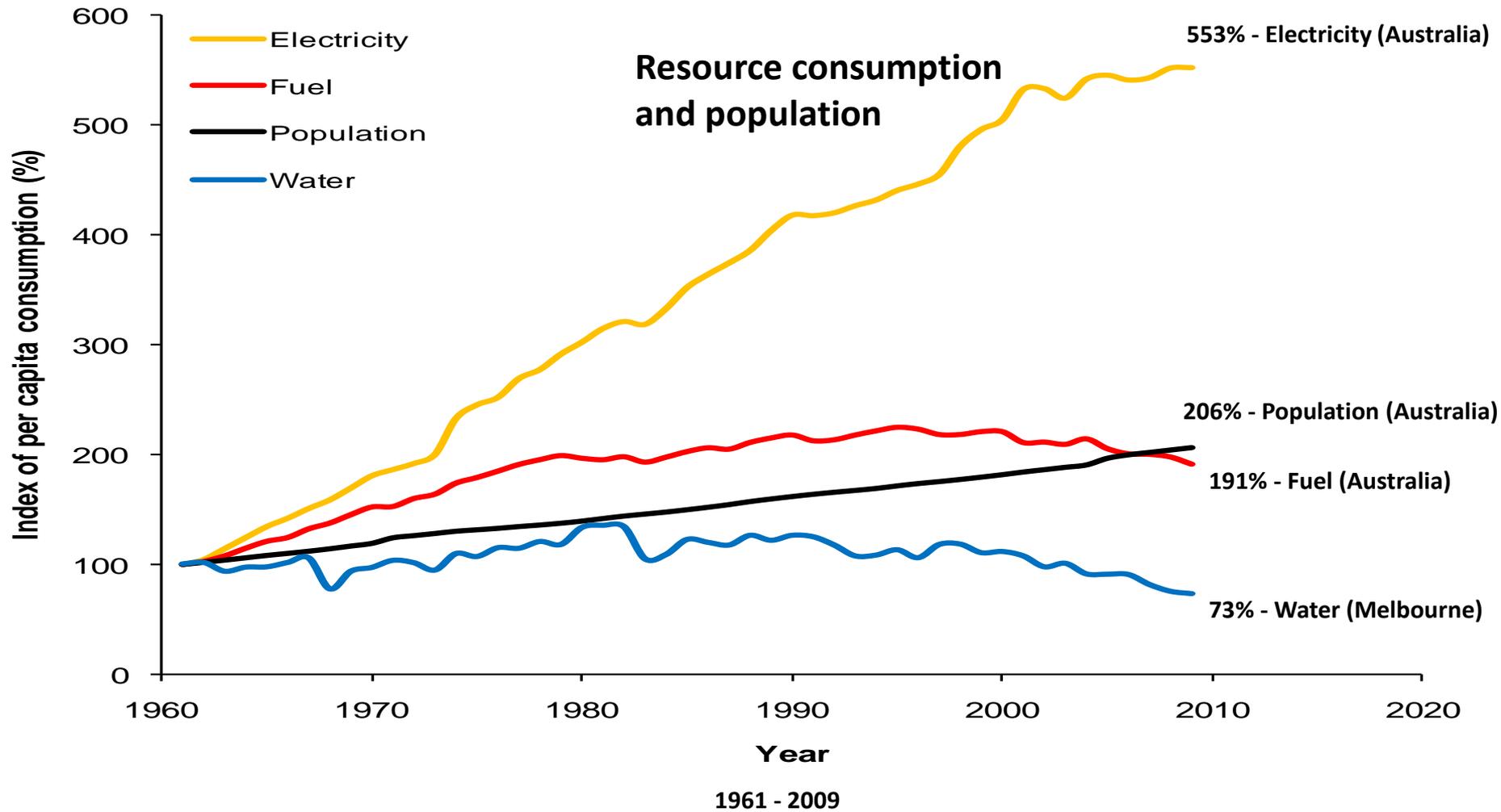
Behaviour Change



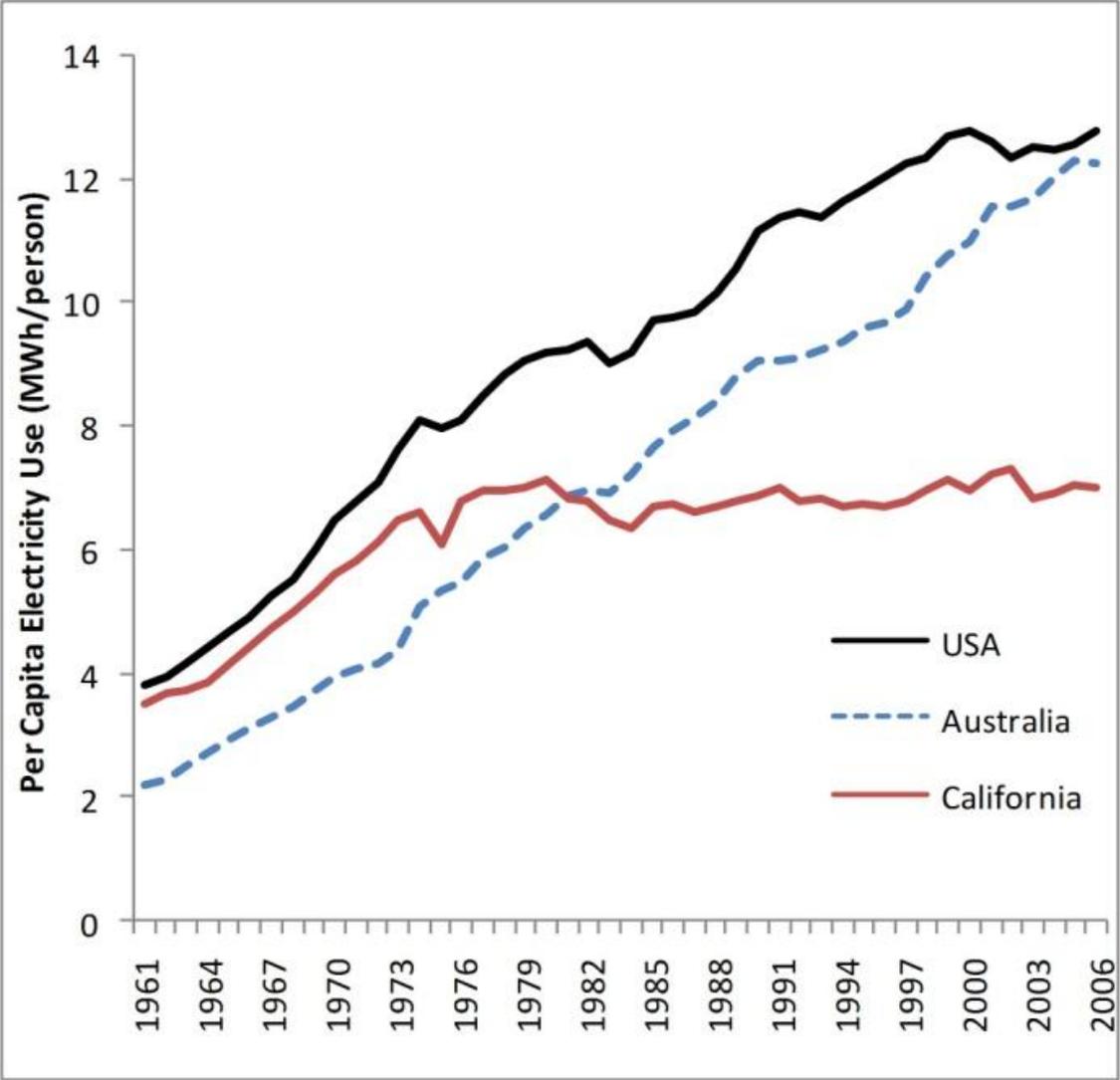
Many complex issues need behavior change as well as political change

- Multiple causes of problem
 - Obesity, drug use, disadvantage
- Depends on community behaviors
 - Carbon emissions, energy and water use
- Government policy and action limited by community attitude
 - Carbon price, speeding fines
- Implementation is the challenge
 - Sustainable urban planning

Climate change and behaviour change: the size of the challenge



Electricity use in California and Australia



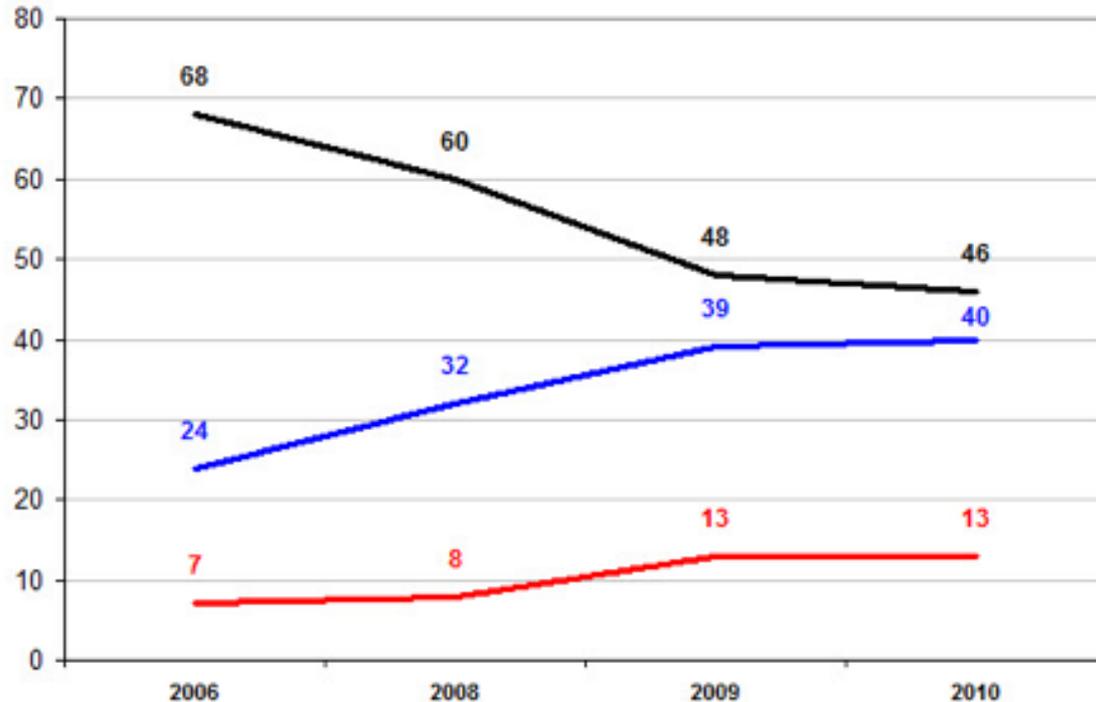
(Sources: ABARE 2008, ABS 2008; Energy Information Administration (US), Annual Energy Review 2007)

Attitudes to climate change



Source: Cathy Wilcox, Sydney Morning Herald.

Softening support for climate action?



- Global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs
- The problem of global warming should be addressed, but its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost
- Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs

Exploring attitudes to climate change

Addressing climate change Lowy Poll 2010

“Do you personally agree or disagree that Australia should take action to reduce its carbon emissions before a global agreement is reached?”

Strongly agree	44%
Somewhat agree	28%
Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	16%

“If it helped solve climate change, how much extra would you be willing to pay each month on your electricity bill?”

Nothing	33%
\$1 to \$10	25%
\$11 to \$20	15%
\$21 or more	19%

Attitude to a carbon price

Do you support or oppose the introduction of a price on carbon? Is that strongly support / support / oppose / strongly oppose?

	Total	Coalition	ALP	Greens	Others
Strongly support	11.8	5	17	31	8
Support	34.3	26	42	44	33
Oppose	24.9	31	22	10	26
Strongly oppose	18.7	28	8	8	28
Neither	4.0	4	5	3	2
Don't Know	6.2	7	6	5	2
Total Support	46.1	30	59	75	41
Total Oppose	43.6	59	30	17	54

Nielsen poll February 2011

Attitude to a carbon price

Do you support or oppose the introduction of a price on carbon? Is that strongly support / support / oppose / strongly oppose?

	Total	18-24	25-39	40-54	55+
Strongly support	11.8	11	10	12	14
Support	34.3	39	37	35	30
Oppose	24.9	30	27	23	23
Strongly oppose	18.7	11	16	20	23
Neither	4.0	3	5	4	4
Don't Know	6.2	6	5	6	7
Total Support	46.1	50	47	47	44
Total Oppose	43.6	41	43	43	45

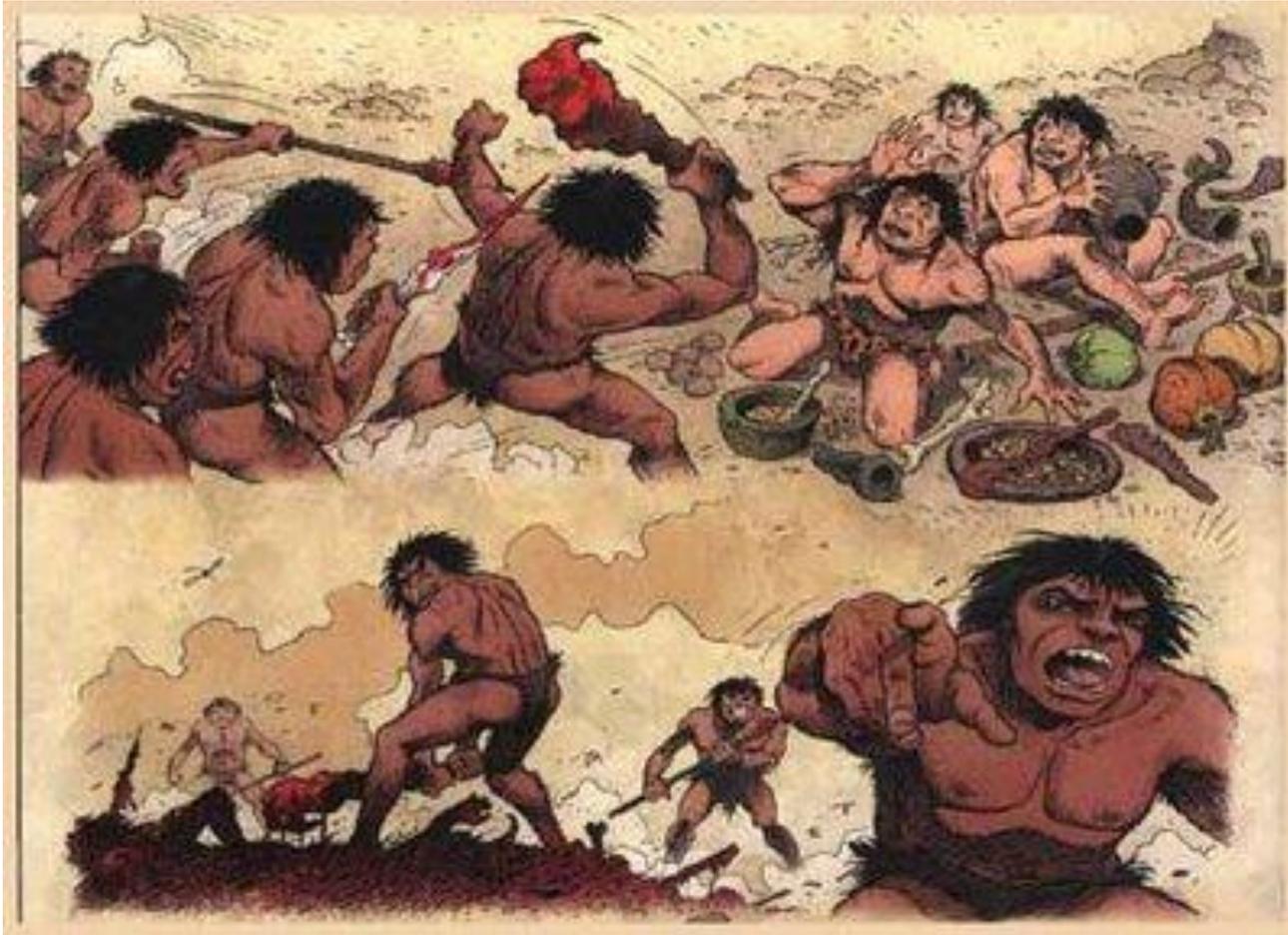
Where does the climate change fit into political priorities?

Qu. Which are the three most important issues in deciding how you would vote at a Federal election?

	One	Total
Management of the economy	36%	63%
Health	14%	48%
Australian Jobs	8%	33%
Political leadership	10%	23%
Education	5%	23%
Fair taxation	4%	18%
Protecting the environment	4%	16%
Climate change	6%	16%
Interest rates	3%	15%
Housing affordability	3%	14%
Quality water supply	3%	12%
Fair Industrial Relations	3%	10%
Security and the war on terrorism	2%	9%

Essential Research poll 25 October 2009

Climate change and Behaviour change: The problem of human psychology



Why climate change doesn't prompt behaviour change

Human brain evolved to respond to threats that

- Involve other humans
- Violate our moral sensibilities
- Are immediate: clear and present danger
- Can be appreciated by our senses

Daniel Gilbert

Professor Psychology
Harvard

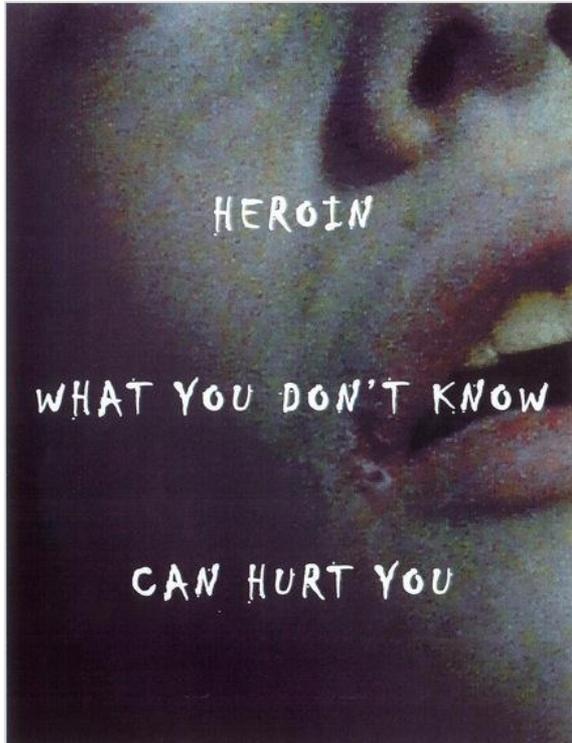
It's Difficult

So what can we do?

Who are we seeking to influence?

- Understand differences in target groups
- Target messages and activities to them

Young people and drugs



HEROIN

WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW

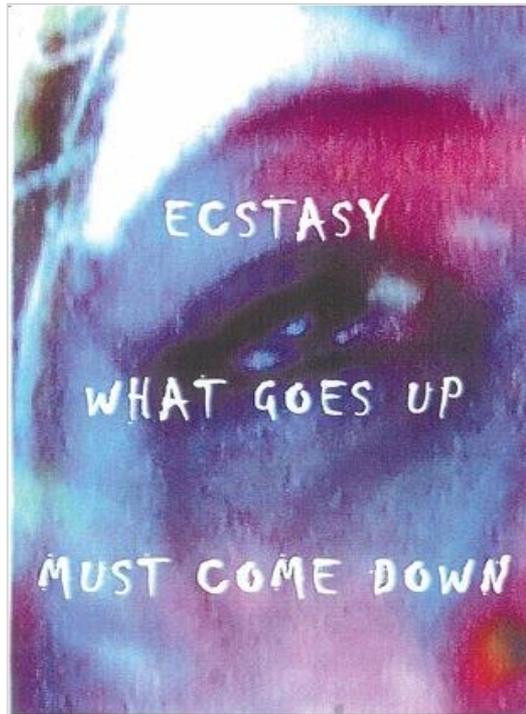
CAN HURT YOU

"I was in a new crowd. I guess I tried smack because I was curious. Then it just took over. All I ever wanted was that next hit. I was so sick, in trouble and I had no one there for me."
If you or someone close to you has a problem with drugs, just call or visit the website.

1800 888 236 drugs.vic.gov.au

It's real help and totally confidential. 24hrs-7days.

Victoria *It's our drug problem*



ECSTASY

WHAT GOES UP

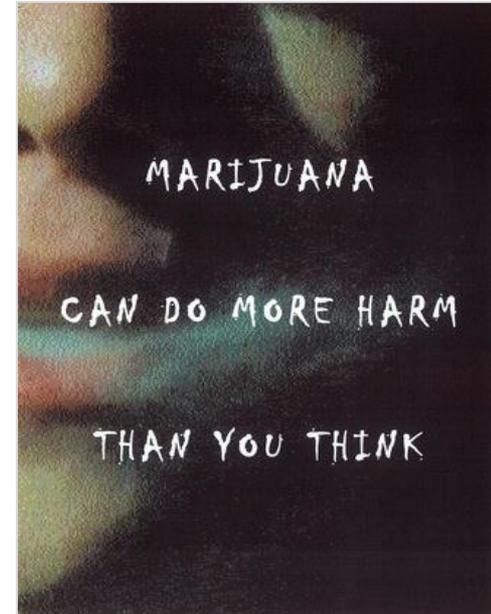
MUST COME DOWN

"When I was going out for a big night, I'd use Ecstasy. In the end I was taking it a lot. Yet it left me agitated, depressed and feeling low."
If you or someone close to you has a problem with drugs, just call or visit the website.

1800 888 236 drugs.vic.gov.au

It's real help and totally confidential. 24hrs-7days.

Victoria *It's our drug problem*



MARIJUANA

CAN DO MORE HARM

THAN YOU THINK

"I'd get up and the first thing I'd do would be to have a bong just to get me going. In the end I was losing my friends. My family wasn't talking to me. I was just wasting my life."
If you or someone close to you has a problem with drugs, just call or visit the website.

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It's real help and totally confidential. 24hrs-7days.

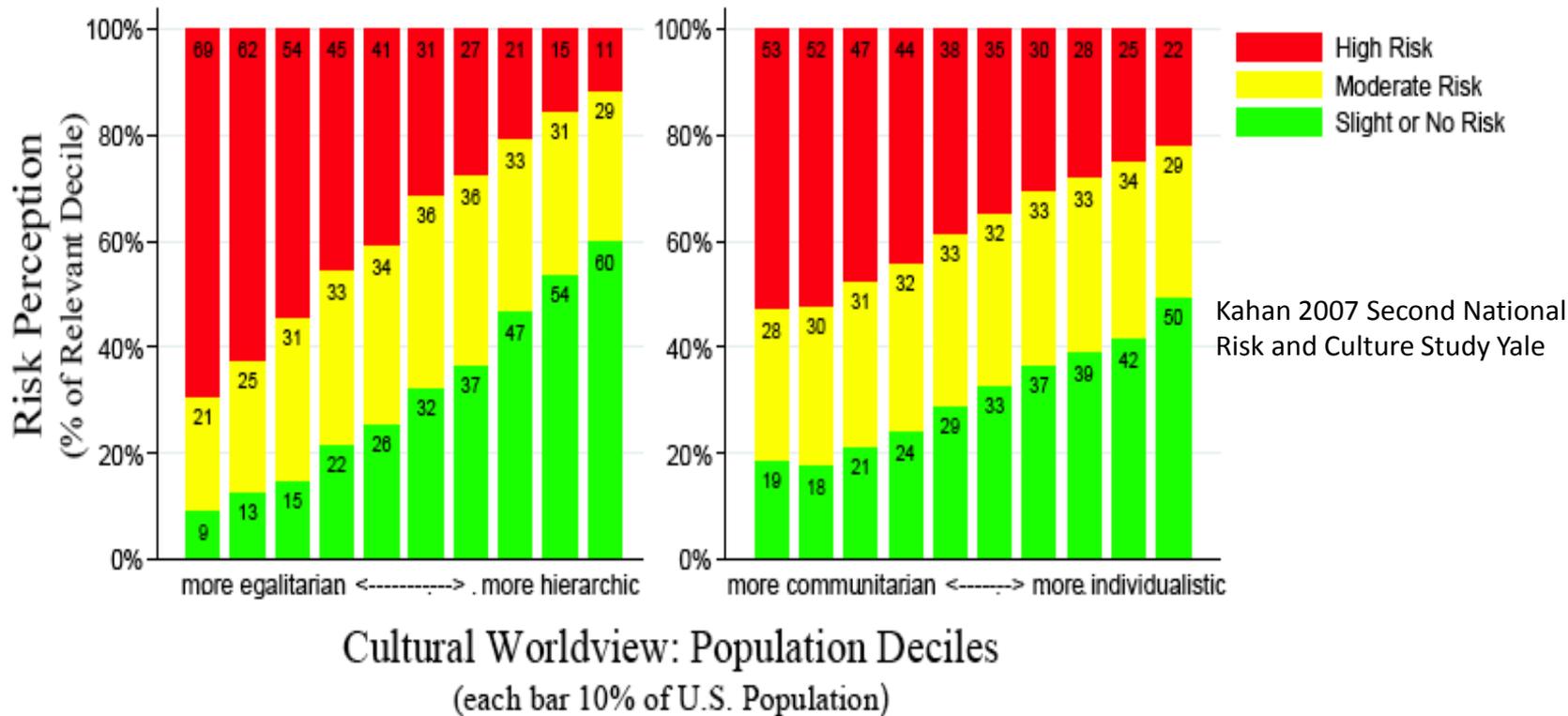
Victoria *It's our drug problem*

Influence of political and cultural views

- Climate change is happening and caused by human activity 53%
Labor 63%
- We are just witnessing a normal fluctuation in the earth's climate 34%
Coalition 54%
- Don't know 13%
- Essential Research Poll November 2009

Global warming, politics and cultural attitudes

How much risk does global warming pose for people in our society?



Hierarchic and individualistic individuals more likely to accept climate science if accompanied by call for nuclear power

Using everything available

- Collaboration and empowerment
- Financial incentives
- Psychology
- Behavioural economics
- Social marketing
- Regulation
- Make it easy to do

Communication and psychology

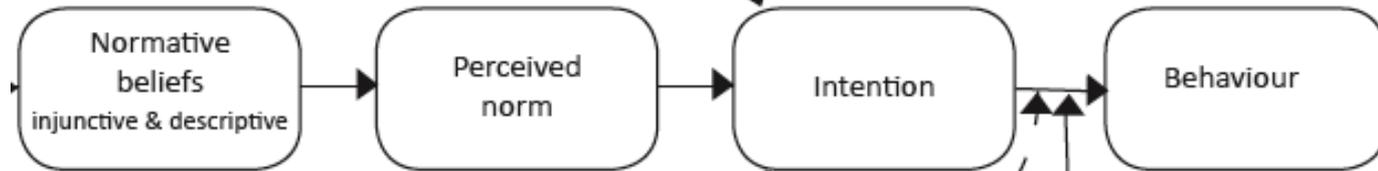
- Framing and language
 - E.g. frequency 1 out of 1000 more concrete than 0.1%
- Understand people discount the future
- Put things in the positive – don't repeat negatives
 - People cling to misinformation – myth vs fact can backfire
- Power of human insight
 - E.g. Problem gambling campaign - “think of what you are really gambling with”

Focus on what influences specific behaviour

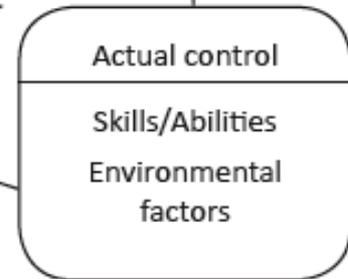
What are good and bad things about it?



What would people who are important to me want me to do?

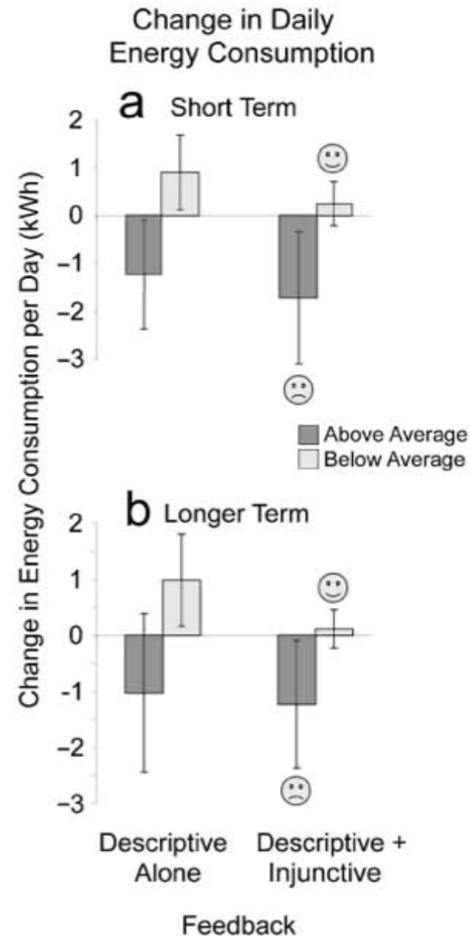


What factors do I believe facilitate or impede performance?



The reasoned action model [Source: M. Fishbein & I. Ajzen (2010). Predicting and changing behaviour: The reasoned action approach.]

Social norms are very powerful



Households use less electricity when told what other households use (descriptive norm) AND given indication of approval or disapproval (injunctive norm)

Schultz et al. (2007)

Attitudes are hard to change But behaviour can be “nudged”

- *“Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness”* Thaler,, Sunstein
- Government’s can guide people’s choices in right direction using psychology
- UK Cabinet Office Behavioural Insight Team
 - Increasing tax collection using social norms
 - Health e.g. STD campaign

Can we change attitudes?

- Changing behaviours may inform attitude
- Self-perception theory
 - “Foot-in the-door” technique
 - US prisoners of war in North Korea
- Commitment and consistency
 - Desire to be consistent with what we have already done
- Elaboration likelihood model
 - Key factors are motivation to process the message and ability to critically evaluate the message

Water conservation campaign in Victoria

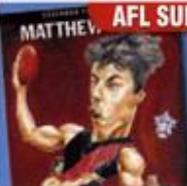
- Drought and climate change
- Need to significantly reduce individual and corporate water use
- Need to change individual behaviours
 - Shorter showers, water efficient appliances, saving water in home, low water use gardens, corporate water saving
- Attitude to water restrictions and water pricing
 - Need to build support for tough water restrictions and increases in water pricing (paying more if you use more)

Letter and kit from the Premier 1.5million



Also used in schools

MATTHEW AFL SUPERSTARS - COLLECT ALL 10



FOOTY POSTER

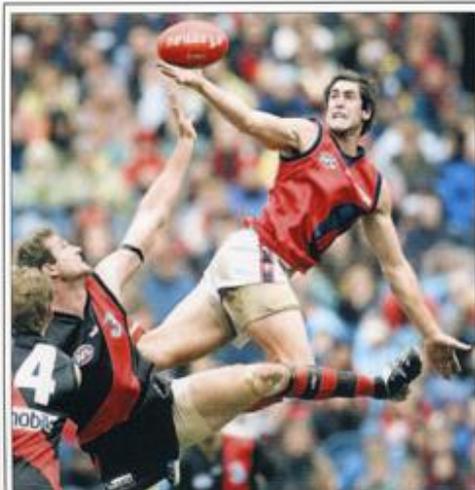


GRIM NEW HUNT

PAGE 5

WATER BANS PERMANENT

Revealed: best & worst savers



Minor: Damon Jeff White soars above opponent Matthew Allan. Picture: COLLEEN PETICH

Winning Demons fly high

MELBOURNE leaped back into second place on the AFL ladder yesterday with a 26-point win over Essendon at the MCG. The Demons are the form team of the AFL, with three consecutive wins in a row. Sport Illustrated, Page 31

Tanya Giles and Kate Obergang

WATER SAVERS

Reduction in water use

- BEST**
1. Fitzroy -29.75%
 2. Melbourne -25.47
 3. Blairgowrie -23.45
 4. Balnarring -22.61
 5. Portsea -22.30

- WORST**
5. Toorak -4.52%
 4. Coburg -4.29
 3. Templestowe -4.26
 2. Lower Plenty -0.45
 1. Coldstream -0.04
- Melbourne's average: Down 11.79%



PERMANENT water bans on Melbourne households will start within months under tough plans to save the state's precious water reserves. Restrictions on the use of sprinklers, the compulsory use of trigger nozzles to wash cars and a ban on leaving downspouts are among options being considered by the State Government. Environment Minister John Sharkey yesterday said urgent action was needed to help preserve the state's dwindling water reserves for future generations. The planned crackdown, envisaged as the Government unveiled the first suburbs by suburb snapshot of Melbourne's best and worst water savers. Fitzroy came up strongly, with some households reducing their water consumption by almost 30 per cent from 2002 to 2003 — a staggering 22 buckets a day. The top five was

rounded out by Melbourne, Blairgowrie, Balnarring and Portsea. The worst residents at hoarding the water usage live in Coldstream, followed by Lower Plenty, Templestowe, Coburg and Toorak. Mr Sharkey said demand for water in Melbourne was expected to outstrip supply in the next 15 years. "We have to change the way we use and

value water. If we don't, Melbourne could reach the limits of its supply by 2020 and many areas would be severely degraded," he said. The permanent water bans would start when stage two restrictions are lifted and would follow two months of non-mandatory conservation.

Continued Page 2
How your suburb rates, Page 18

WATER SAVERS

Reduction in water use

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Melbourne's average: Down 11.79%

GB, GN/Herald Sun 21/6/2004



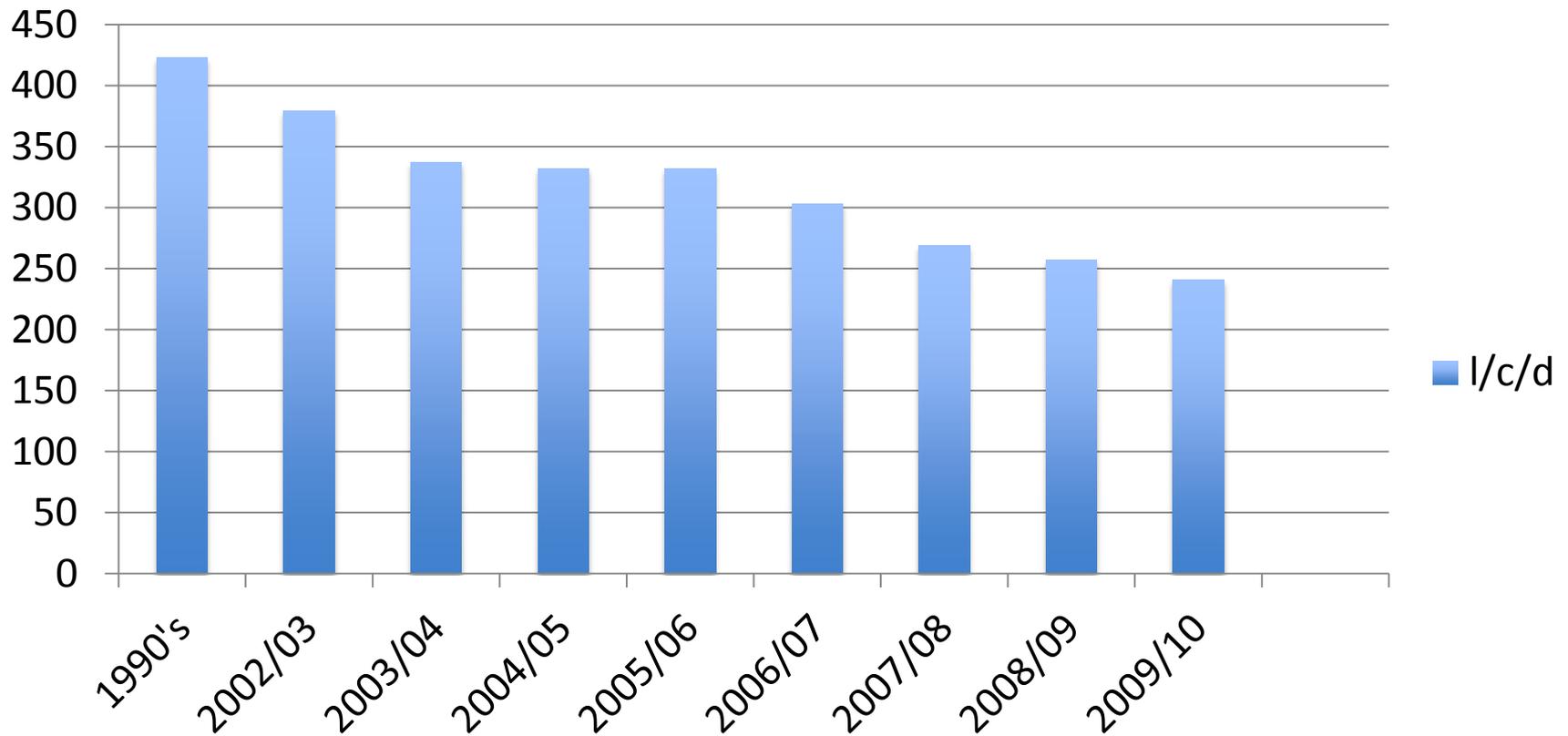
Parents, three girls die in car crash: P3





Water: a successful behaviour change campaign

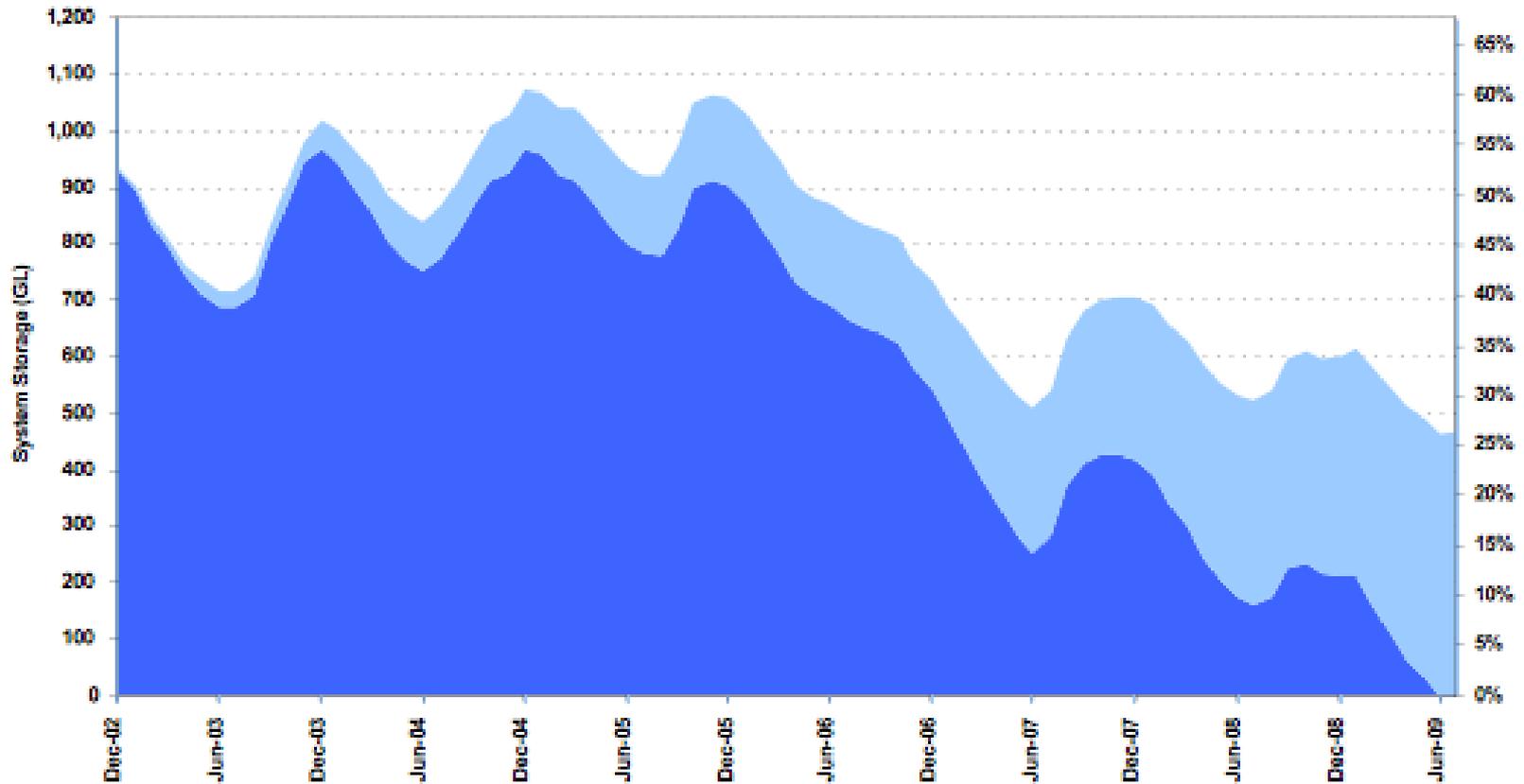
Litres per person per day



Water: a successful behavior change campaign

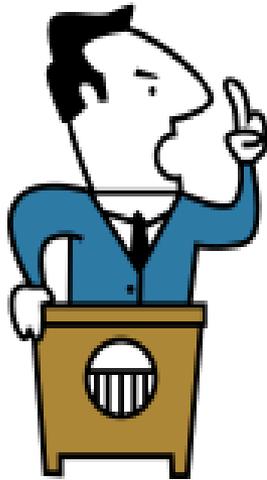
Melbourne's storages 2002-2009

Storages on 1 July 2009 would be empty without conservation of 475 GL



Dealing with complex long term issues

Political Strategy



Leadership
Trust
Persuasion and Communication
Media strategy
Stakeholder Management
The 'numbers'

Community engagement and behaviour change



Community engagement
Participatory decision making
Behaviour mapping
Psychology
Social marketing
Behavioral economics
Regulation