

Communication Best-Practices for Renewable Energies (RE-COMMUNICATE)

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Workshop on Social Acceptance of Renewable Energy

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IRENA Headquarters, Abu Dhabi, UAE

The mission of IEA-RETD is to accelerate the large-scale deployment of renewable energies



Platform for international cooperation on RE policies and actions
under the legal framework of the IEA
(Implementing Agreement)

- Created in 2005, currently **9 member countries**: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, UK.
- Commissions **5-7 studies** per year

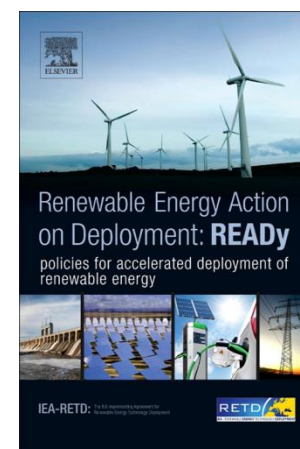
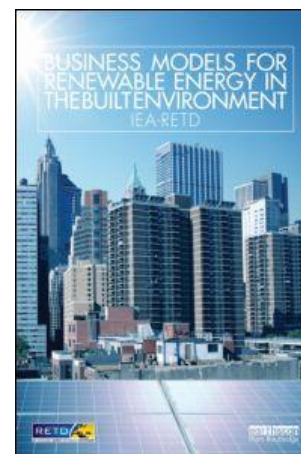
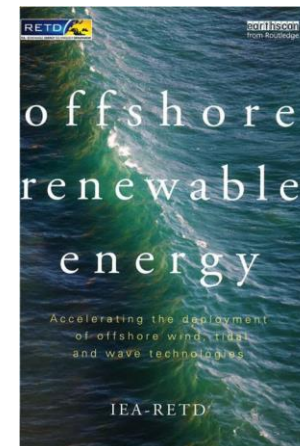
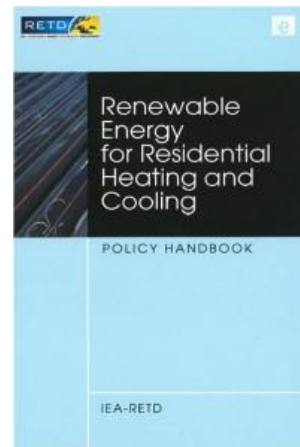
IEA-RETD takes communication seriously

- Presenting studies at (joint) events with:

- IEA Secretariat
- IRENA
- REN21
- DIREC, JREF, COP, ...

- Dissemination channels:

- Reports freely available www.iea-retd.org
- Books published by Earthscan/Routledge and Elsevier
- Press releases, mailing lists, Twitter, Facebook
- Workshops



In general RE have a positive image – but higher acceptance is needed for large-scale deployment

People seem to like renewables.

Survey Germany 9/2013: "100% RE should be reached as soon as possible."
-> 85% full or rather supportive

But:

Mis-perceptions in the public
and at political level;
aggressive campaigns of
incumbent stakeholders

**How can RE communication
be improved?**



Commissioning the scoping study “Communication Best-Practices for Renewable Energies”

Objectives

Provide **ideas and techniques** on how the benefits of RE can be better communicated *to* and *by* policy and decision makers in order to accelerate the deployment of RE.

Approach

- Document examples of RE communication campaigns
- Compare against best practice techniques
- Conduct two workshops (Brussels, Nov 2012, Feb 2013)
- Give recommendations

 iisd FÖS
GREEN BUDGET GERMANY
FORUM ÖKOLOGISCH-SOZIALE
MARKTWIRTSCHAFT COLLINGS
& MONNEY
The renewable energy marketing agency

Comparing practice from governments, associations and NGOs with of (RE) communications theory



iisd



EWEA
THE EUROPEAN WIND ENERGY ASSOCIATION



Gute Nachbarn
Starke Kommunen mit
Erneuerbaren Energien

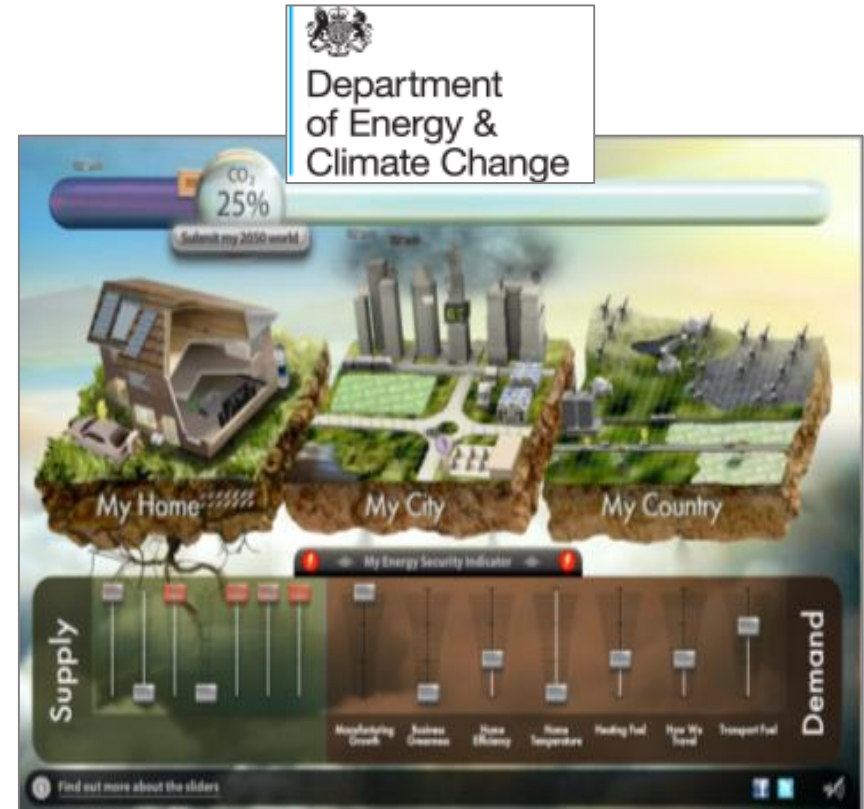


Analysing different types of communication activities (“campaigns”)

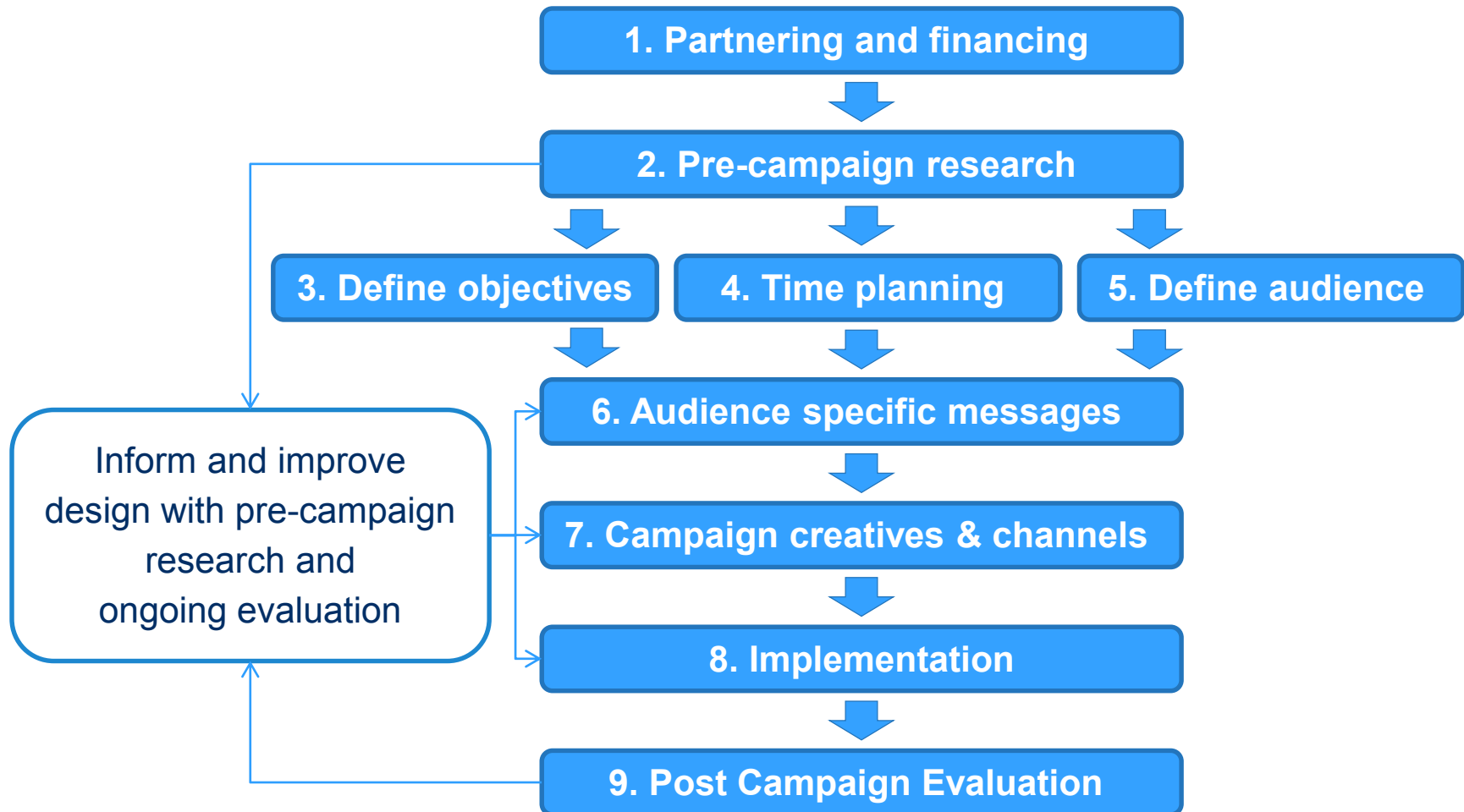
Energy Agency of Upper Austria: Promotion of use of pellets



UK DECC: Interactive energy calculator



Approaching communications strategy as a process with clearly defined stages



Broadening the reach of campaigns and reducing costs

Theory

- Increasing human and financial resources through cooperation
- Reducing cost burdens for those involved
- Improving design, reach and effectiveness

Practice

- Most RE communications tend to have limited funding
- Some campaigns used partnering:
 - Energy Agency of Upper Austria with network of over 160 regional businesses
 - EWEA leverages small budget to create the brand Global Wind Day



Understanding the audience and defining the campaign

Theory

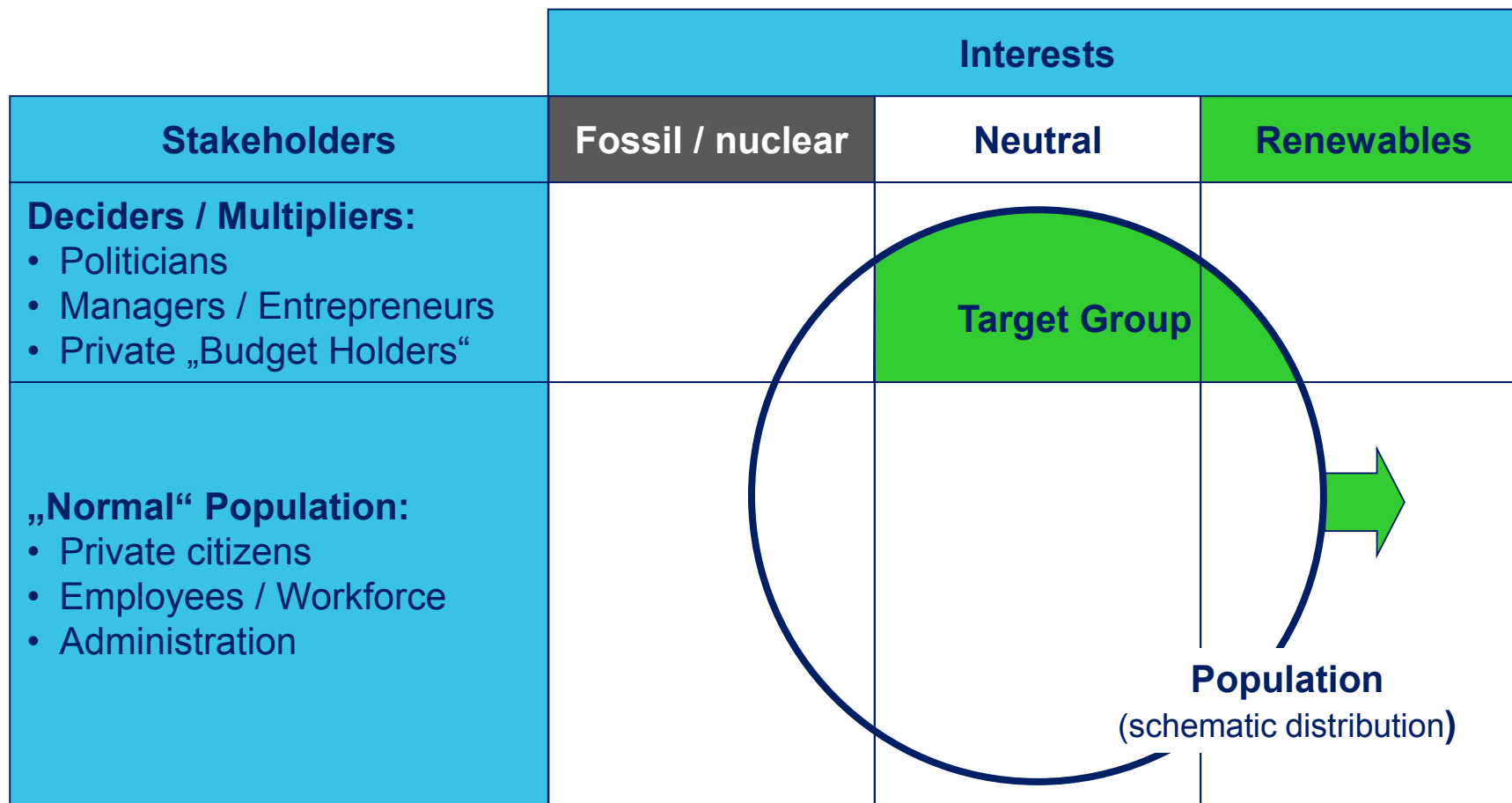
- Research informs entire strategy:
 - Campaign objectives
 - Audience segmentation:
How do they feel? What do they know? What media do they use?
 - Timing
 - Messaging
 - Media selection
- Reduce cost by narrowing scope

Practice

- Most case studies did research:
 - Attitudinal studies
 - Face-to-face meetings
 - Analyses of market studies
- Potential not fully used yet



Concentrating on swing votes and opinion-leaders



Being interesting, memorable and relevant

**WHEN THERE'S A HUGE SOLAR ENERGY SPILL,
IT'S JUST CALLED A NICE DAY.**

**GREEN JOBS,
NOT MORE OIL SPILLS.**

GREENPEACE
Handout

Being inspiring to be remembered

- You don't bore people into buying your story!
- Competition for people's attention is tough
- Providing information is NOT enough:
More information ≠ more action
- Poor campaigns can have a negative impact
- Knowing the audience to produce a message that will interest them



Applying consciously behavioural economics (can be counter-intuitive)

Framing of facts is often more important than facts themselves
(and sometimes counter-intuitive).

- **Status quo bias**
- **Loss aversion:** Individuals are more strongly motivated to avoid loss than acquire a similar gain
- **Omission bias**
- **Endowment effect**
- **Hyperbolic discounting**
- **Pro-social behaviour**



Also show what a
community will **lose** by
not investing in RE



Gute Nachbarn
Starke Kommunen mit
Erneuerbaren Energien

RE Value Creation Calculator



Placing messages within compelling stories

Theory

- Matching audience segments with communications channels
- Social media: Audience should interact with content
- “Recycling” content in different media



> 3.6 million views

Epuron/BMU: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mTLO2F_ERY



www.iea-retd.org

Practice

- Focus on facts, rather than emotional narratives
- Some achieved only a few views or downloads

Communications activities




Assessing campaign results against objectives

Before:

Campaign:

After:



KOSSEN KAN
DET HA SEG AT
HAUGESUND LIGGE
SÅ LANGT ITTE
VINDAFJORD?

Why is it that
Haugesund is
so far behind
Vindafjord?

HAR DERE I HAUGESUND
Enova støtter hvert år ...
som kutter energibruket. De ...
enova.no



Red: No climate Action Plan
Green: Climate action plan defined
Yellow: Climate Action Plan in process

Actively defending RE's image in online and print media



MailOnline

Home News U.S. | Sport | TV&Showbiz | Femail | Health | Science | Money | RightMinds

News Home | Arts | Headlines | Pictures | Most read | News Board

'Soviet' wind farm subsidies blight rural lives and may have worse impact than climate change, says environment minister



How the Green Taliban spreads its poison gospel

By **James Delingpole** Politics | Last updated: December 5th, 2012

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JUST A FEW DAYS TO SAVE OUR VILLAGES

The six proposed wind turbines on farmland between Sellindge, Aldington and Lympe villages will have a disastrous effect on the surrounding area.

- The wind generators are huge (125m high) and will be visible for at least 10 miles.
- They will be just 600m away from local residents' homes.
- Noise and shadow flicker will cause annoyance to whole communities.
- Infrasonic pressure waves are harmful to health, causing headaches, sleep loss, ringing in the ears, dizziness and nausea.
- House values will drop and local enterprises will suffer.
- Danger to wildlife and even TV reception!

If you are concerned, you must all **ACT NOW**.
Write to: Shepway Planning, Civic Centre, CT20 2QY and quote reference Y12/0451/SH
Or visit: www.shepway.gov.uk search for Y12/0451/SH. Click 'View application...'; then 'Comment on Application'.

Sellindge, Aldington & Lympe Villages Against Turbines In Our Neighbourhood
For further information visit: www.slarty.org.uk email: act14ukaction@gmail.com

Ingredients for success: Structured approach, achievable goals & firm understanding of audience

- Mobilising larger budgets through partnering
- Using process of clearly-defined steps to develop long-term strategy
- Defining audience in thorough pre-campaign research
- Applying knowledge from behavioural economics
- Using more emotive campaign creatives
- Improving campaign evaluation
- Actively addressing negative media coverage



Conducting RE-focused survey in various countries

- Most existing surveys are not detailed enough
- Primary research covering:
 - Knowledge about RE
 - Attitudes towards RE
 - Demographic and socio-economic indicators
- Objectives:
 - Identifying ways of segmenting audiences
 - Understanding misconceptions in RE sector
 - Providing sound basis for future campaigns



Establishing a dedicated platform for RE communication professionals

- Website with global reach
- To become *the* address to exchange knowledge on RE communication
- Country-specific information (local language!) and networks
- Regional workshops and annual international conference
- Funding for multiple years required



RE-COMMUNICATE gives valuable insights into theory and practice of RE communication

- Campaigns should consciously apply best-practice process.
- Case studies show many good approaches and ideas.
- But the potential is not fully used yet.
- Proposed next steps:
 1. Survey
 2. RE Communication Platform
- <http://iea-retd.org/archives/publications/re-communicate>

IEA-RETD is committed to support an Alliance on improving RE Communication and social acceptance



A **Alliance building** Build alliances and reach agreements among policy stakeholders including industry members, consumers, and investors.

C **Communicating** Communicate knowledge about renewable technologies and issues to create awareness, address concerns of stakeholders, and build up trust.

T **Target setting** Clarify the goals, set ambitious targets on all levels of government, and enact policies to achieve goals.

I **Integrating** Integrate renewables into policymaking and take synergies with energy efficiency.

O **Optimizing** Optimize policy frameworks by building on own policies or other countries' policy mechanisms and adapting them to specific circumstances.

N **Neutralizing** Neutralize disadvantages in the marketplace, such as misconceptions of costs and the lack of a level playing field.

READY
RENEWABLE ENERGY ACTION ON DEPLOYMENT

ACTION

Six policy actions for accelerated deployment of renewable energy

Summary





THANK YOU!

For additional information on RETD

Online: www.iea-retd.org
Contact: IEA_RETD@ecofys.com

The mission of IEA-RETD is to accelerate the large-scale deployment of renewable energies

RETD stands for *Renewable Energy Technology Deployment*.

IEA-RETD is a **platform for cooperation on RE policies and actions**
(*Implementing Agreement*)
under the legal framework of the International Energy Agency.

- Created in 2005, currently **9 member countries**: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, UK.
- Commissions annually **5-7 studies** providing innovative policy options and international best-practices
- Reports and handbooks are freely available at www.iea-retd.org.
- Organizes **workshops** and presents at international events.

IEA-RETD studies cover a wide range of policy fields



RE for Remote Areas and Islands (2011-12)



Next generation RES-E policy instruments (2012-13)

Cost and Business Case Comparisons of RET vs. non-RET (2012-13)



Costs of In-Action (2011)



Individuals perceive the value of an object higher if they already possess it than if they don't

Individuals value a ticket with a 50% chance of winning \$20 differently:

- If they already possess it: \$11.02
- If they have to acquire it: \$ 5.60



Creating a sense of ownership to increase support for RE

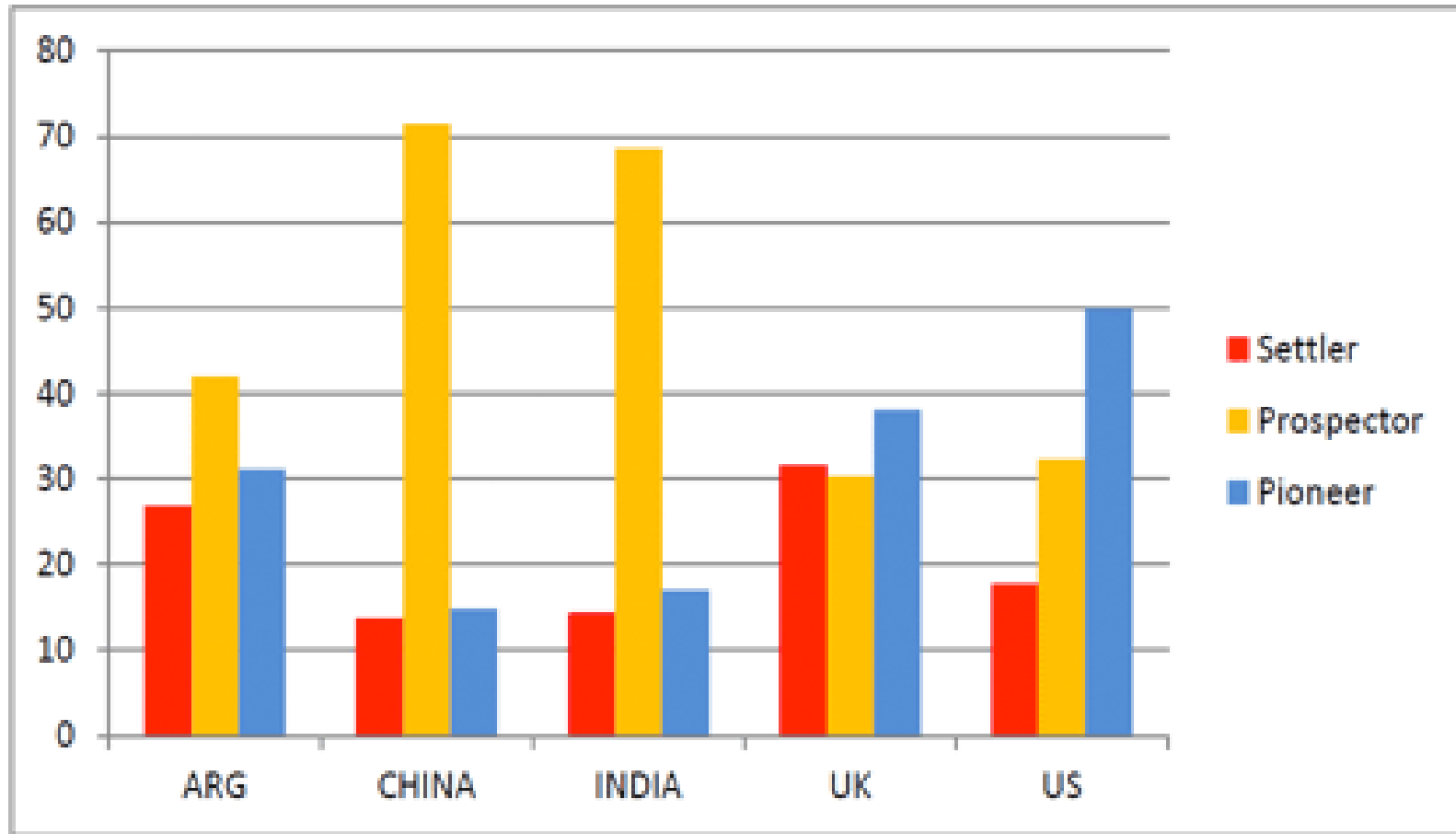
- 'My wind turbine and me' competition in schools, France



Using behavioural economics to inform campaigns

- Framing of facts is often more important than facts themselves
- Behavioural economics can be counter-intuitive
 - > its conscious application is necessary to counteract
- **Status quo bias:** Individuals have a strong bias against change
- **Omission bias:** Individuals prefer harmful inaction over harmful action
- **Loss aversion:** Individuals are more strongly motivated to avoid loss than acquire a similar gain
- **Endowment effect:** Individuals perceive the value of an object higher if they possess it than if they don't
- **Hyperbolic discounting:** Individuals make short-sighted decisions if costs *or* benefits (not both!) are immediate
- **Pro-social behaviour:** Individuals value fairness and act pro-socially to benefit from "warm glow" effect

Values Mode Segmentation in 5 countries showed large differences in the composition of the populations



Pre-campaign research will inform the development of specific messages for each audience segment

- Craft messages for each segment audience:
 - Test your message
 - Reason vs. emotion
 - Creating a sense of urgency
vs. creating guilt
 - One issue vs. all issues
 - Simplify the message
 - Link the message to public concerns



The 10 key points of the RE-COMMUNICATE Executive Summary

- 1. Partnering and financing: Partnerships broaden the reach of communications and reduce costs –which is crucial in the context of RE communications, which tend to have limited funding.
- 2. Pre-campaign research: Research builds in-depth understanding of target audiences for RE campaigns and provides insights into how best to communicate with them, producing more effective, targeted communications.
- 3. Definition of objectives: A RE campaign will only be as targeted, measurable and successful as its objectives allow it to be.
- 4. Time planning and duration: Timing is everything for RE communications campaigns.
- 5. Audience definition and segmentation: The beliefs, values, needs, desires and interpretations of RE and the deployment of RE technologies vary widely between audience segments.
- 6. Campaign messaging: Messages about RE should be carefully differentiated by segment, taking insights from behavioural economics into account where possible.
- 7. Campaign creatives: Aiming only to be heard or seen is not enough, particularly in a crowded arena such as energy policy – RE campaigns must compete with communications about other energy sources, and strive to be remembered and acted upon..
- 8. Campaign channels: Efforts must be made to match audience segments identified as particularly relevant to RE deployment with communications channels they personally value and are exposed to..
- 9. Evaluation: Learning from your mistakes is only an option if you know what mistakes were made.
- 10. Proactive response to negative media coverage: There are many misconceptions and negative opinions expressed about RE in the media, and these should be addressed to enhance understanding and perceptions of RE.