

# Northumbria Research Link

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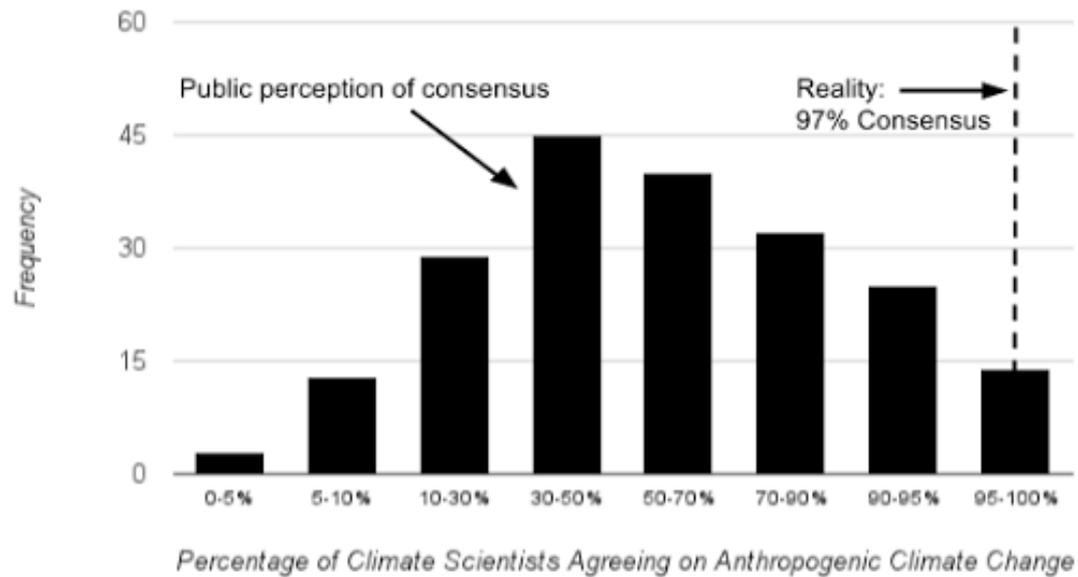
# **Climate Change and Social Media: Trust, literacy, legitimacy and subjectivity**

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*Northumbria University*

## The Consensus Gap



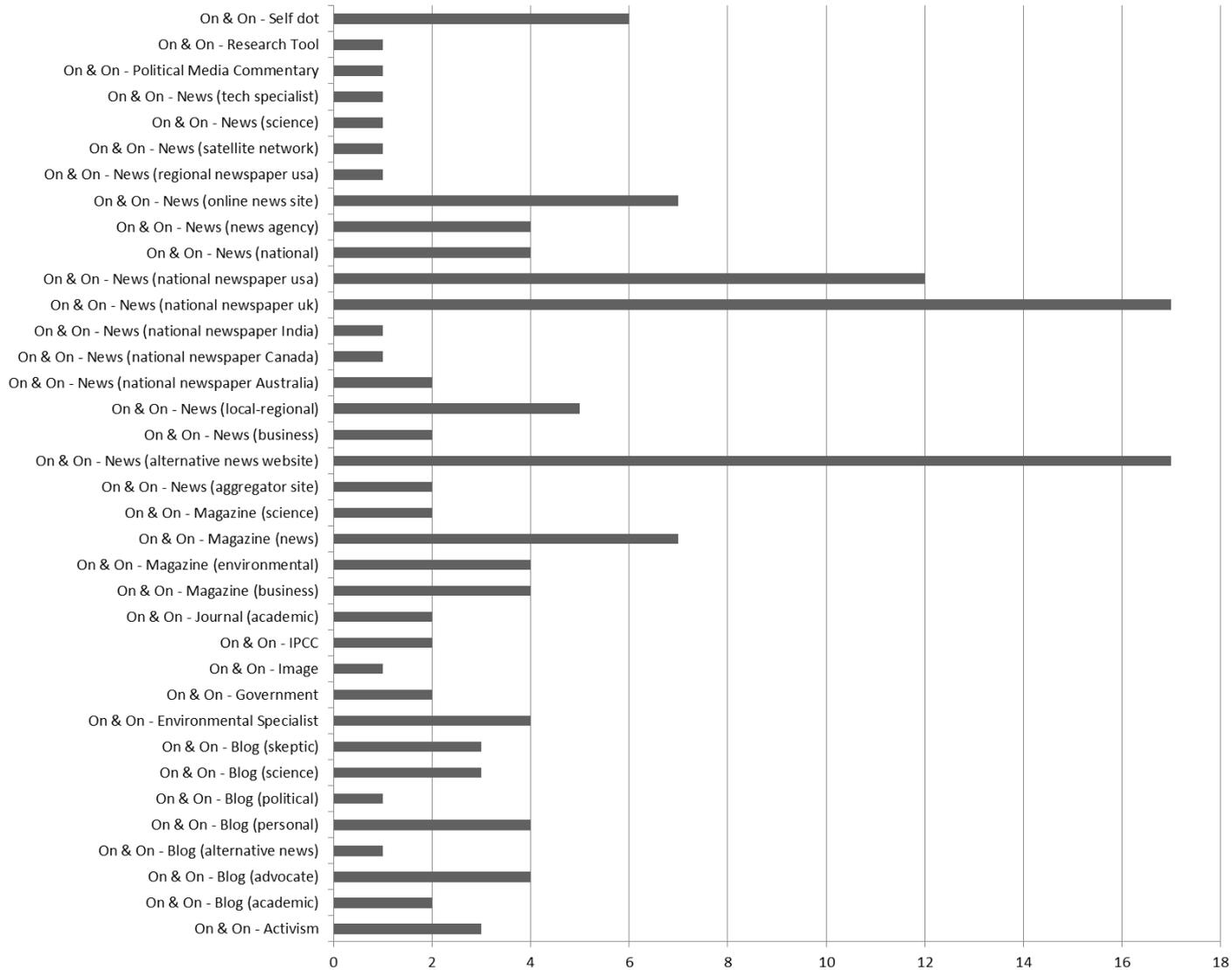
“information is no longer unquestionable. It's up to the consumer of the information, not the publisher of the information to test the authenticity of that information ... that's a radical change”

Howard Rheingold

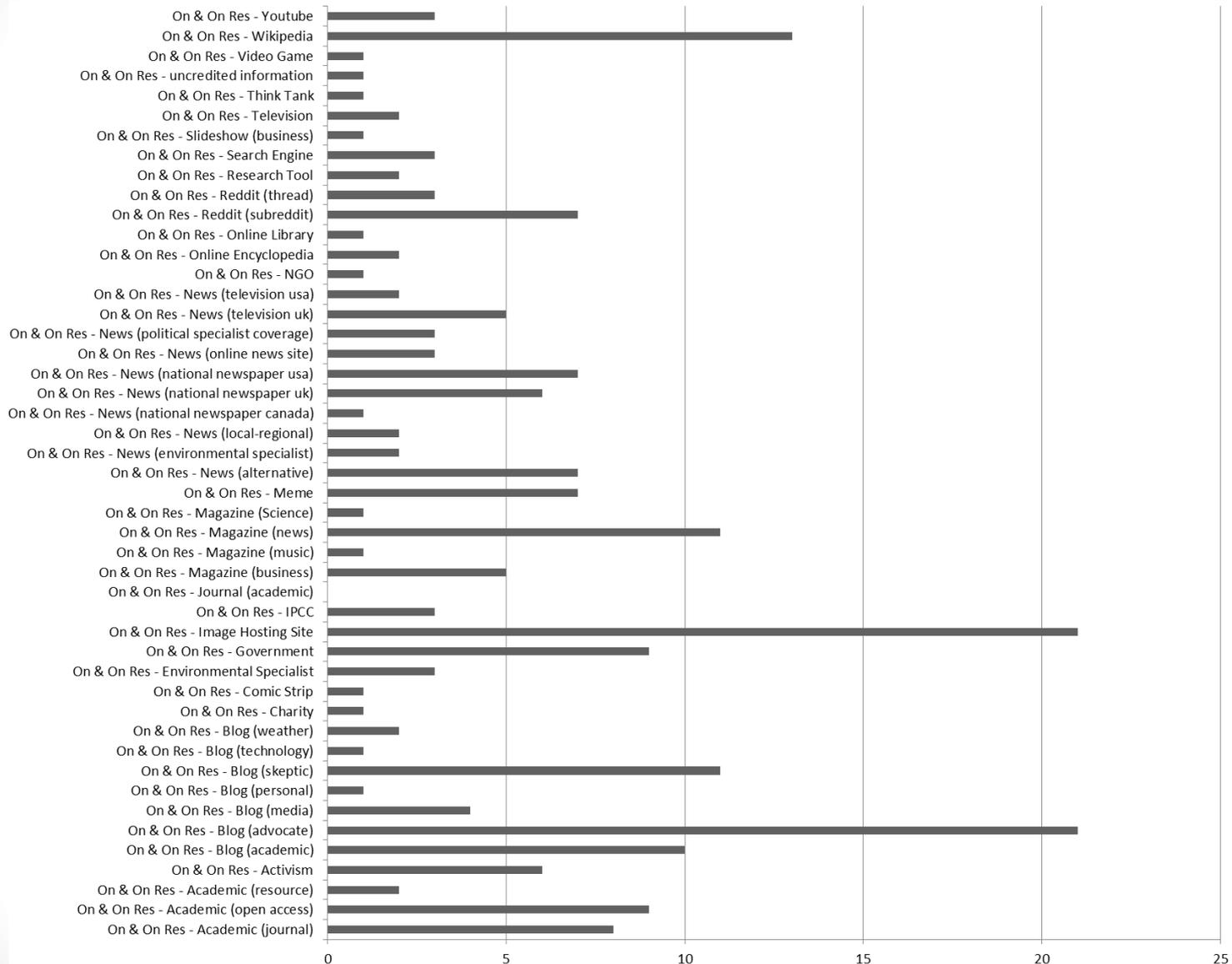
## Case Study

- IPCC Fifth Report Summaries for Policy Makers 27<sup>th</sup> September 2013
- Reddit Environment Discussion Board
- 13/09/2013 – 11/10/2013
- 1415 Conversation Threads
- 379 Individual Users

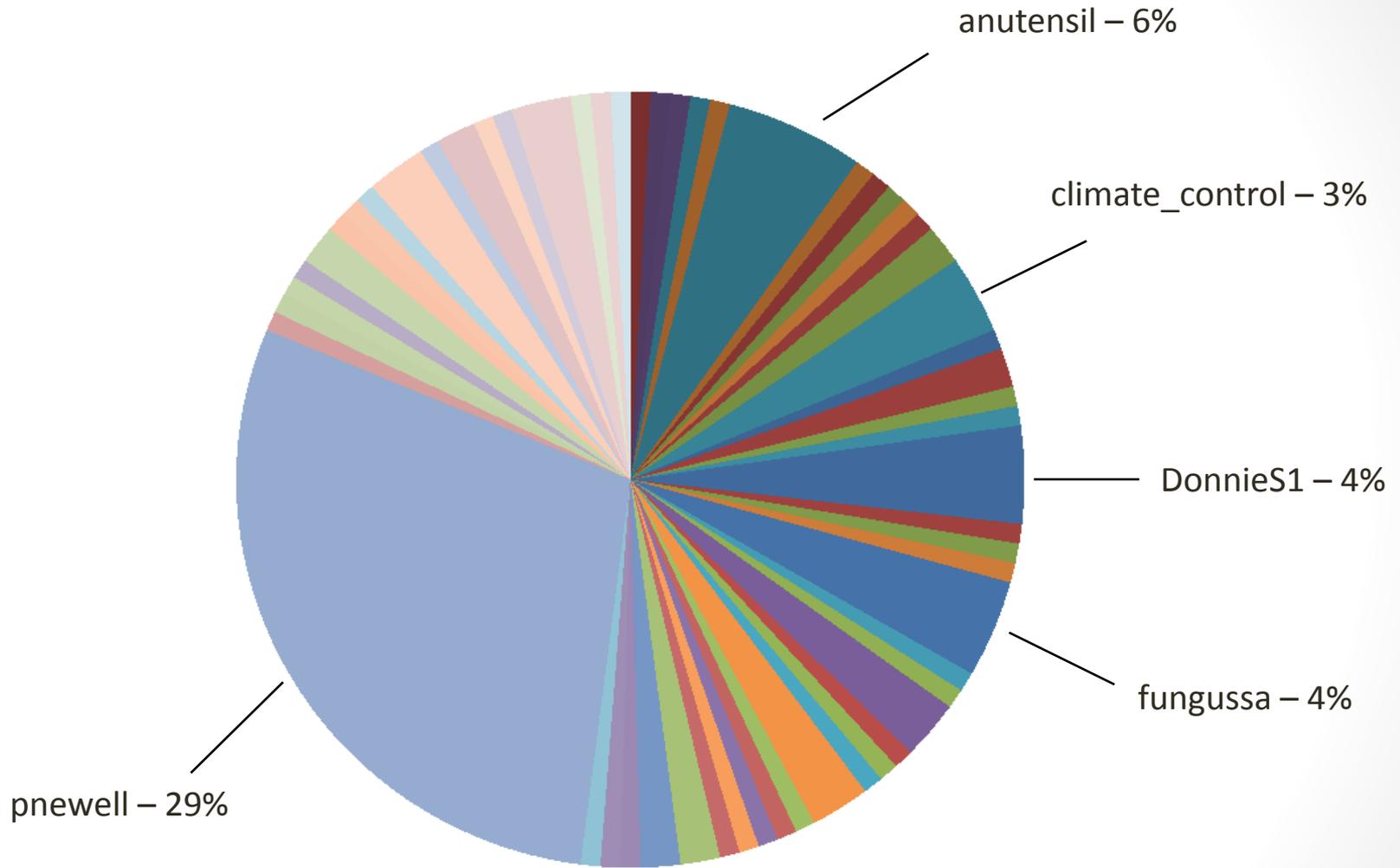
# Information Shared by Users as Opening Posts:



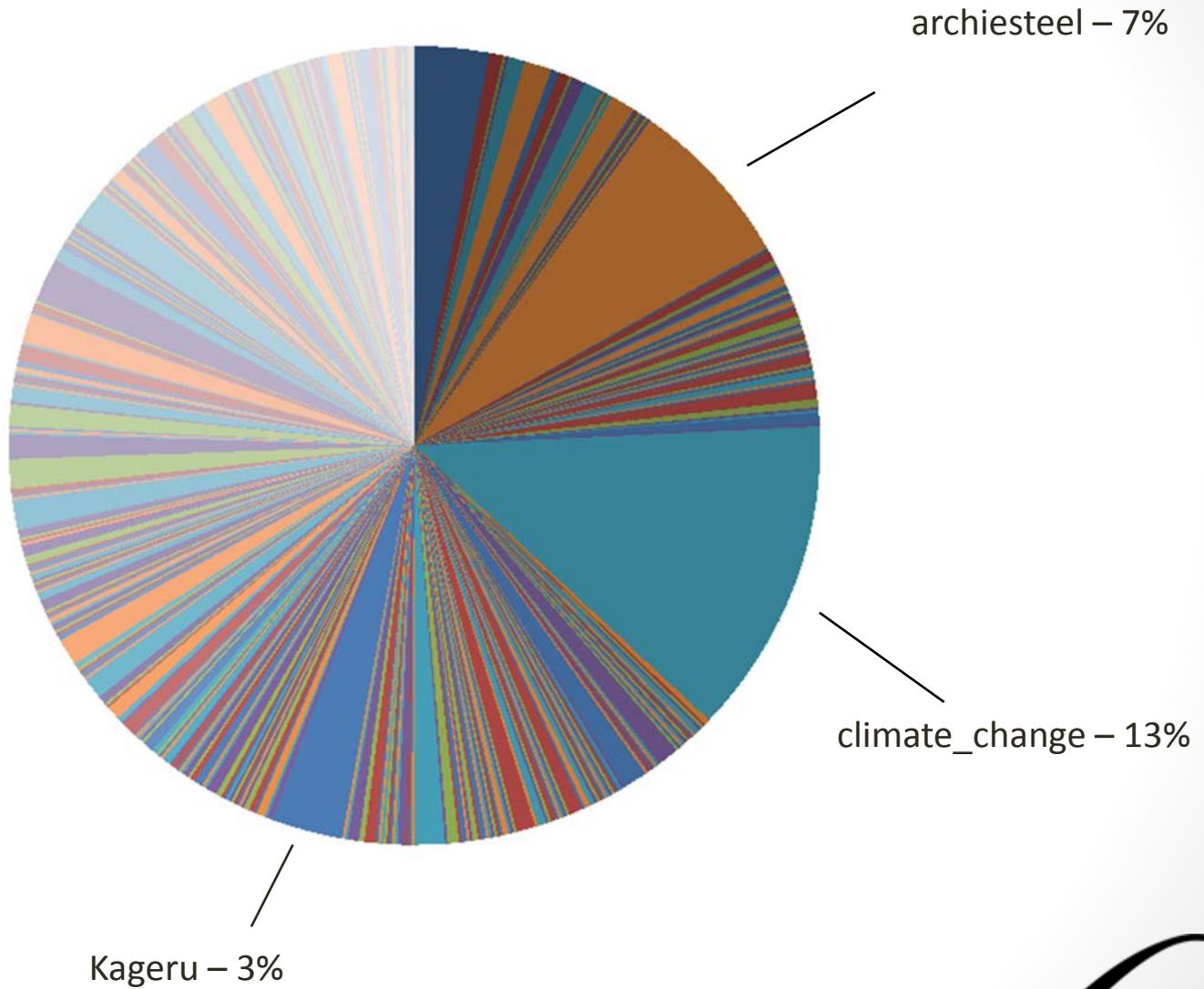
# Information Sources Shared by Users as Responses:



# User contributions to Opening Posts:



# Percentage of User contributions as Responses:



## Summary of Findings

- Access to information
- Types of information used
- Perceived credibility of information sources
- Influence of key contributors
- Perceived credibility of users within discussions

## Questions to address:

- The distance between science and the public
- Presence in online communities
- How to establish credibility within online communities
- How to distribute information for maximum impact
- How to create a more information literate audience

# Post conference addition

- This presentation report work from Robert Hunter's Doctoral study:
  - Hunter, RS. (2016). *Unknowledge Economies: Digital discourse and its effect in potentially rendering all information effectively subjective*. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University.
  - Available at: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/32491/>