

Tweeting about climate change

Using computational and qualitative techniques to analyse social media

Matthew Andreotta^{1,2}, Robertus Nugroho^{2,3}, Mark Hurlstone³,
Fabio Boschetti⁴, Simon Farrell¹, Iain Walker⁵, & Cecile Paris²

[1] School of Psychological Science, University of Western Australia

[2] Data61, CSIRO

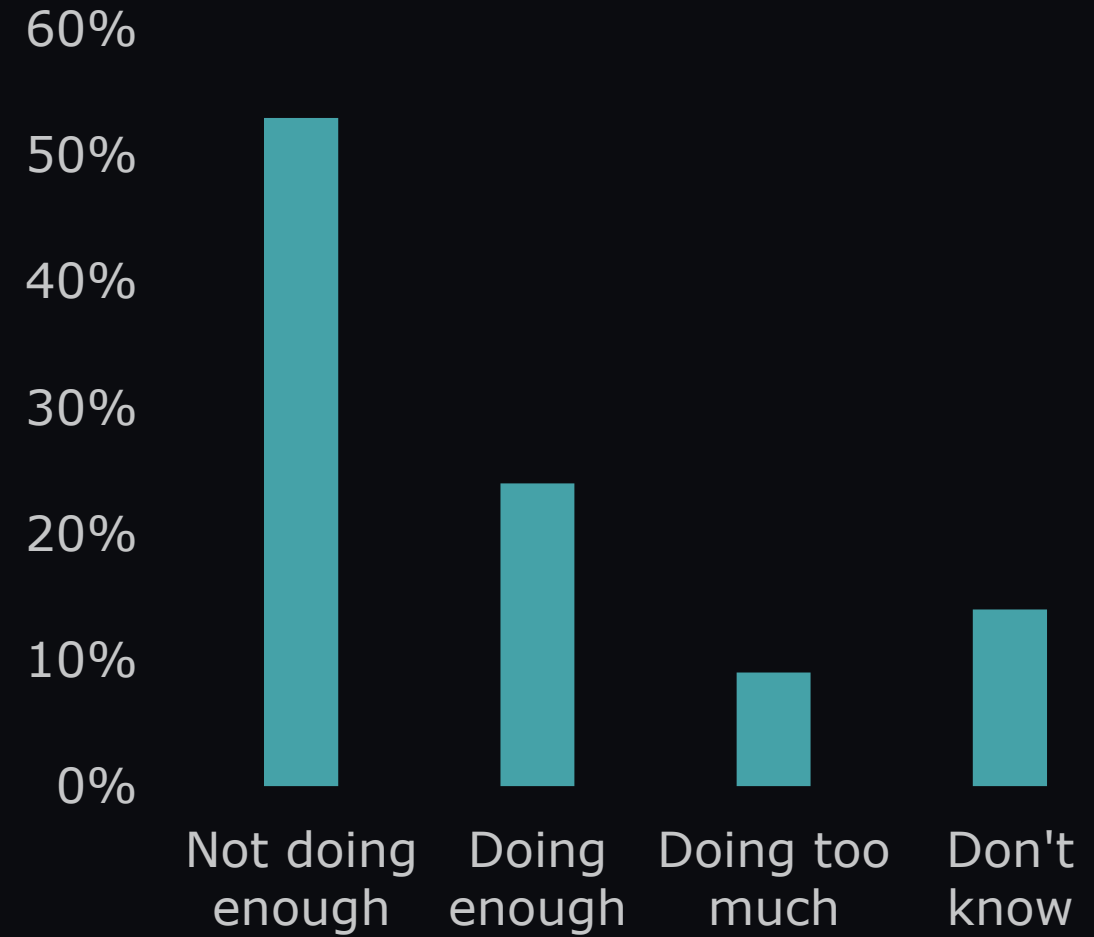
[3] Soegijapranata Catholic University

[4] Ocean & Atmosphere, CSIRO

[5] School of Psychology and Counselling, University of Canberra

Public perceptions of climate change

- Public is a heterogeneous mix of climate-related perceptions, motivations, & behaviours¹
- Change is required on political, societal, and individual levels²
- Public commentary can inform decision making
- Improve communication of climate policy and science



[1] (Hine, Reser, Morrison, Phillips, Nunn, & Cooksey, 2014)

[2] (Lorenzoni & Pidgeon, 2006)

Twitter



- Microblogging platform
- Many tweets in public domain
- Users interact
 - (ReTweet, Mention, Like, Reply)
- Large in volume



AIM

To identify the broad topics of Twitter discussion

201,506 tweets referencing climate change, posted by Australians over the year 2016

DATA

ANALYSIS

A mixed-methods approach, blending machine learning techniques with qualitative analysis

Results

Climate change action

Consequences of climate
change

Conversations on climate
change

Climate change deniers

The legitimacy of climate
change and climate science

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- Prevention, mitigation, and adaption
- Critical of government
- Desire action
- Deprioritise climate policy

If a foreign country did half the damage to our country as #climatechange we would declare war.

Malcolm Turnbull will never have a credible climate change policy

Results

- Physical, biological, human systems
- Generally negative

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Australia experiencing more extreme fire weather, hotter days as climate changes

Reefs of the future could look like this if we continue to ignore #climatechange

You and your friends will die of old age & I'm going to die from climate change

Results

- Lack of discussion
- Futility, morality of discussions
- Political and ideological bias

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not so gripping from No Principles Malcolm. Not one mention of climate change in his pitch.

Yes let's all debate whether climate change is happening...

Maybe governments will actually listen if we stop saying "extreme weather" & "climate change" & just say the atmosphere is being radicalized

Results

- Individuals or groups perceived to deny climate change

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Malcolm Roberts, funded by climate change skeptic global groups loses the plot when nobody believes his findings

You know I just don't see any point engaging with climate change deniers like Roberts. Ignore him

- Legitimacy of climate science (CSIRO)
- Reality of climate change

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#CSIROcuts will damage Aus ability to understand, respond to & plan for #climatechange

Do we have an international convention on 'Cloud Seeding'? Or it comes under United Nation's climate change agreement?

Discussion

- Users want action on climate change
- Some users are engaged
 - Discussion of climate risks (e.g., biodiversity)
 - Discussion of discussions
- Need to:
 - Counter scepticism
 - Promote messages of self-efficacy and hope

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<https://psyarxiv.com/bynz4/>



matthew.Andreotta@research.uwa.edu.au



[@MattAndreotta](https://twitter.com/MattAndreotta)