

3 MAR 2019

PO Box 10362, Wellington 6143
Website: www.mfe.govt.nz
Freephone: 0800 499 700

s 9(2)(a)

19-D-00186

Office of the Leader of the Opposition
s 9(2)(a)@parliament.govt.nz

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your emails of 12 February 2019 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I request a copy of all surveys, polls or assessments of public opinion conducted by or on behalf of the Ministry for the Environment between 26 October 2017 and 12 February 2019.

I also request the total cost of each individual poll, survey or assessment of public opinion over the period.

And

I request a copy of the results of all surveys, polls or assessments of public opinion conducted by or on behalf of the Ministry for the Environment between 26 October 2017 and 12 February 2019.

There are two pieces of work that fall within the scope of your request.

First, in 2018 we published survey research into New Zealanders' attitudes to environmental issues. The research was done in two parts, an initial survey and a later update. The initial research cost \$34,850. The update cost \$16,000.

The research was initiated by the Ministry to inform the development of policy advice, design public consultations in targeted and engaging ways, and provide insight into environmental attitudes to inform our stewardship role. It can be found on the Ministry website at:

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/science-and-data/understanding-new-zealanders%E2%80%99attitudes-environment>

The second piece of research was a small survey carried out to help us prepare for the release of our upcoming Environment Aotearoa 2019 report. The cost of this survey was \$3600. A copy of that survey is attached.

If you have any queries about this response, please feel free to contact me.

Please note that the Ministry for the Environment releases responses to selected requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent.

Yours sincerely



Vicki Connor

Director, Communication and Engagement



**Environmental Consumer Research
MfE
Version 1**

October 2018

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Sample source

683 Respondents were sourced from Research Now/SSI– the largest New Zealand online panel.

Audience and weighting

New Zealanders aged 18 and over. Sample had the following quotas: age, gender, location, and ethnicity, to align with Stats NZ population counts from the 2013 census.

Fieldwork

Interviewing was carried out from the 14th October to 28th October 2018.

Accuracy

At a total sample level the results have a maximum margin of error (at the 95% confidence interval) of +/-4.9%.

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Key findings

8% involved in environmental actions on a regular basis

36% sometimes/50% not involved very much

47% care greatly

80% want to receive their environmental information in the news

Social media – 50% to their personal facebook page

Tools – 69% want simple actions that will make a difference/50% more local info

38% feel the environment is good but degrading

4% feel it is great

45% feel they have little or no ability to have an impact

51% feel they can have some impact

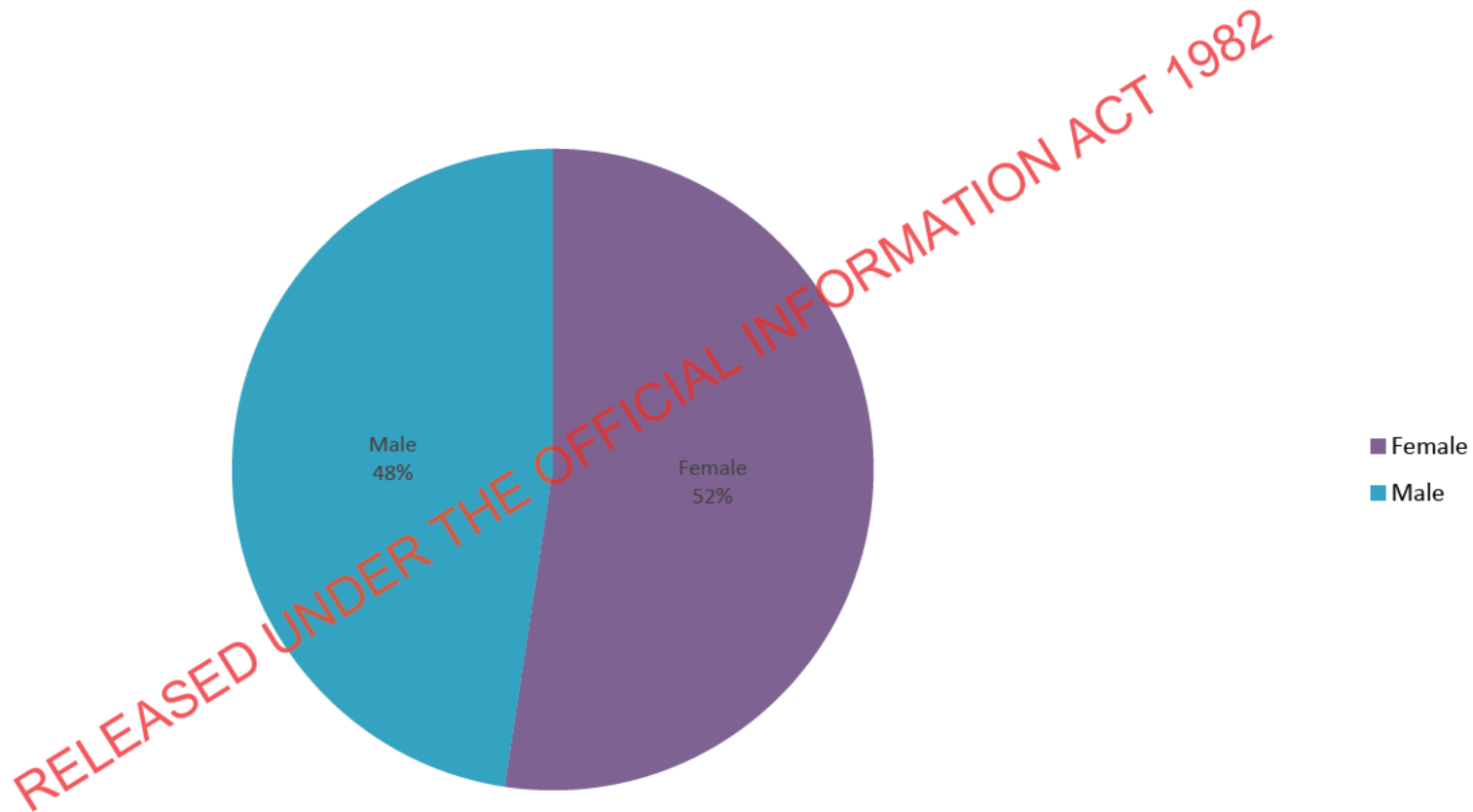
58% want a fb page or website with tips

77% not aware of environment reports – 77% of these feel it would be a great idea

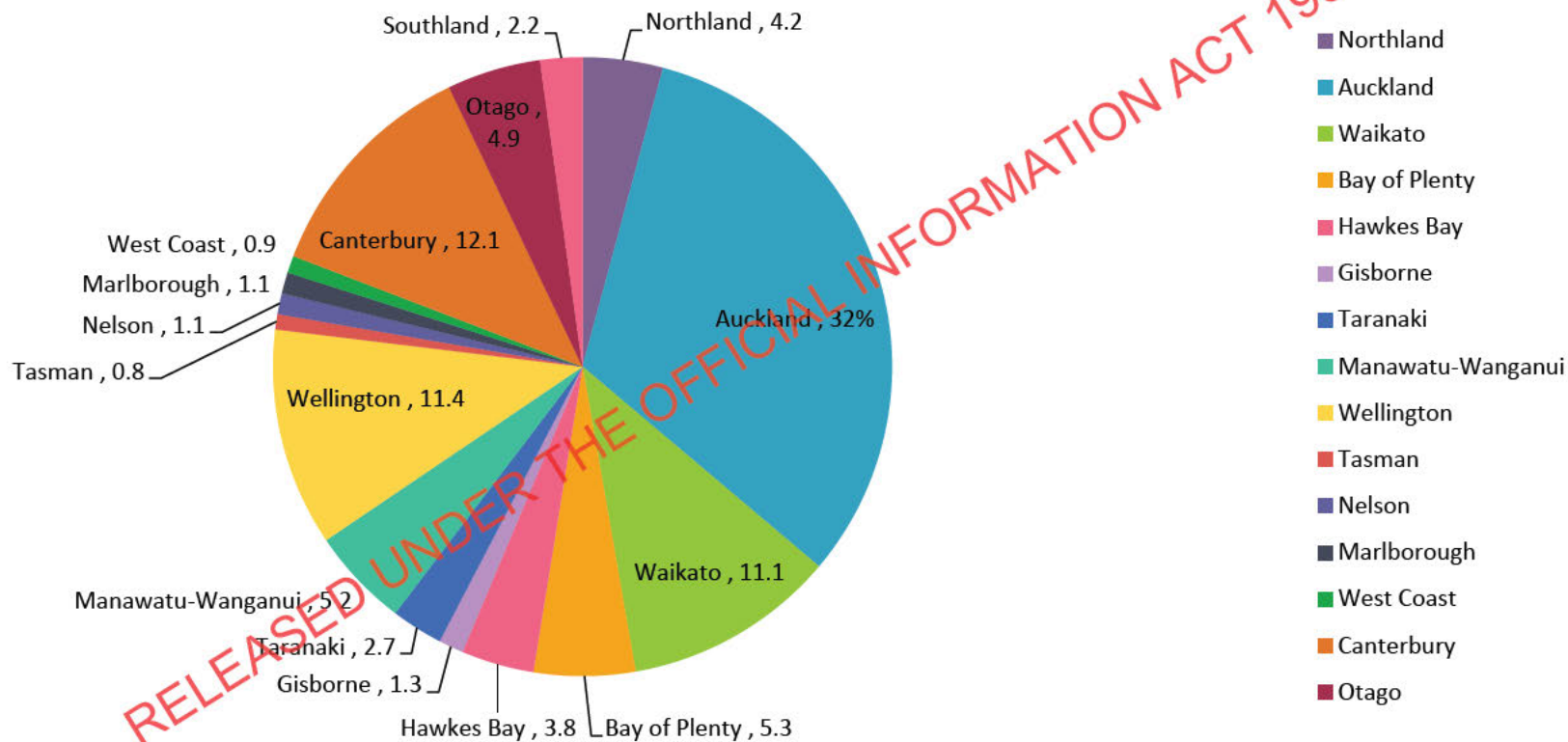
Demographic Information

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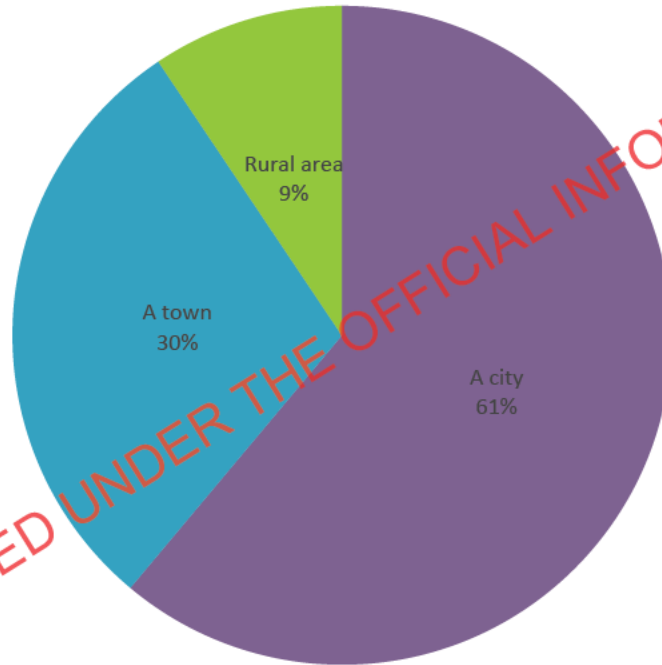
Gender



Location



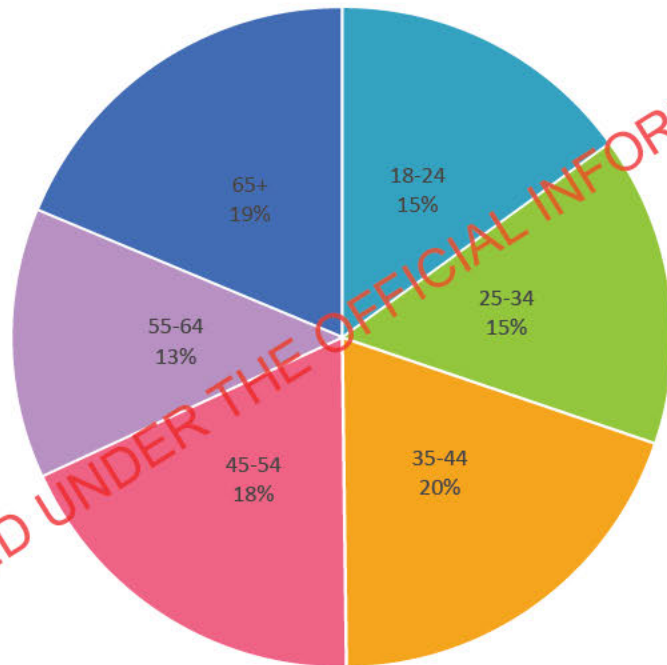
City/rural breakdown



- A city
- A town
- Rural area

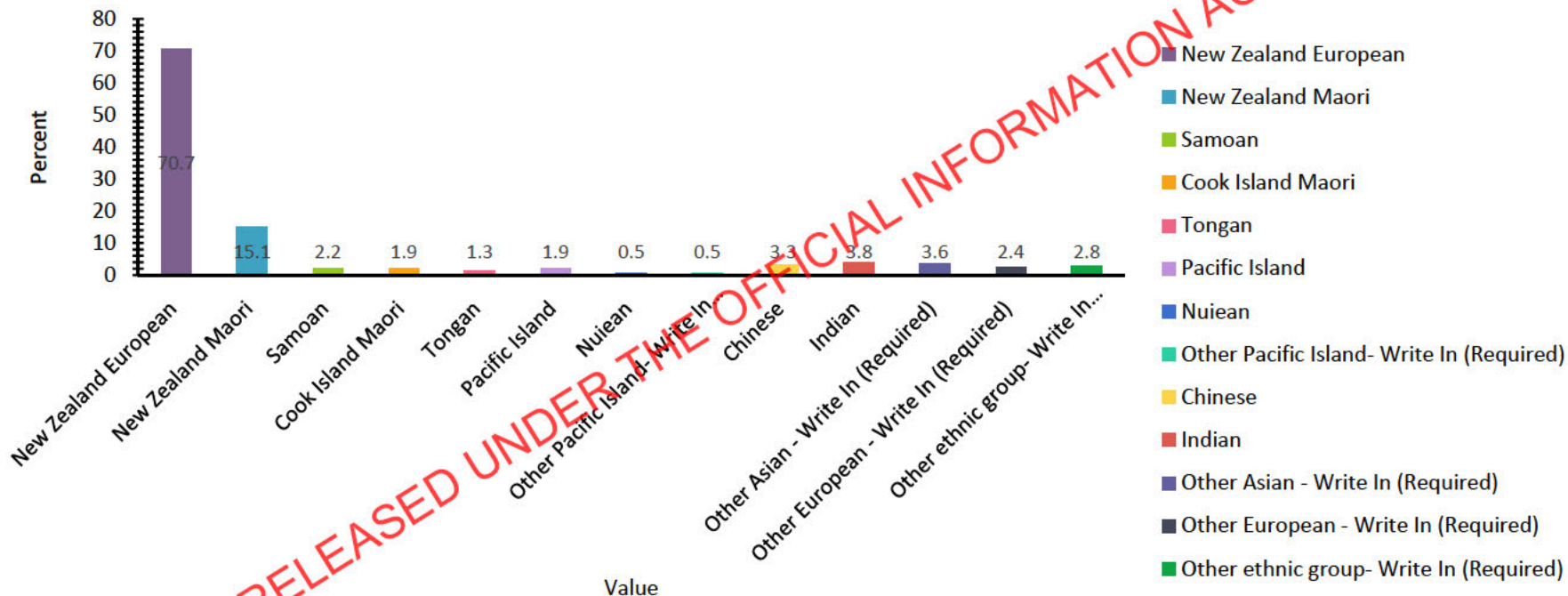
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Age



- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Ethnicity

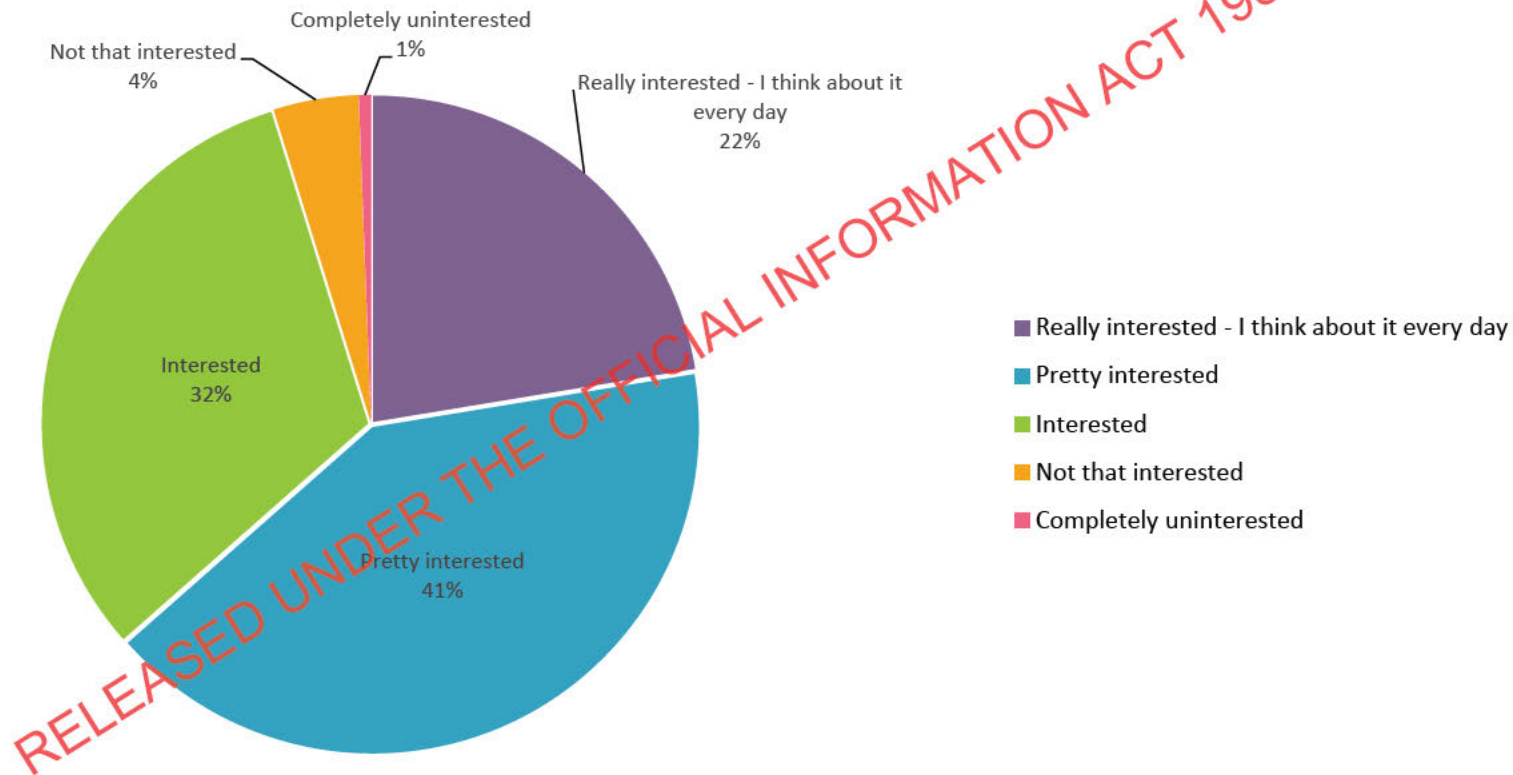


Section 1

Interest

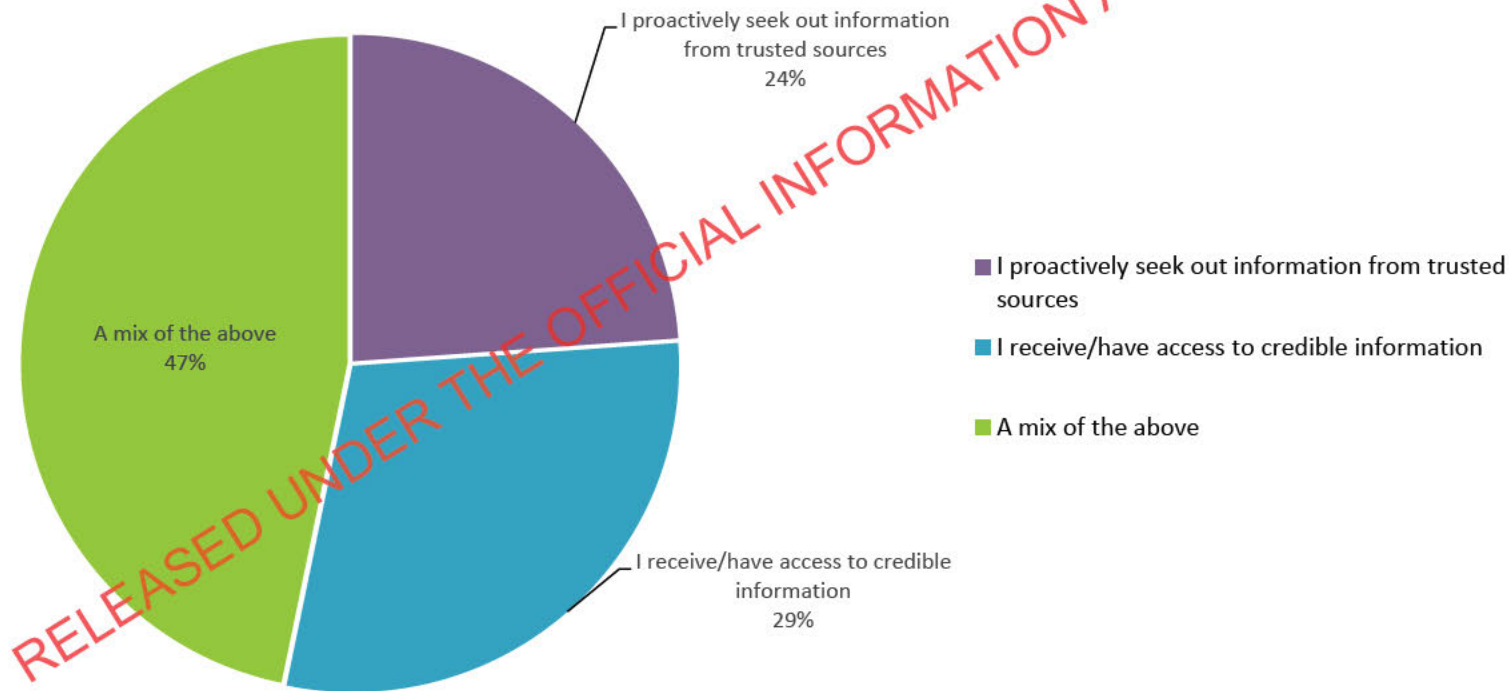
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Interest in New Zealand's natural environmental



Interested


How do you stay informed about environmental issues?



Interested

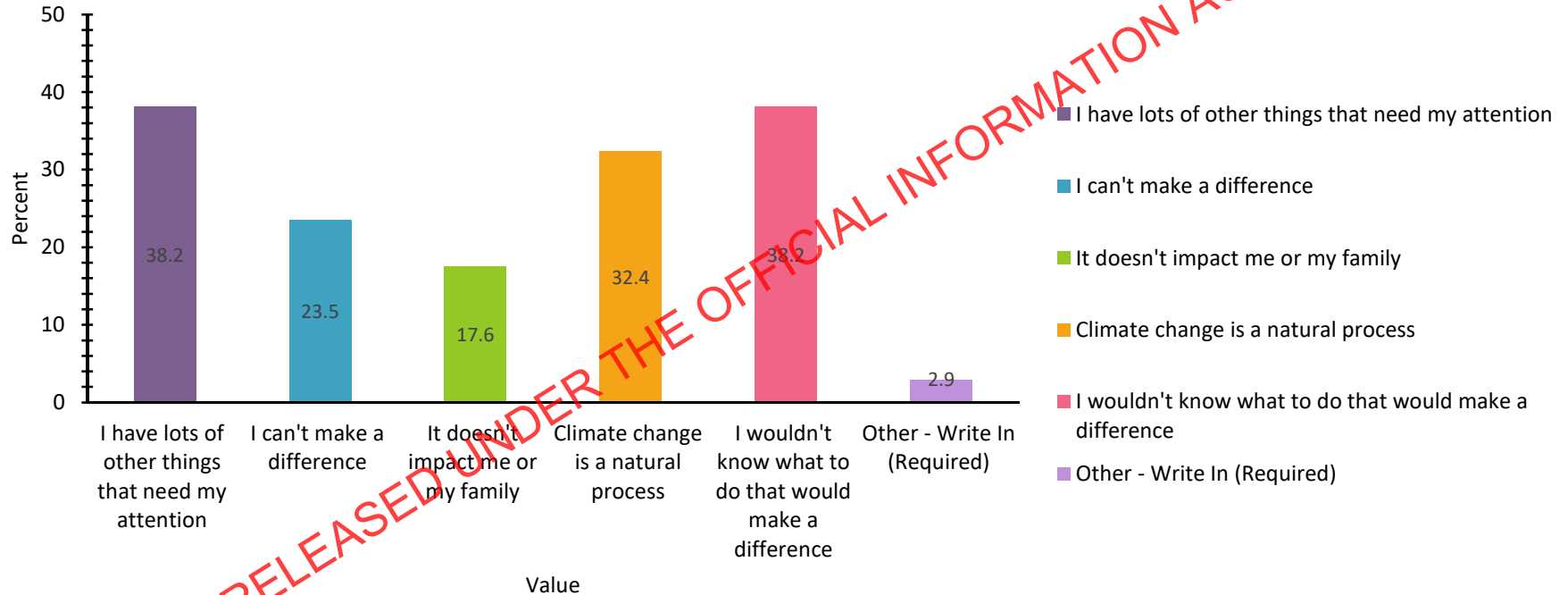
Trusted and credible sources of information

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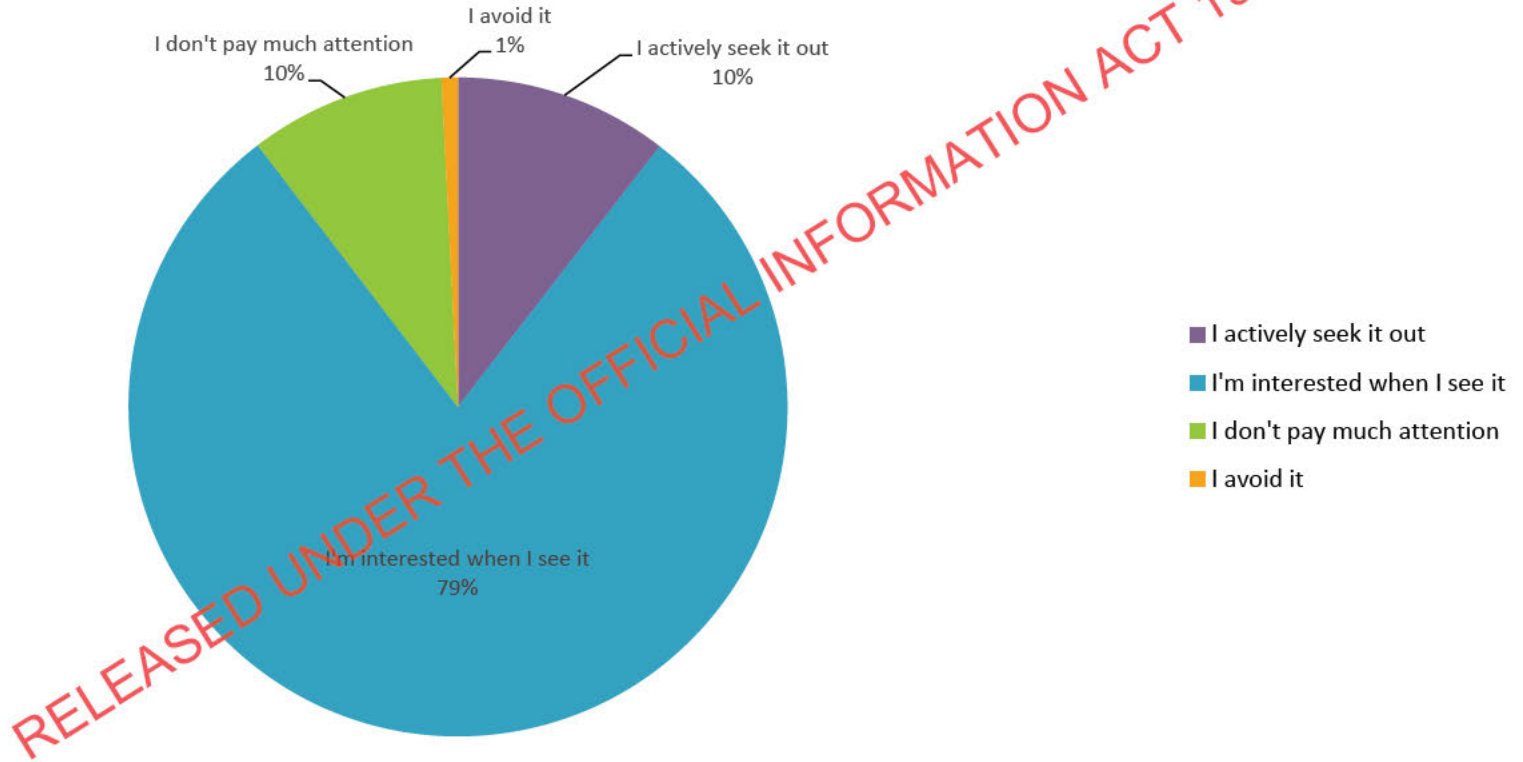


A word cloud of various terms related to news, information, and media. The words are arranged in a roughly circular shape. The most prominent words are 'news' and 'websites' in large blue font. Other words include 'internet' in green, 'government' in yellow, 'facebook' in orange, 'newspapers' in purple, 'conservation' in light blue, 'family' in green, 'google' in blue, 'forest' in brown, 'nz' in blue, 'bird' in yellow, 'amp' in blue, 'local' in yellow, 'friends' in green, 'media' in red, 'council' in green, 'environment' in blue, 'newspaper' in blue, 'greenpeace' in green, 'stuff' in brown, 'online' in red, 'article' in yellow, and 'tv' in blue.

Not really interested in environmental issues.
Why is that?



Approach to news and information about environmental issues



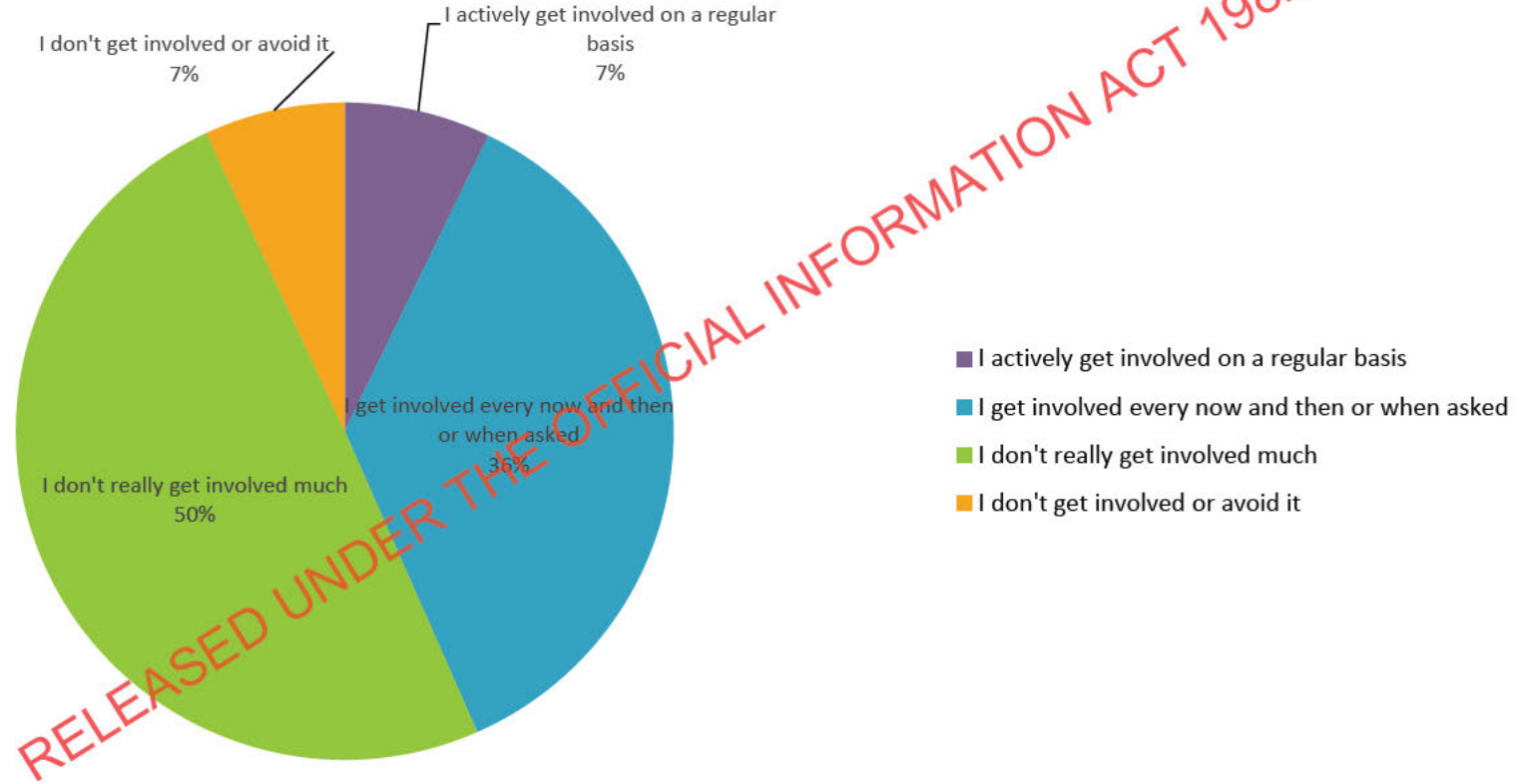
Where do you see information on environment issues?



Don't pay much attention/avoid environmental information
Why?



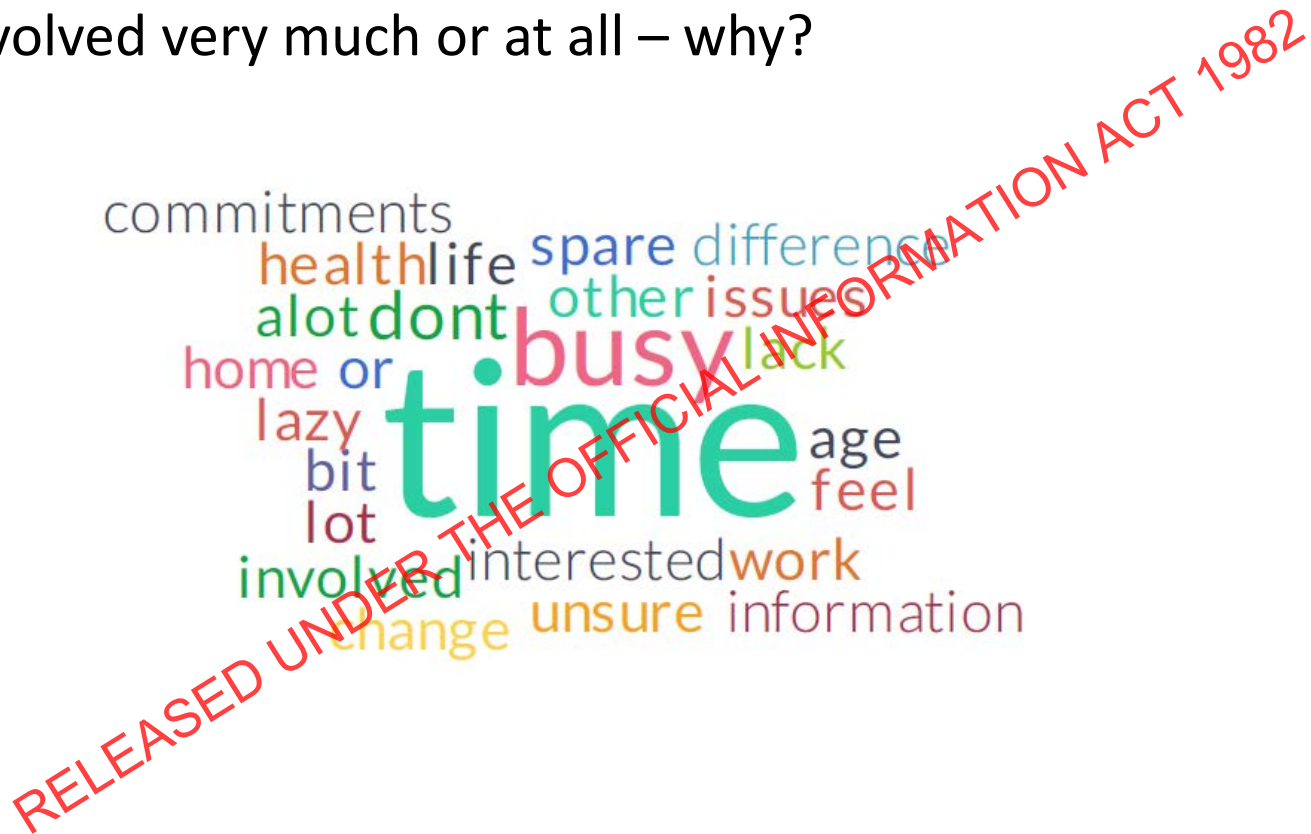
How involved are you in environmental issues?



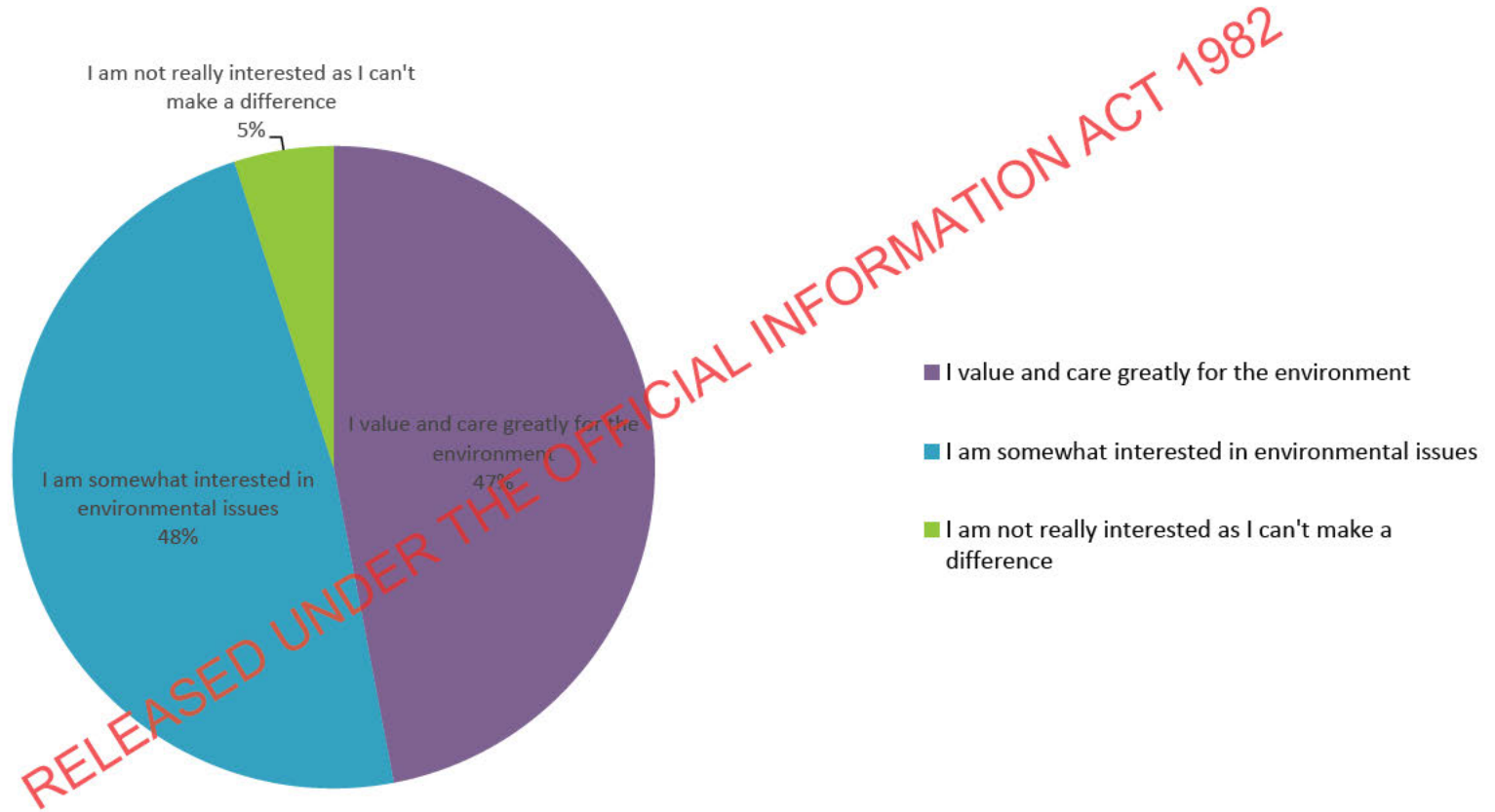
Involved - what do you do?



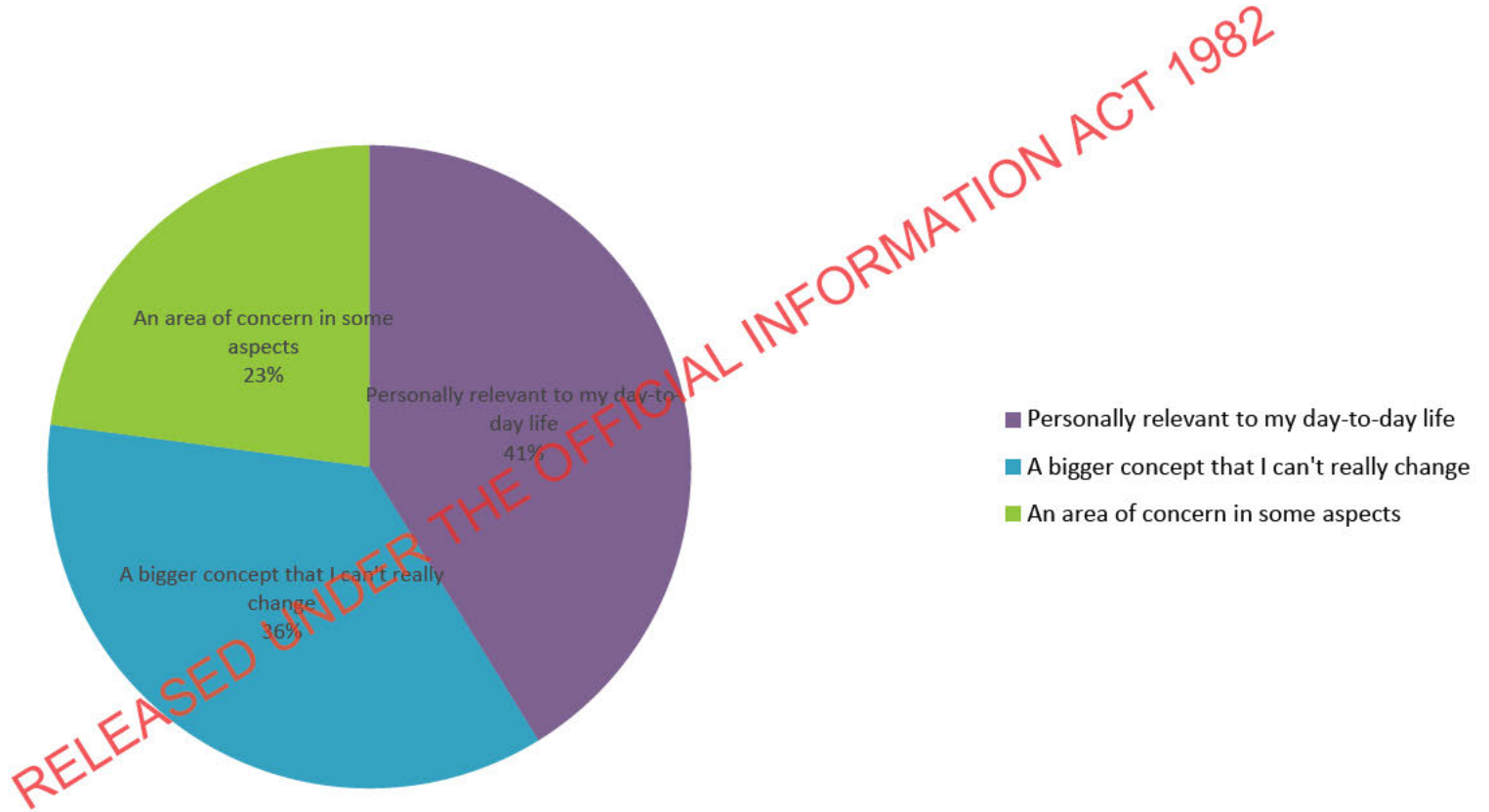
Not involved very much or at all – why?



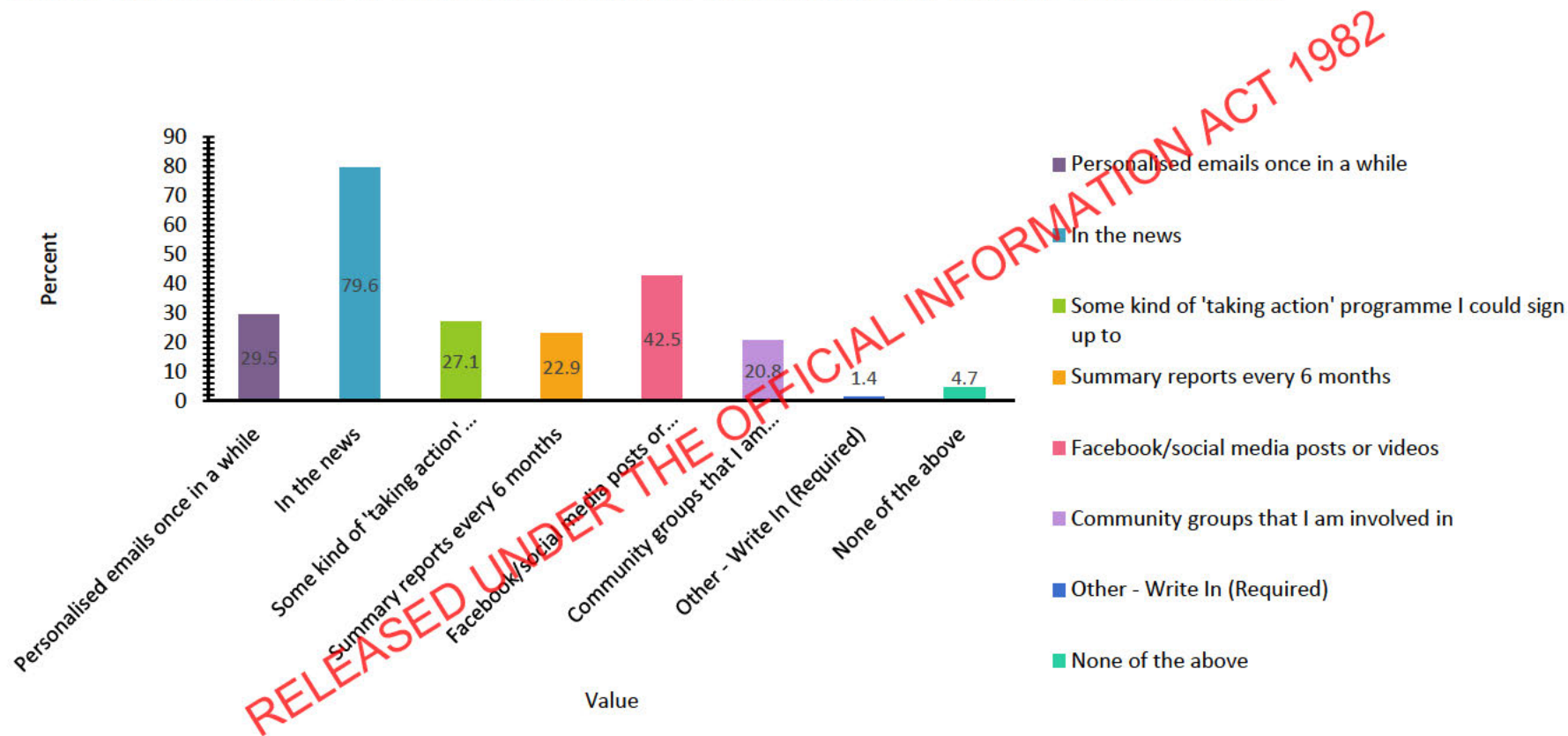
How much do you value and care about the environment?



How do you see environmental issues?

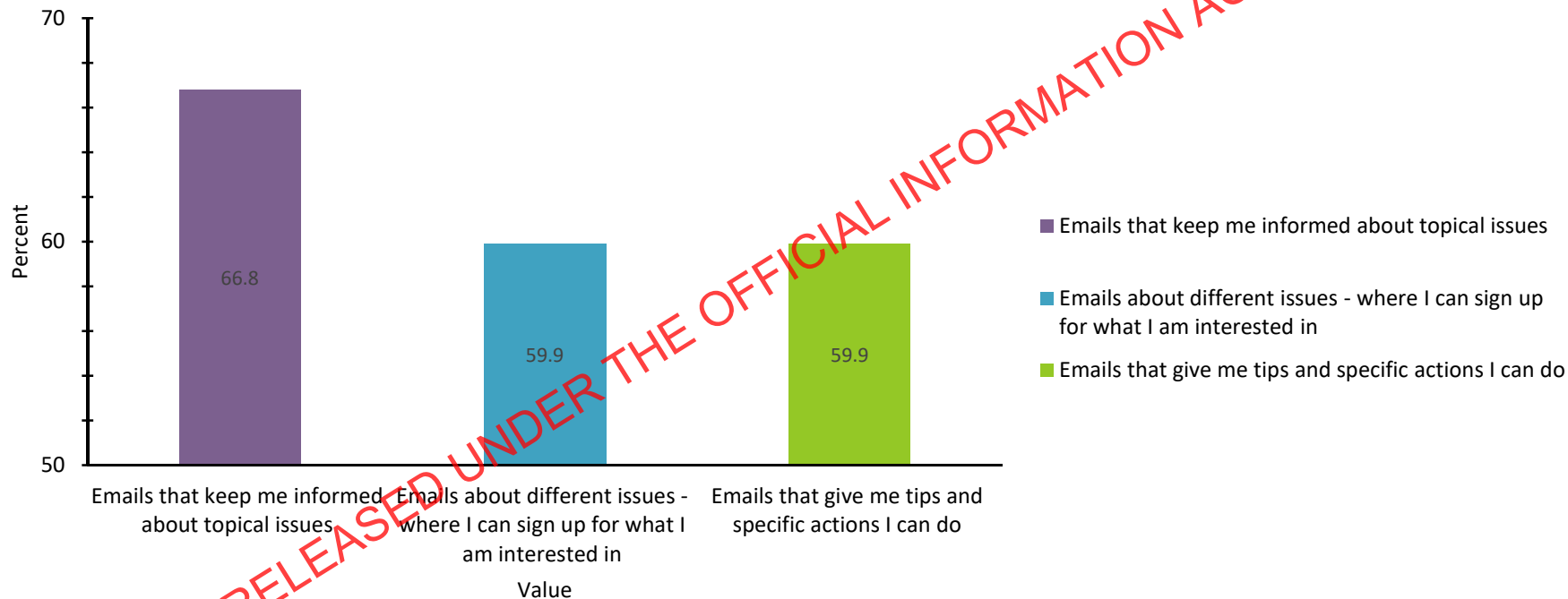


Other useful sources of information about New Zealand's natural environment

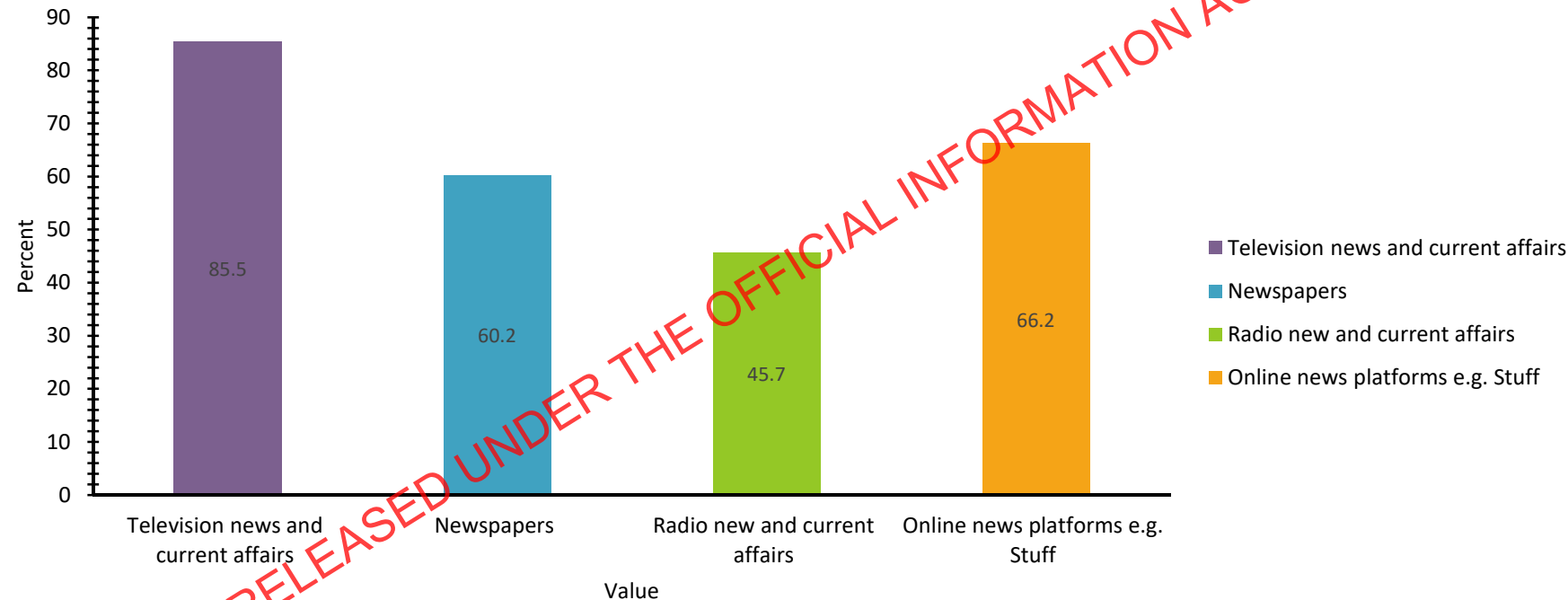


Email

What email content would you like?

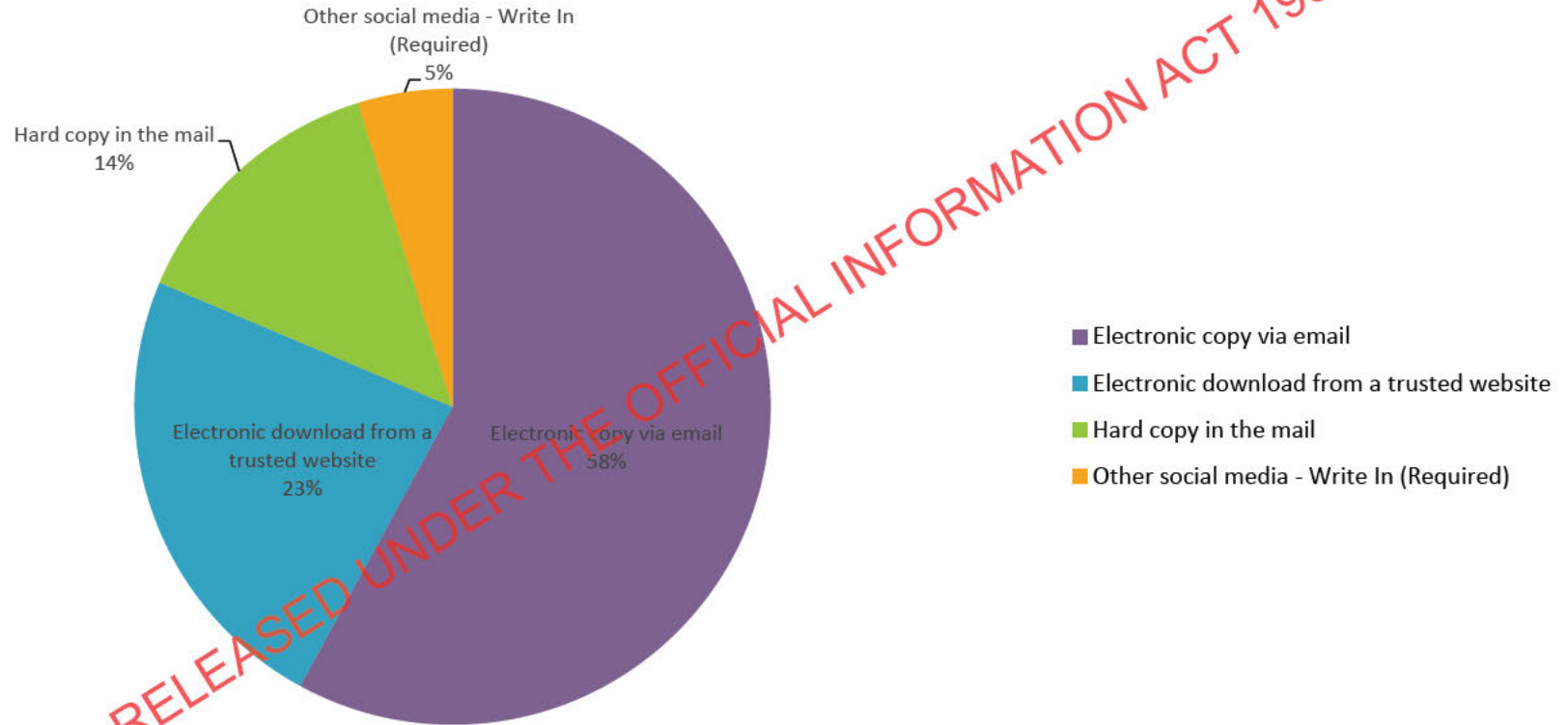


News media:
Where?



Summary report

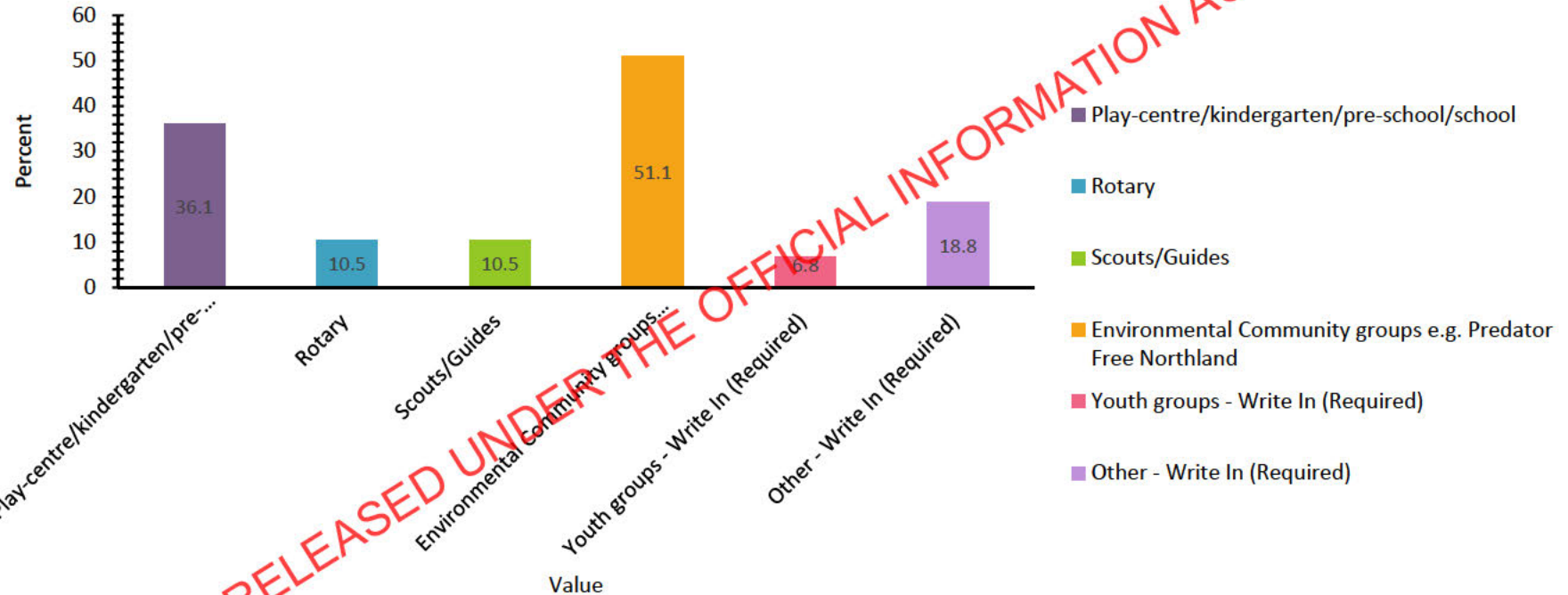
What format



Social media channels – which ones?



Community or special interest groups – which ones?



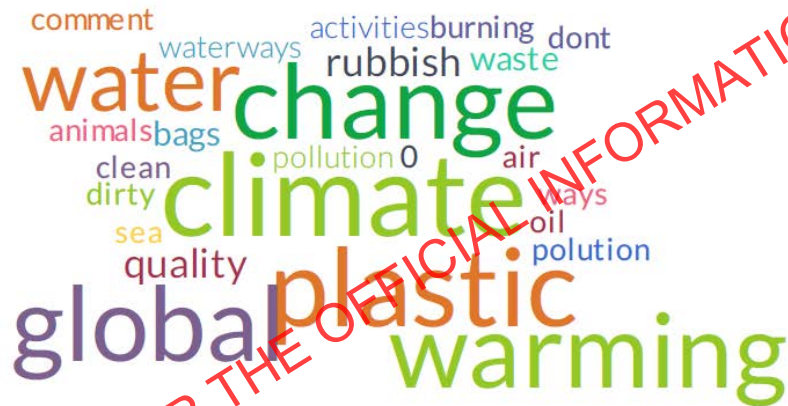
Issues, impact & current status

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Impact and action statements

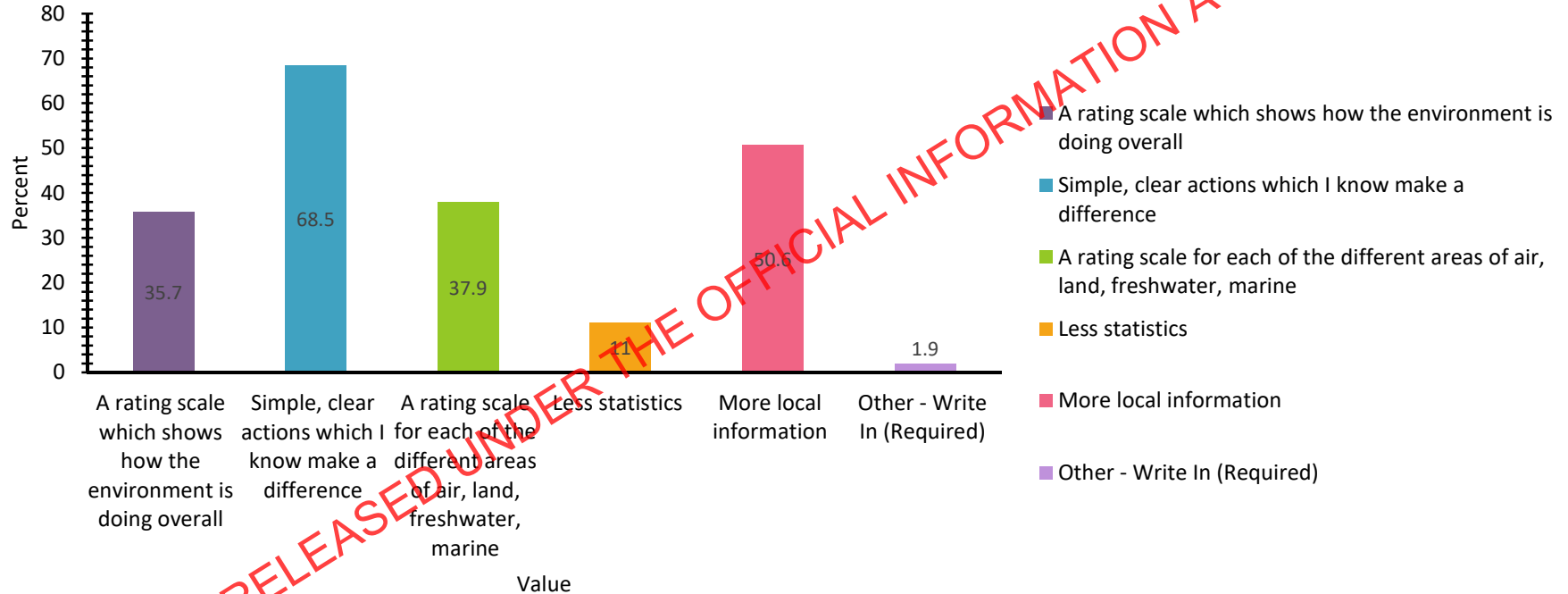
	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Not applicable		Total Checks
	Checks	Row Check %	Checks	Row Check %	Checks	Row Check %	Checks	Row Check %	Checks
One person can't make a difference to these big environmental issues	176	27.4%	196	30.5%	268	41.7%	3	0.5%	643
Environmental issues cover so many things - I don't know where to start.	281	43.4%	215	33.2%	142	21.9%	9	1.4%	647
The information I do see doesn't help me take action	163	25.2%	267	41.3%	202	31.2%	15	2.3%	647
The environment is just one of a whole lot of things that I have an interest in	410	63.5%	183	28.3%	44	6.8%	9	1.4%	646
I don't know what action to take	201	31.1%	237	36.6%	185	28.6%	24	3.7%	647
Total Checks	1231		1098		841		60		3230

What would you consider a 'big' environment issue?

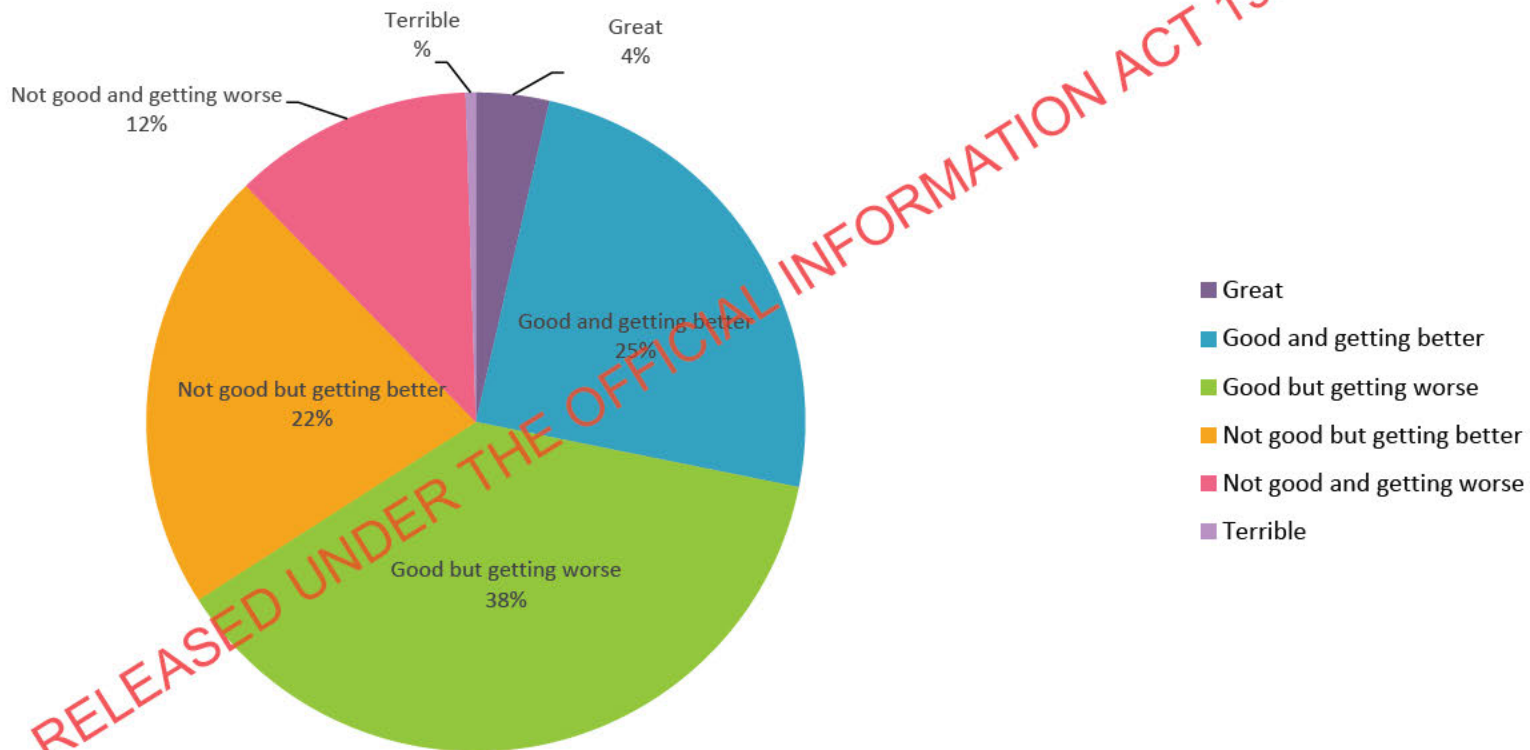


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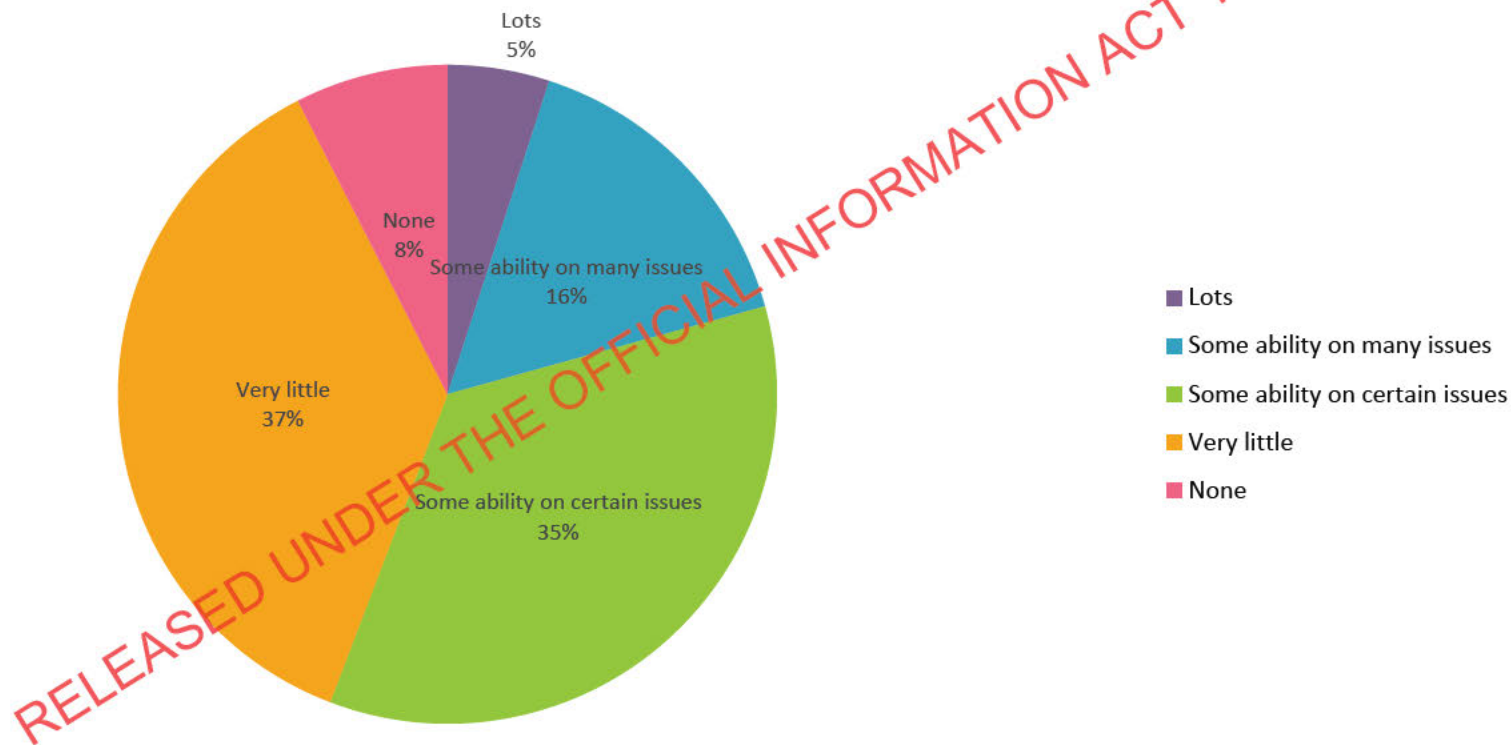
What would be useful to help you understand environmental issues and what you can do?



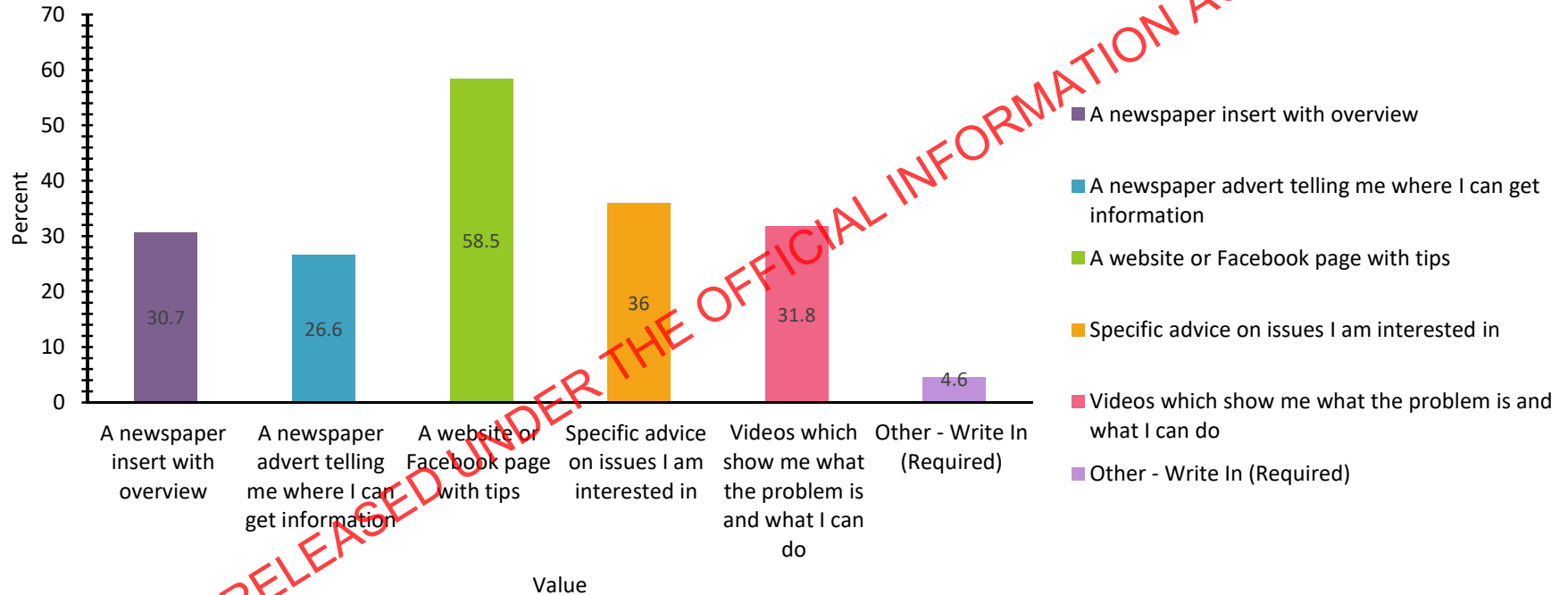
Current status of New Zealand's environment



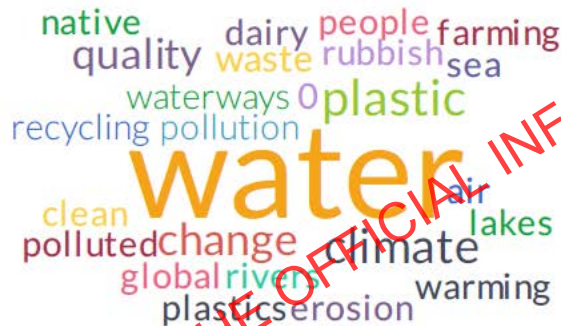
Ability to influence change on environmental issues



Tools to keep informed and help get involved in environmental issues



New Zealand's main natural environmental issues



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Top 3 environmental issues New Zealand needs to take action on?

	Water quality		High levels of air pollution from cars and fires		Adverse weather/flooding as a result of climate change:		Sea level rise		Land use		Plastic pollution in seas		Reducing waste		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
No.1 issue	304	47.6%	49	7.7%	67	10.5%	19	3.0%	23	3.6%	95	14.9%	81	12.7%	638
No. 2 issue	110	17.2%	80	12.5%	65	10.2%	45	7.1%	57	8.9%	152	23.8%	129	20.2%	638
No. 3 issue	82	12.9%	68	10.7%	90	14.1%	54	8.5%	75	11.8%	111	17.4%	158	24.8%	638

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Marine issues

	Very important - I'm trying to do something about it		Important - I'm unsure what I can do about it though		The issue and the solutions needs to be explained in plain English		I don't understand what I can do about the issue		Not important/not applicable		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
Global greenhouse gases are causing ocean acidification and warming	109	17.1%	309	48.6%	110	17.3%	75	11.8%	33	5.2%	636
Native marine birds and mammals are threatened with extinction	95	14.9%	359	56.4%	101	15.9%	63	9.9%	18	2.8%	636
Coastal marine habitats and ecosystems are degraded	95	14.9%	363	57.1%	110	17.3%	53	8.3%	15	2.4%	636

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Action on marine issues



A word cloud of terms related to marine issues and plastic waste. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with 'plastic' being the largest and most central word. Other prominent words include 'rubbish', 'waste', 'beach', 'reduce', 'pick', 'litter', 'people', 'plastics', 'animals', 'pollution', 'coastal', 'bags', 'clean', 'or', 'fishing', 'beaches', 'marine', 'sea', 'local', 'picking', 'environment', 'reducing', 'aware', and 'water'.

water aware environment picking
reducing local
rubbish waste sea
marine beaches fishing
plastic or
litter pick beach reduce
people plastics clean bags coastal
animals pollution

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Air quality issues

	Very important - I'm trying to do something about it		Important - I'm unsure what I can do about it though		The issue and the solutions needs to be explained in plain English		Not important/not applicable		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
On-road vehicle emissions are a source of pollution	140	22.0%	360	56.6%	84	13.2%	52	8.2%	636
Home heating emissions are a source of pollution	124	19.5%	257	40.4%	149	23.4%	106	16.7%	636
50% of areas around NZ have air pollution higher than allowed by the national standards	106	16.7%	340	53.5%	144	22.6%	46	7.2%	636

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Action on air quality issues



Atmosphere and climate issues

	Very important - I'm trying to do something about it		Important - I'm unsure what I can do about it though		The issue and the solutions needs to be explained in plain English		I don't understand what I can do about the issue		Not important/not applicable		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
Climate change is already irreversibly affecting NZ's natural systems	89	14.0%	343	53.9%	107	16.8%	53	8.3%	44	6.9%	636
In 2016 concentrations of carbon in the atmosphere passed 400 parts per million - the highest level of carbon in the last 800,000 years	74	11.6%	320	50.3%	126	19.8%	80	12.6%	36	5.7%	636
NZ's annual average temperature has increased by 1 degree Celsius since 1909 - in line with gobal average increases	59	9.3%	333	52.4%	103	16.2%	88	13.8%	53	8.3%	636
Methane warming the air	59	9.3%	302	47.6%	116	18.3%	112	17.6%	46	7.2%	635
Sea level rise and coastal damage	63	9.9%	359	56.5%	82	12.9%	95	15.0%	36	5.7%	635

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Action on atmosphere and climate issues



Impact of climate change on our economy and weather

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Not applicable		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
Climate change may have a negative impact on New Zealand's economy over the next 5-10 years if we don't take action	39	6.1%	51	8.0%	139	21.9%	244	38.4%	154	24.3%	8	1.3%	635
Climate change may have a negative impact on New Zealand's economy over the next 20 years if we don't take action	29	4.6%	37	5.8%	128	20.2%	222	35.0%	210	33.1%	9	1.4%	635
Climate change is already having a negative impact on New Zealand's economy	26	4.1%	81	12.8%	213	33.5%	210	33.1%	94	14.8%	11	1.7%	635
Climate change won't have any negative impact on New Zealand's economy	147	23.1%	242	38.1%	135	21.3%	72	11.3%	28	4.4%	11	1.7%	635
Climate change may have a positive impact on New Zealand's economy	128	20.2%	171	26.9%	211	33.2%	75	11.8%	36	5.7%	14	2.2%	635
New Zealand's increased storms, flooding and hotter summers are caused by climate change	23	3.6%	36	5.7%	150	23.6%	264	41.6%	144	22.7%	18	2.8%	635

Causes of increased storms, flooding and hotter summers



Water issues

	Very important - I'm trying to do something about it		Important - I'm unsure what I can do about it though		The issue needs to be explained in plain English		I don't understand what I can do about the issue		Not important/not applicable		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
Water quality	138	21.7%	390	61.3%	64	10.1%	30	4.7%	14	2.2%	636
Water quantity and flows	90	14.2%	394	61.9%	81	12.7%	48	7.5%	23	3.6%	636
Ecosystems, habitats and species	102	16.0%	398	62.6%	85	13.4%	36	5.7%	15	2.4%	636

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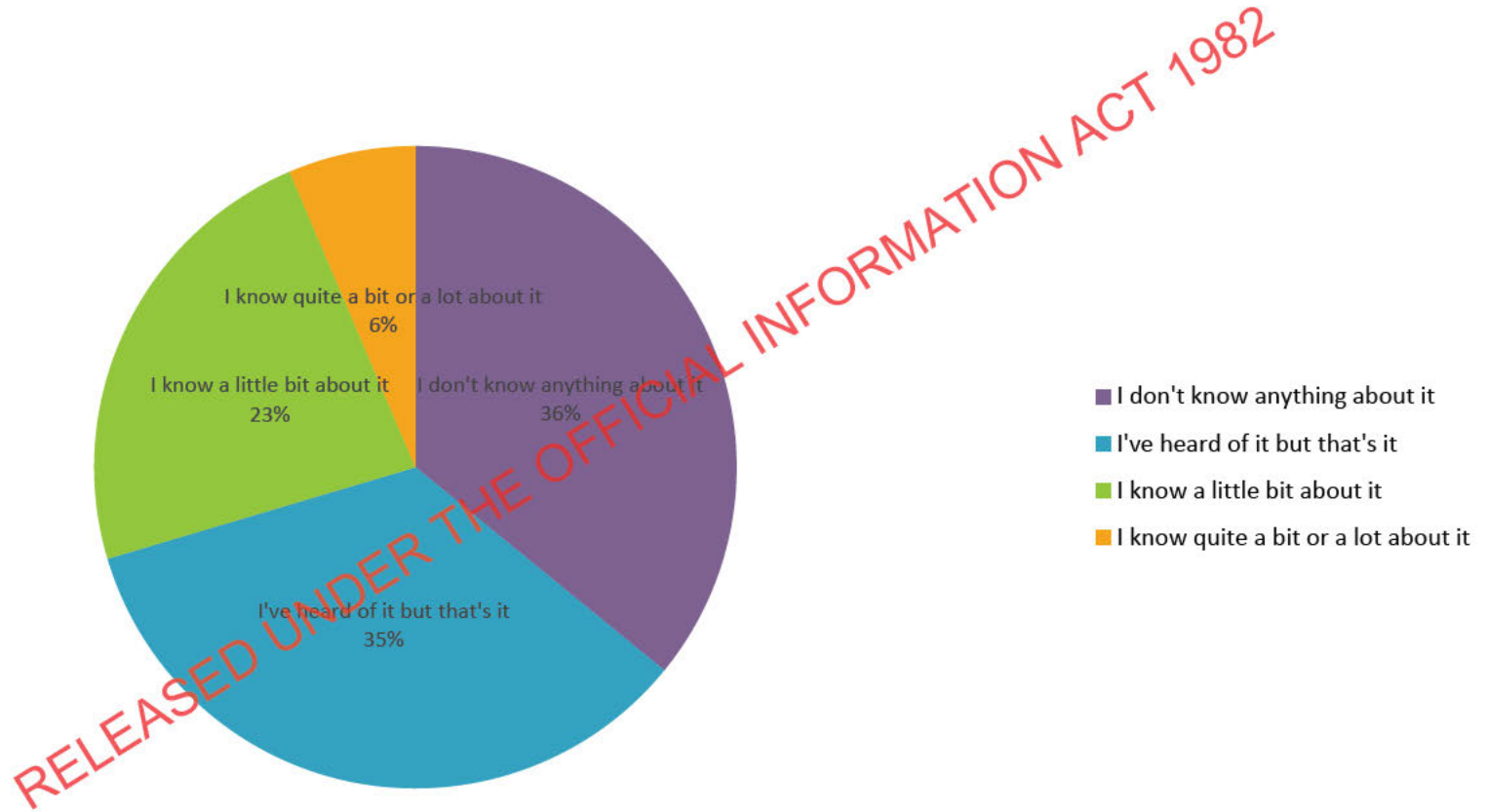
Action on water quality issues

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A word cloud centered around the word "water", which is the largest and most prominent. Other words include "cleaning", "drink", "avoid", "rubbish", "put", "careful", "waste", "beach", "plant", "or", "clean", "care", "filter", "reduce", "waterways", "stop", "rivers", "polluting", "conserve", "reducing", "quality", "products", "car", and "care". The words are in various colors and sizes, arranged in a circular pattern around the central word.

What do you know about increasing nitrogen levels.



Land use issues

	Could be a problem		A good sign of economic growth		Don't understand what this means in terms of impact on the environment		I don't understand what I can do about the issue		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
Soil quality being affected by erosion due to agriculture	367	57.7%	64	10.1%	122	19.2%	83	13.1%	636
Increase in the proportion of land used for dairy	333	52.4%	137	21.5%	89	14.0%	77	12.1%	636
Continued intensification of farming	338	53.1%	107	16.8%	112	17.6%	79	12.4%	636
Indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems continue to be under threat	343	53.9%	42	6.6%	137	21.5%	114	17.9%	636

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What do you understand when you hear the word biodiversity?



Key land use issues for Maori



What main iwi you belong to?

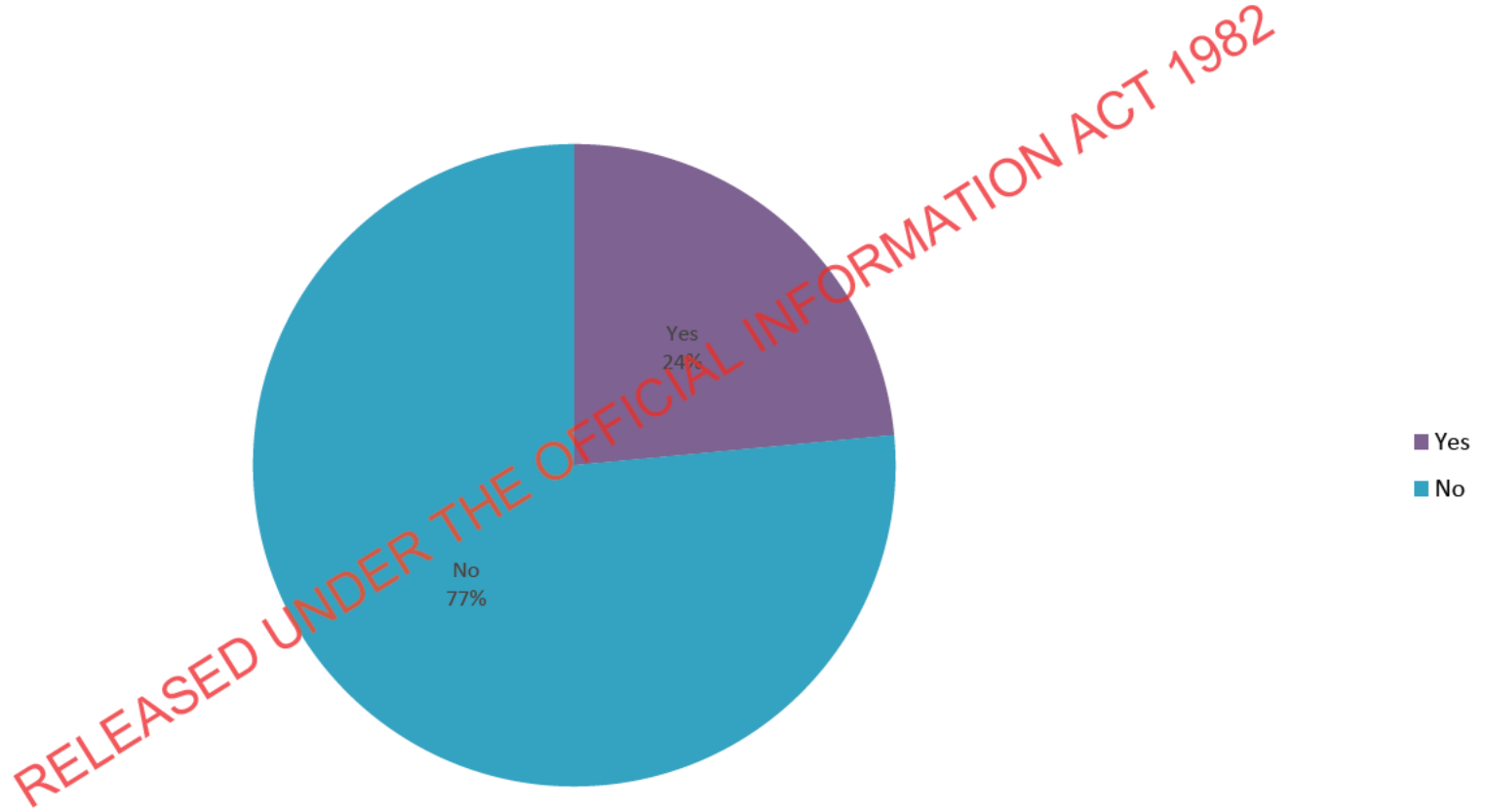


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A word cloud featuring various Māori names and terms. The word 'ngati' is the largest and most central. Other prominent words include 'remember', 'tahu', 'pukarawa', 'nga amp', 'iwi', 'kahu', 'ranginui', 'tainui', 'atihaunui', 'haretoa', 'tuwharetoa', 'paparangi', 'porou', 'tuhoe', 'raukawa', 'affiliates', 'apa', 'kahungunu', 'maniapoto', and 'ngapuhite'. The words are in various colors and orientations, creating a dynamic visual effect.

Aware of regular Environment Reports that are published in New Zealand?

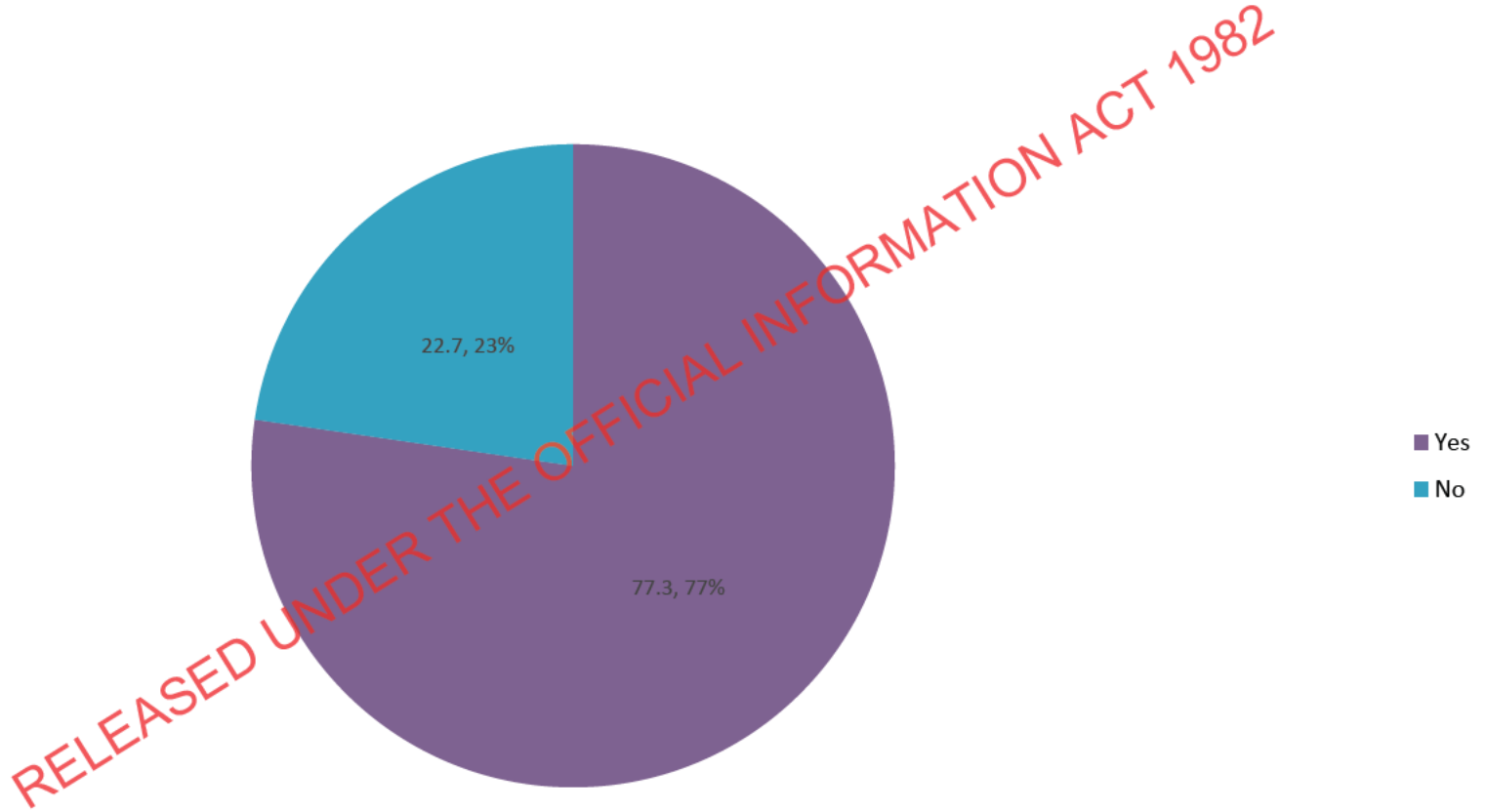


What reports are you aware of?

	Have read		Aware, not read		Not aware		Responses
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count
Marine	40	26.8%	99	66.4%	10	6.7%	149
Land	54	36.2%	85	57.0%	10	6.7%	149
Freshwater	54	36.2%	86	57.7%	9	6.0%	149
Atmosphere and climate	50	33.8%	84	56.8%	14	9.5%	148
State of the Environment Report	43	28.9%	88	59.1%	18	12.1%	149

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Not aware
Would regular reporting to the public be useful?



What should these reports look like and how often should they come out?

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Environmental reports' production

