



Bringing the people along: Social Licence to Operate and Public Acceptance in WtE

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11 November, 2019





Recent 2019 research Statewide attitudes

Research partnership with Sustainability
Victoria since 2016

Report available at
<https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/About-us/Research/Engaging-communities-on-waste>

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Changes in Victorian attitudes and perceptions of the waste and resource recovery sector: 2016 to 2019

Andrea Walton, Rod McCrea, and Talia Jeanneret

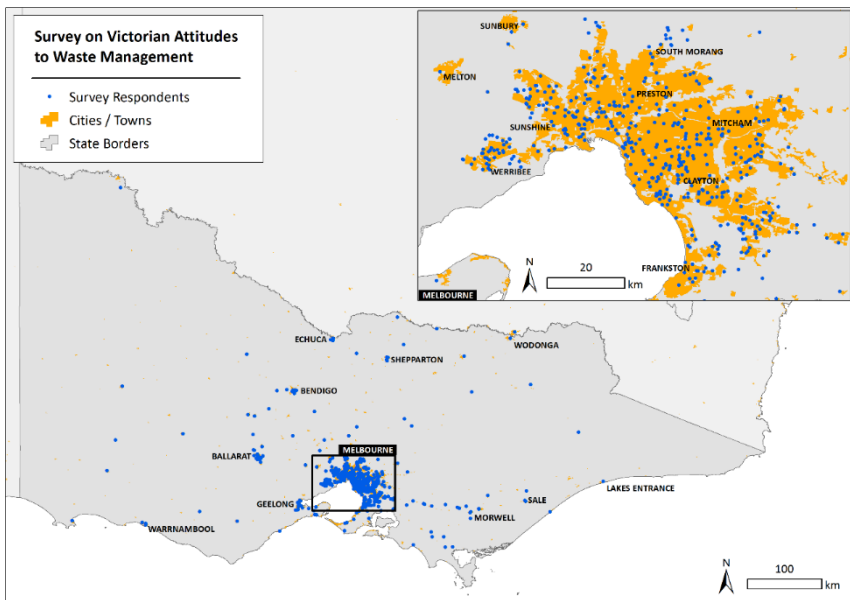
August 2019

Engaging Communities on Waste project





Conducted March 2019



SAMPLE

N = 1,244

- Targeted postcodes = 610
Other postcodes = 634
- ‘Impacted’ = ‘non-impacted’

ABS representative: age, sex, and geography for Victoria (ABS 2016)

- Metro Melbourne – 68%
- Regional Vic - 32%

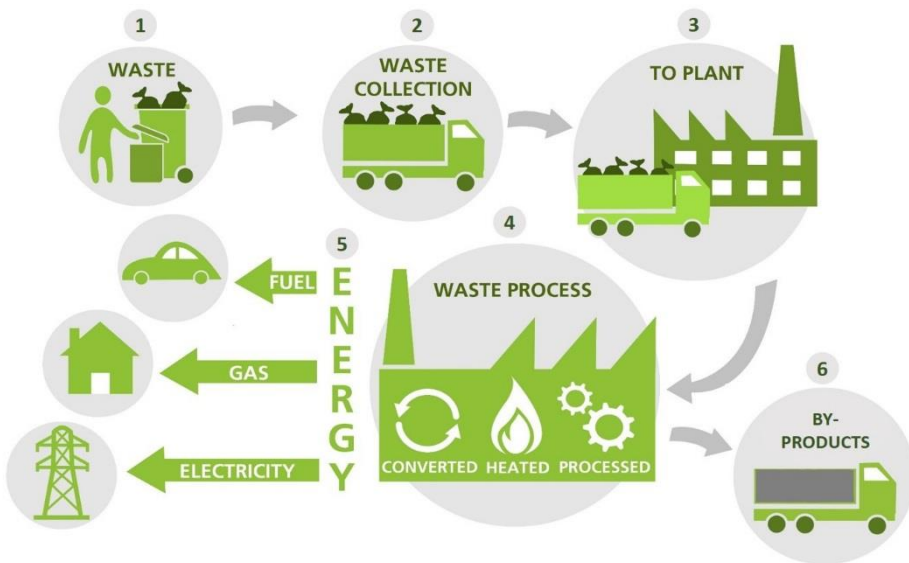
Waste Hierarchy:

40% believe avoiding waste is the best option

75% think landfills the worst option



Scenario



- Living within 2 kms from
 - Waste complex (landfill) OR
 - Waste to Energy plant
- Provided brief information

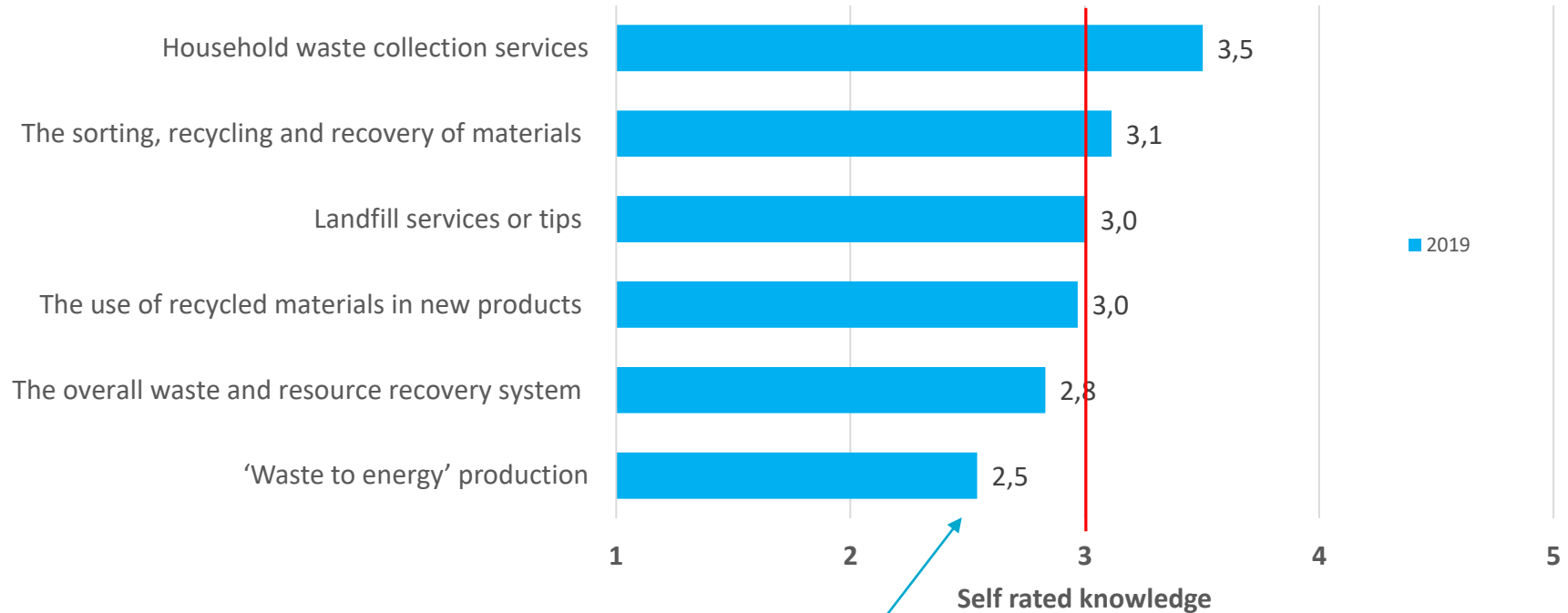


Background information for respondents

- Waste to Energy plant scenario

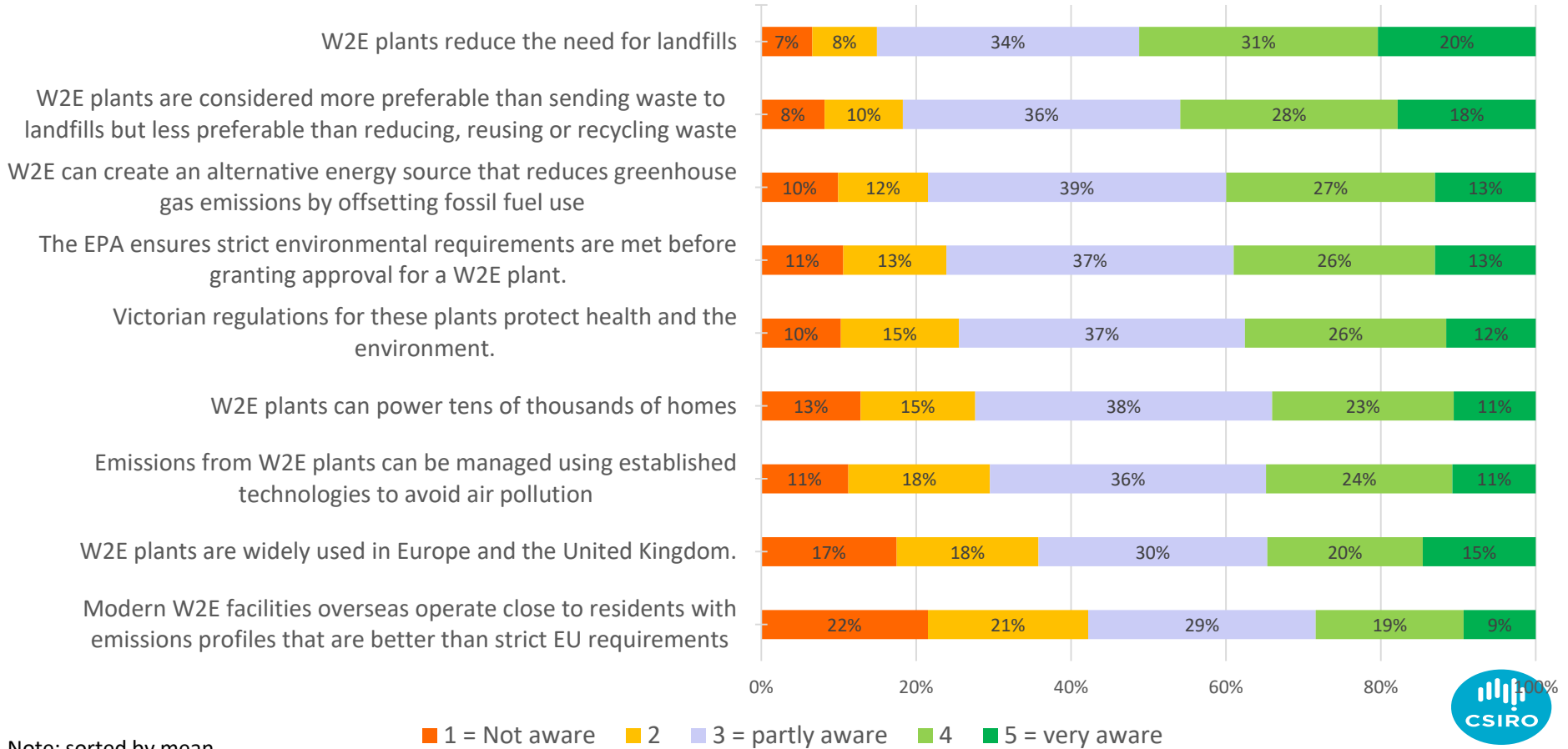
- W2E plants use technologies to create energy from general household waste, otherwise sent to landfill.
- The basic process is:
 1. Households sort their waste
 2. Garbage trucks collect it
 3. General waste is delivered to the waste to energy plant, which usually includes a pre-processing facility that ensures recyclables and unsuitable materials are removed
 4. Instead of burying general waste in a landfill, it can be used to make energy and by-products
 5. Energy can be produced as fuel, gas and/or electricity
 6. By-products may be used to make other products (e.g., in road base, fertiliser, or fuel pellets).
 7. Hazardous residues that can't be reused are sent to landfill and safely disposed of

Knowledge of the waste sector



Note: 1 = No knowledge; 3 = some knowledge; 5 = A lot of knowledge

Awareness and understanding



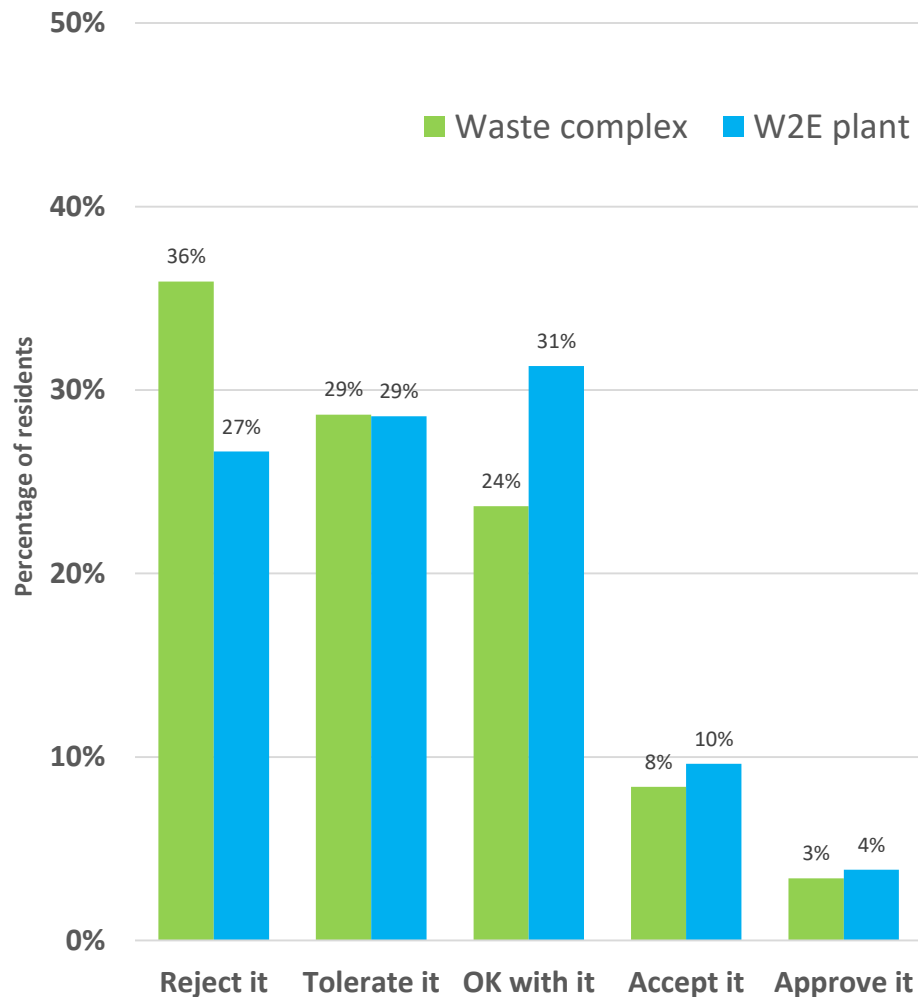
Note: sorted by mean



How accepting of living within 2 kms

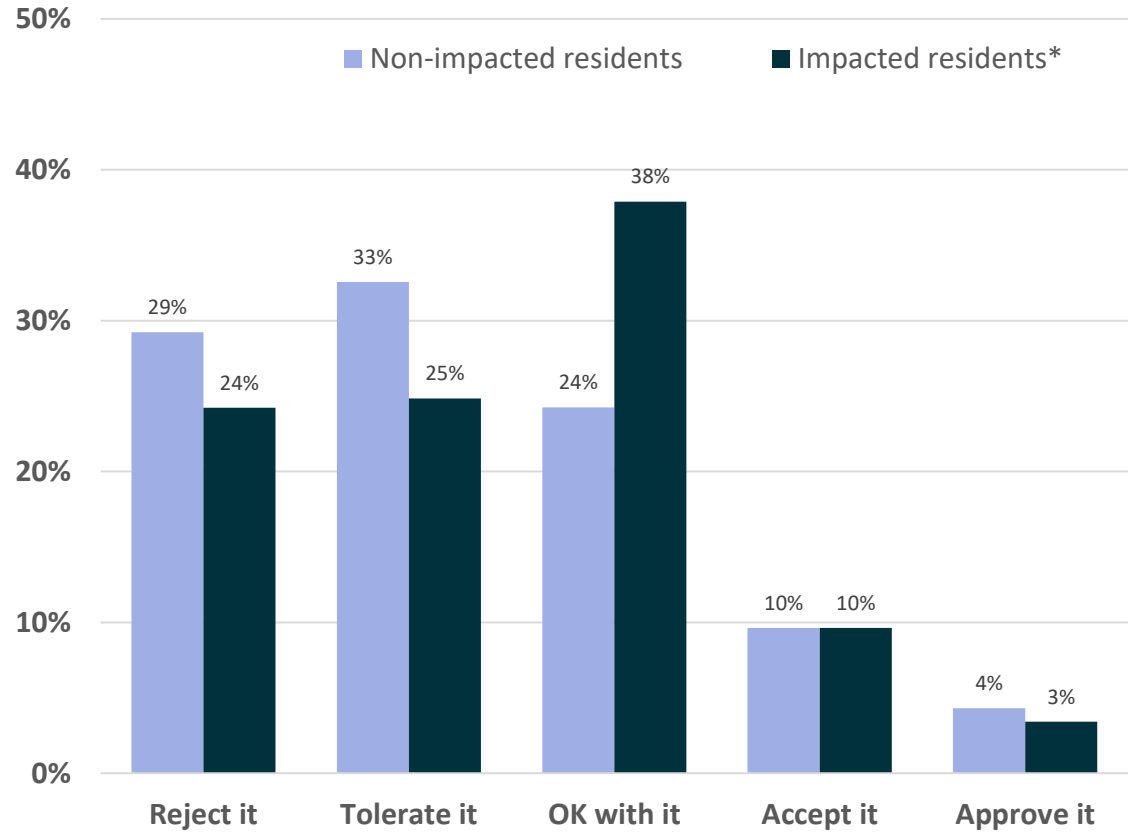
Compared to living near a waste complex

- Higher percentage of residents were OK with living near a waste to energy plant, with fewer rejecting the notion.

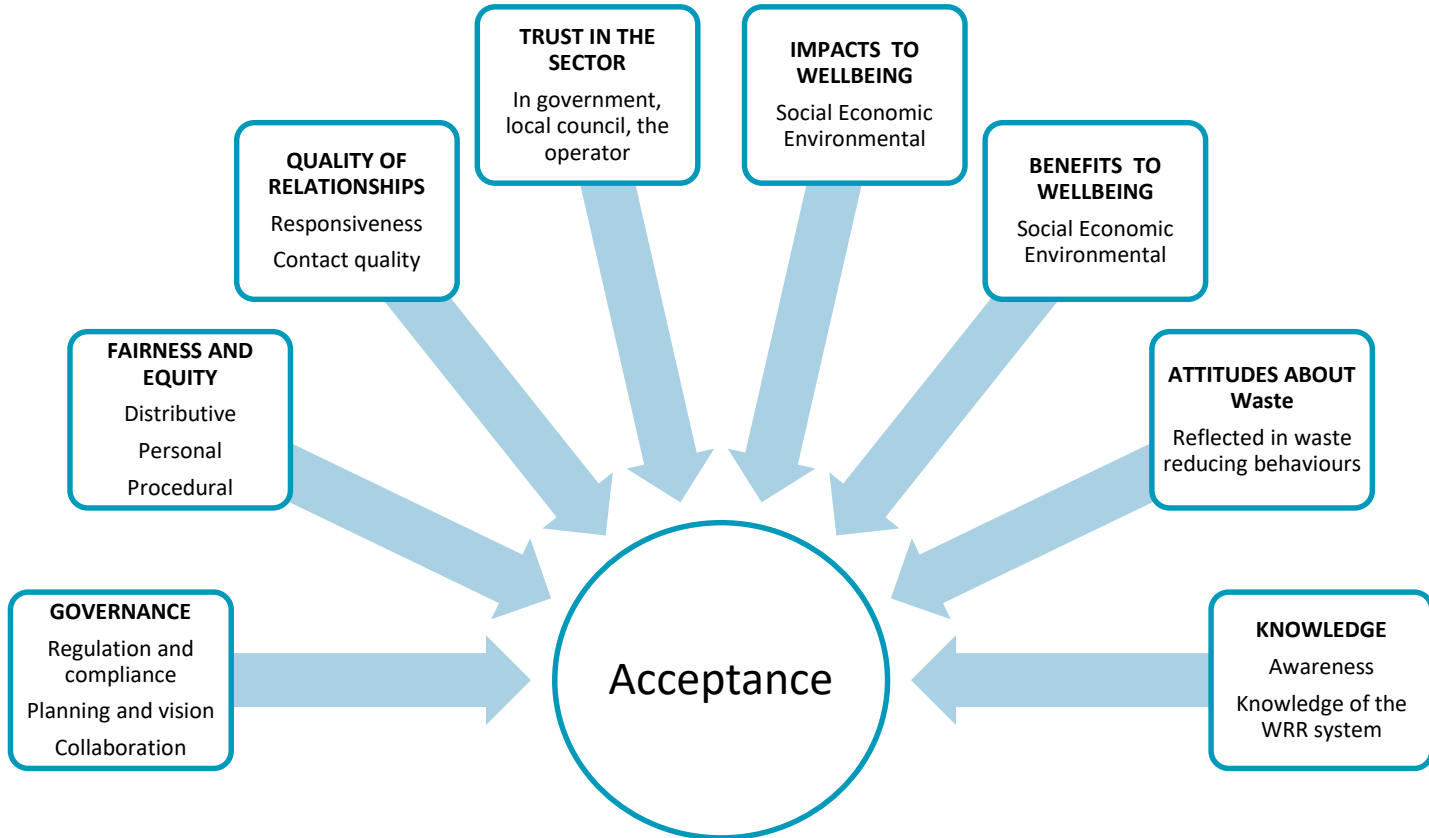


Impacted v Non-impacted residents

- Those living near a waste and resource recovery (WRR) facility were significantly more likely to accept living near a W2E plant



Drivers of social acceptance in the waste domain

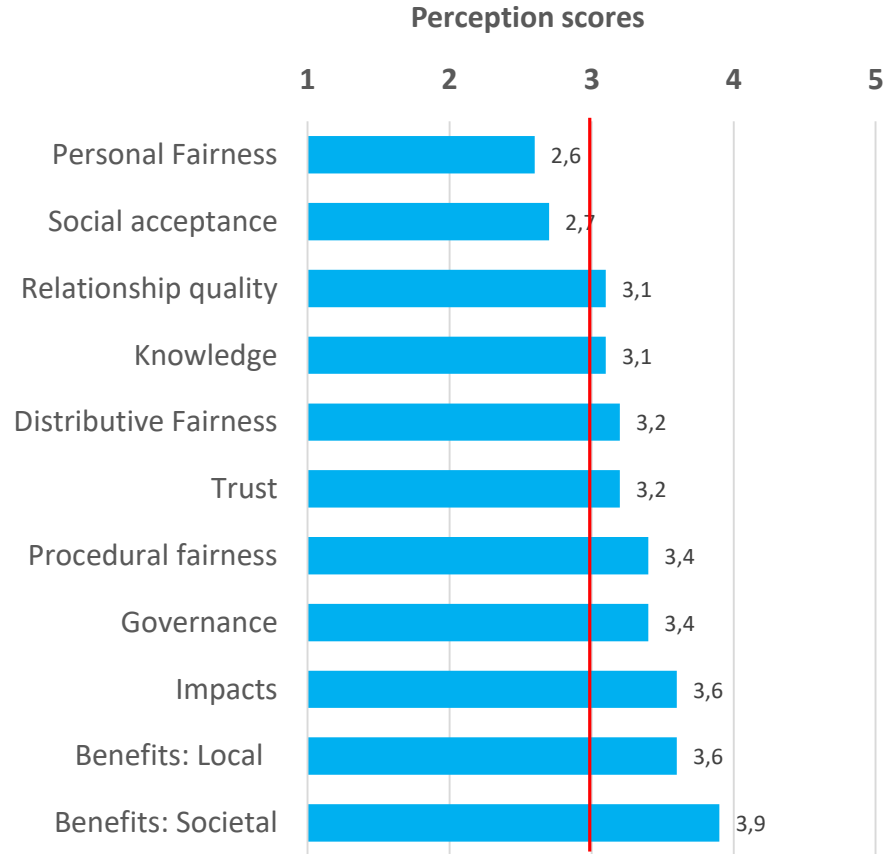




Drivers of acceptance of W2E plants

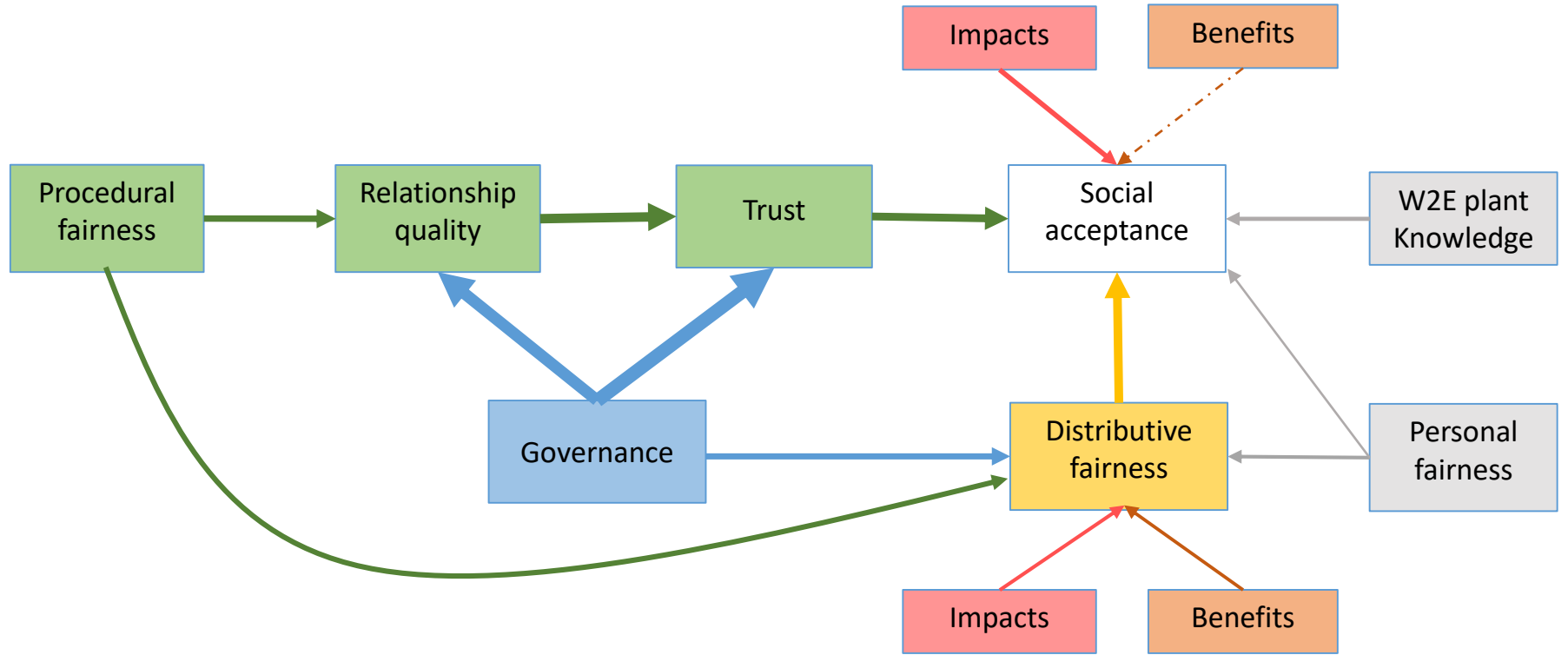
Community perceptions of W2E

- societal benefits high
- local benefits and impacts similar
- Governance OK
 - Regulations, planning and collaborations
- community relationships with industry and trust in the sector modest
- procedural and distributive fairness OK, but personal fairness (NIMBYism) problematic
- overall social acceptance low

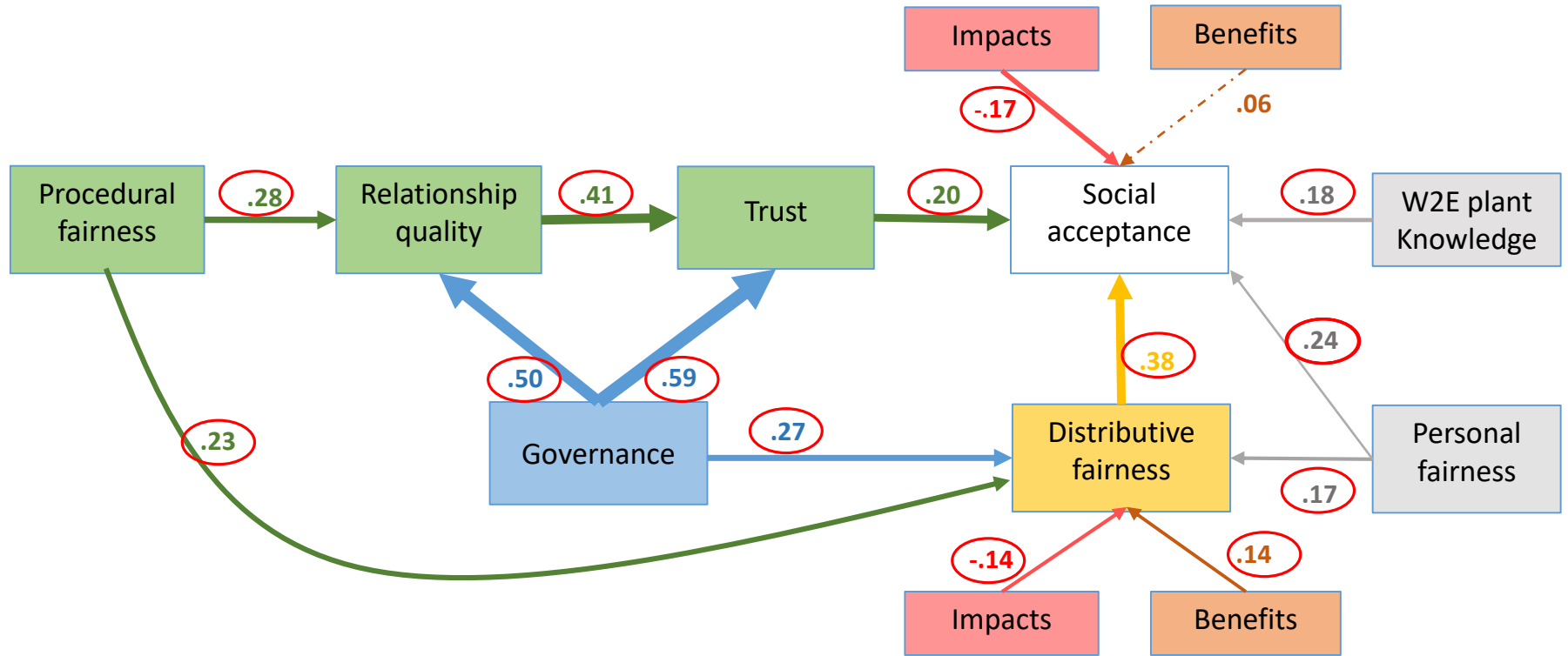


Note: 1 = Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly

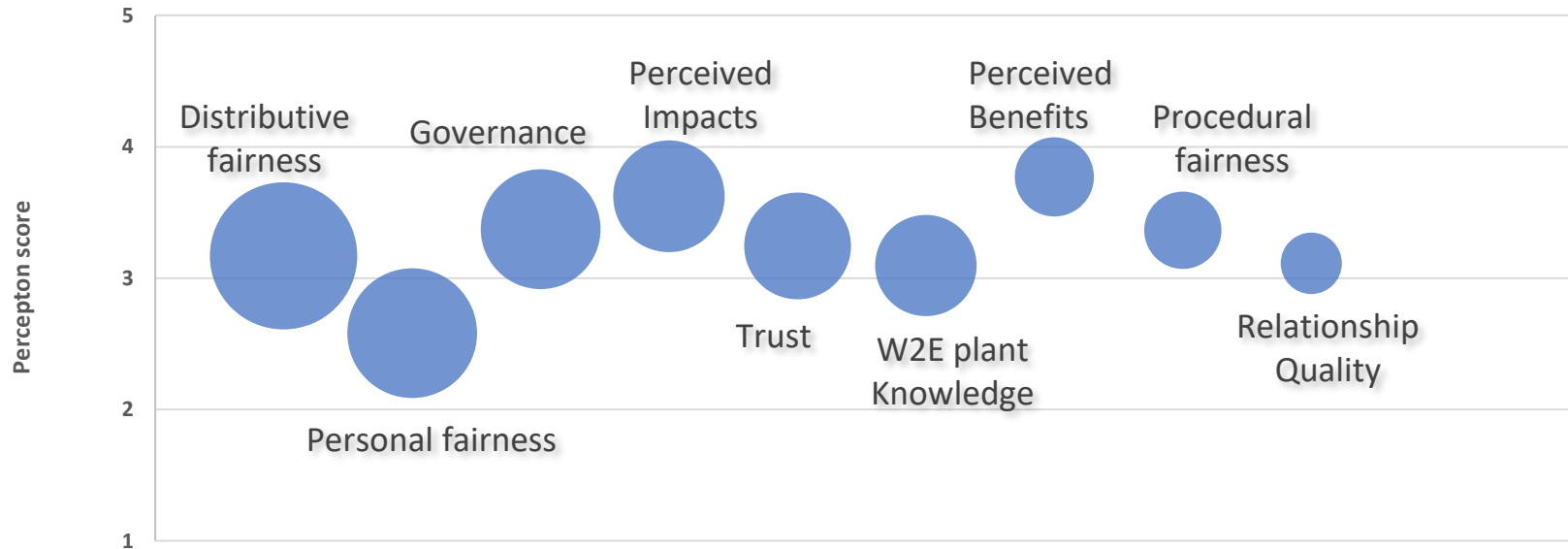
Model of Social Acceptance of W2E plant



Model of Social Acceptance of W2E plant



Relative importance and perceptions of underlying drivers of W2E plant acceptance



Note: Size of bubble = relative importance; height = perception



Some key messages for ‘bringing people along’ with W2E

- People are more accepting of living near a W2E plant than a waste and resource recovery hub
- Knowledge reduces perceptions of risk associated with W2E plants and enhances social acceptance
- Residents presently impacted by a waste and resource recovery facility have more favourable attitudes toward the waste sector
- Perceived benefits relate to social acceptance by enhancing perceptions of distributional fairness
- Perceived personal fairness is low and somewhat problematic
- Good governance supports good community relationships with the industry, trust in the sector, distributional fairness, and thus overall social acceptance
- Demographic differences are less important than how people perceive underlying drivers of SLO



Thank you

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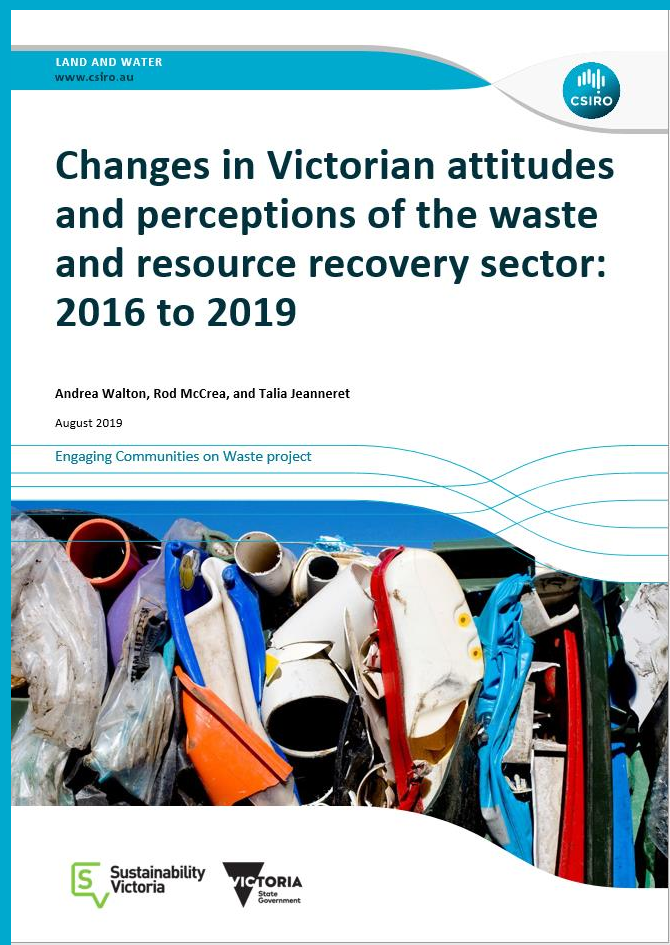
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Understanding trust and social acceptance in the energy from waste context

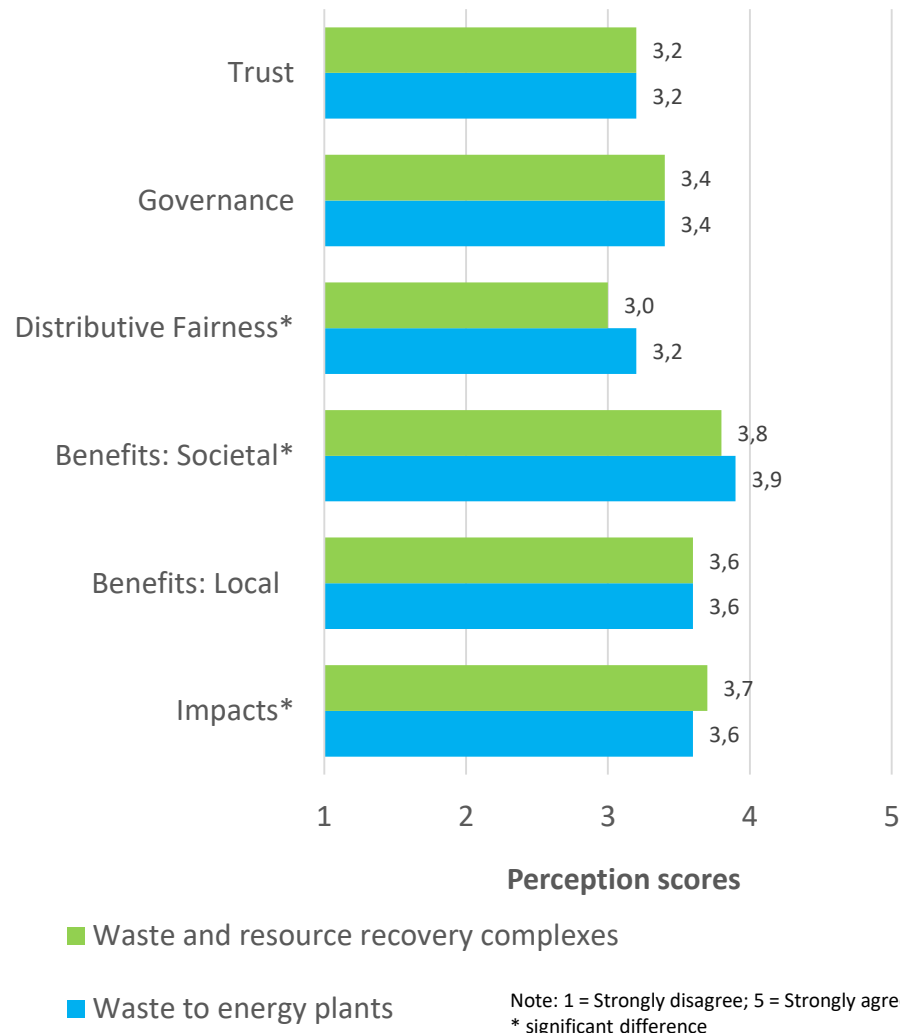
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Compared to living near a waste complex

- Perceptions of possible impacts were lower
- Societal benefits were assessed more favourably

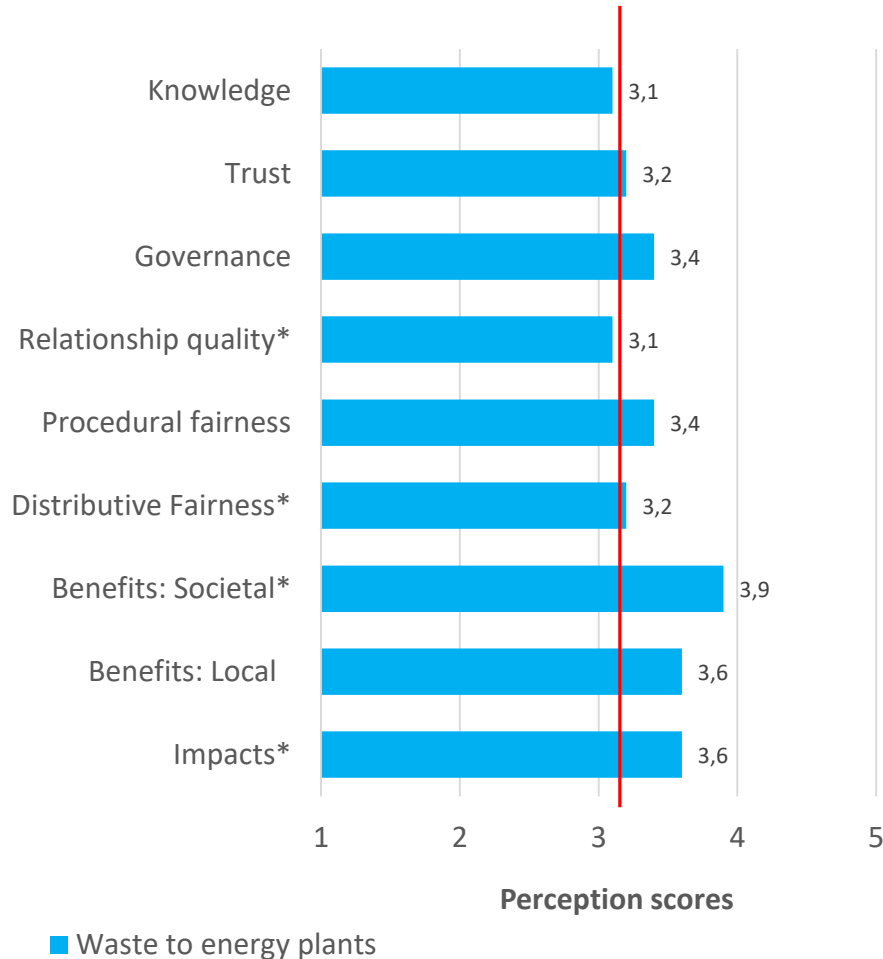




Drivers of acceptance

Compared to a waste complex

- Perceptions of impacts lower
- Societal benefits more favourable
- Perceptions of fairness higher



Note: 1 = Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly