

Online Appendix
Political Trust and Climate Policy Choice:
Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment

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1 Survey questions and descriptive statistics

Table A1 provides question wording and response scales for key variables used in the main analysis (trust) and additional analyses (following three). Table A2 provides descriptive statistics for these variables.

Variable	Question wording	Responses
Trust	How much of the time, if at all, do you think you can trust the government in Berlin to do what is right?	Just about always; most of the time; only some of the time; almost never
Climate hoax	To what extent, if at all, do you agree, or disagree, with the following statements? Climate change is a myth promoted by the government as an excuse to raise taxes	Strongly agree; tend to agree; neither; tend to disagree; strongly disagree
Trust on climate	How much, if at all, do you trust the government to do each of the following? Tackle climate change	0 = Not at all, 10 = completely
Issue importance	How important, if at all, are each of the following issues to you? Tackling climate change	0 = Not at all important, 10 = Very important

Table A1: Question wording and response scales

Table A3 shows that randomisation and post-experimental coding was successful. Exactly 25% of the observations are in each task (iteration); 53% of respondents opted for Government A (47% for B), and there are no errors with presenting two profiles. Similarly, table A4 shows approximately equal randomisation of attribute levels.

	Unique (#)	Missing (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max
Political trust	5	3	2.8	0.8	1.0	3.0	4.0
Political trust (binary)	2	0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0
Trust on climate change	12	7	6.3	2.8	1.0	6.0	11.0
Impt. to tackle climate change	11	0	8.3	2.9	1.0	9.0	11.0
Climate change is a hoax	6	6	4.0	1.3	1.0	5.0	5.0

Table A2: Descriptive statistics of moderator variables

		N	Percent
Chosen	Govt A	6588	52.86
	Govt B	5876	47.14
Profile	Govt A	6232	50.00
	Govt B	6232	50.00
Task	Task 1	3116	25.00
	Task 2	3116	25.00
	Task 3	3116	25.00
	Task 4	3116	25.00

Table A3: Observations in key design variables

		N	Percent
policy	Encouraging the adoption of more plant-based diets	3185	25.55
	Financing the building of wind and solar farms	3040	24.39
	Helping plant trees in tropical forests	3082	24.73
timing	Increasing the price of things that produce carbon to make, like electricity and plastic	3157	25.33
	Higher costs in 10 years	4188	33.60
	Higher costs in 20 years	4149	33.29
pricing	Higher costs in 30 years	4127	33.11
	Tax for the environment	4142	33.23
	Tax for the environment, other taxes reduced	4193	33.64
complexity	Tax on things that pollute, like petrol or electricity	4129	33.13
	Experts agree - fairly complex	4064	32.61
	Experts agree - not very complex	4250	34.10
costbenefit	Experts agree - very complex	4150	33.30
	1% of GDP	2531	20.31
	1% of GDP, but costs would be higher for future generations	2439	19.57
	1% of GDP, but reduce public health costs	2520	20.22
recommended	2% of GDP	2525	20.26
	GDP would increase by 1%	2449	19.65
	Made by expert panel	3127	25.09
	Made by government, backed by opposition	3143	25.22
publicsupp	Made by government, opposition in parliament	3115	24.99
	Made by random members of public	3079	24.70
	30% for, 70% against	4134	33.17
	45% for, 55% against	4149	33.29
	60% for, 40% against	4181	33.54

Table A4: Randomisation of attribute levels

2 Pre-registered hypotheses

We have structured our main text around a set of theoretical propositions rather than specific hypotheses about the attributes. However, in the pre-registered document, we did the latter. To be transparent, we restate the pre-registered hypotheses here and our conclusions on whether we reject them. We emphasise that this makes no difference to our conclusions in the paper, given that the results show no moderation effect of trust.

Hypothesis	Conclusion
As the time horizon for future costs becomes longer, the effect of trust is larger	Rejected
As complexity grows, the effect of trust is larger	Rejected
The less public support there is, the effect of trust is larger	Rejected
The effect of trust is larger when there is opposition in Parliament, compared to when the policy is backed by opposition parties.	Rejected
Compared to those with higher trust, those with low trust are less likely to support technocratic policy making (policy made by an expert advisory panel) but more likely to support policies made by a citizen's assembly ('randomly selected members of the public')	Rejected
The effect of trust is largest for an unconditional tax ('a tax for the environment would be introduced') than the other two levels.	Rejected
The effect of trust is larger for specific increases ('There would be tax increases on things you buy that pollute the environment, like petrol or electricity') than for a balanced tax ('A tax for the environment would be introduced, but other taxes would be reduced')	Rejected
The effect of trust is larger for the 2% increase than the 1% increase	Rejected
The effect of trust is larger for the policies that have future trade-offs than those that have no trade-offs	Not Rejected (but opposite direction)
There is no difference between low and high trusters when the return is positive ('Projections suggest gross domestic product (GDP) would increase by around 1%').	Not rejected

Table A5: Hypothesis summary

In the main text, our conclusions for these hypotheses were based on marginal means. Here, we also report a set of interactions (as we pre-registered) and AMCEs.

Interactions between trust and the timing variable are insignificant at the $p=0.05$ level ($\beta = -0.036$ and -0.04). The interaction between trust and ‘higher costs in 30 years’ is significant at the 0.1 level and is negatively signed ($\beta = -0.041$, $p = 0.07$). An interaction between the complexity attribute and trust provides a non-significant coefficient at all levels ($\beta = 0.028$ and 0.009 , $p = 0.20$ and 0.66). An interaction between trust and the public support attribute has non-significant coefficients ($\beta = -0.02$ and 0.018 , $p = 0.39$ and 0.45).

We also changed the base category for our ‘recommended’ attribute. We interact the ‘recommended’ attribute with trust when ‘made by government, backed by opposition’ is set as the baseline. The interaction between trust and ‘made by government, opposition in parliament’ is not significant and negatively signed ($\beta = -0.027$, $p = 0.32$), indicating that, if anything, trust has a negative effect.

We present these graphically in figure A1.

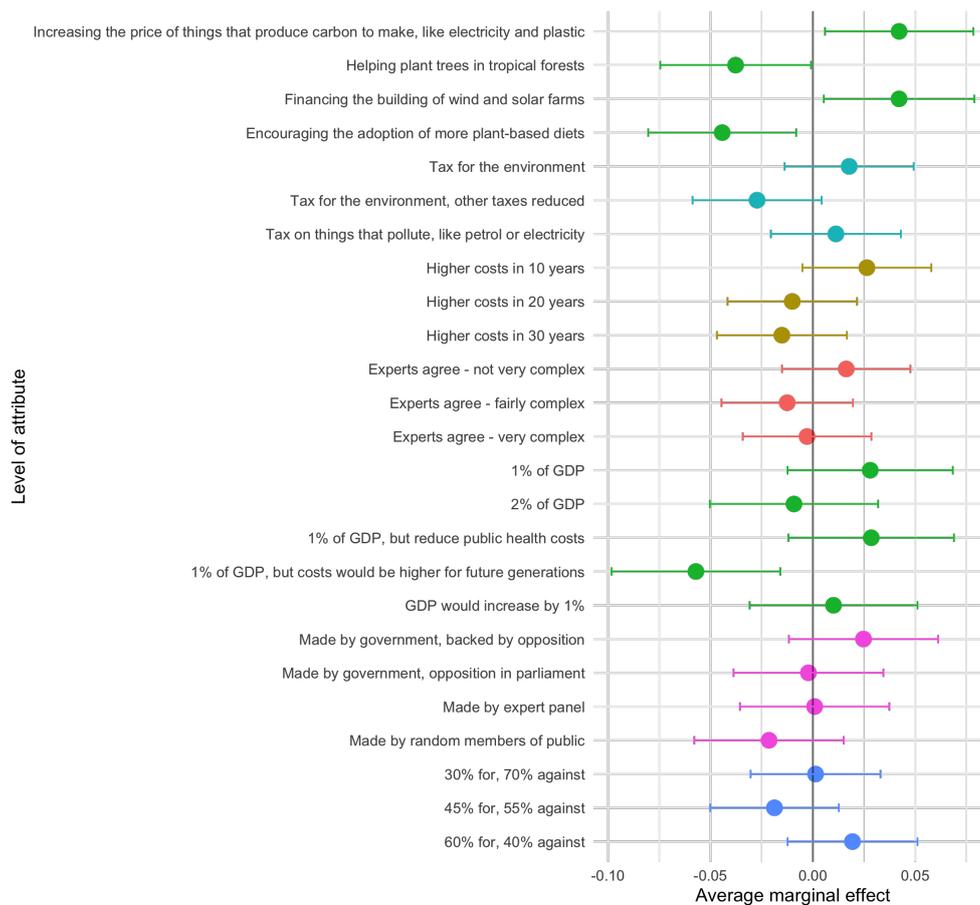


Figure A1: Results from interaction models

3 Alternative moderators

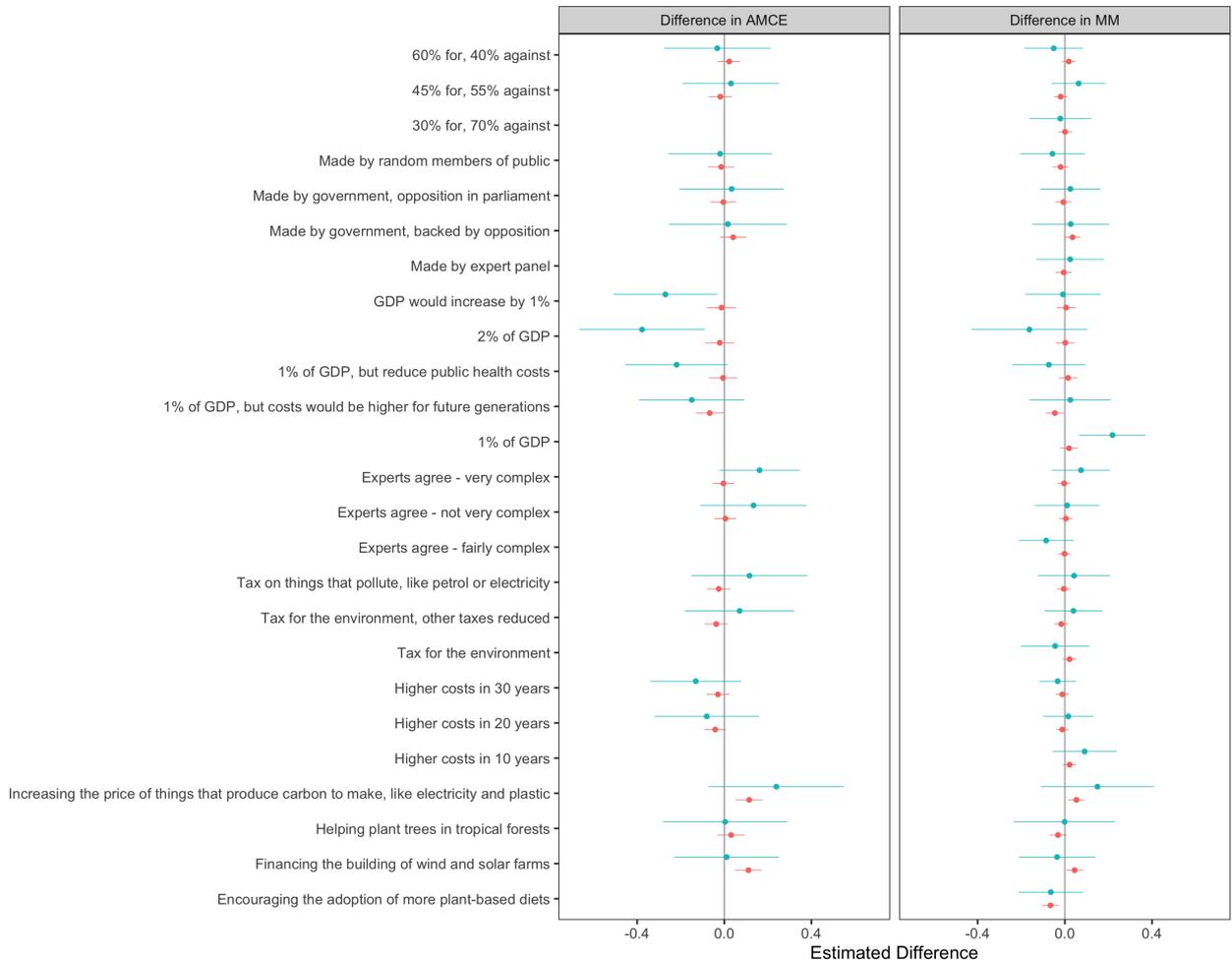


Figure A2: Differences in marginal mean differences and average marginal component effects of attributes on policy choice between those who think dealing with the climate is important and those that do not

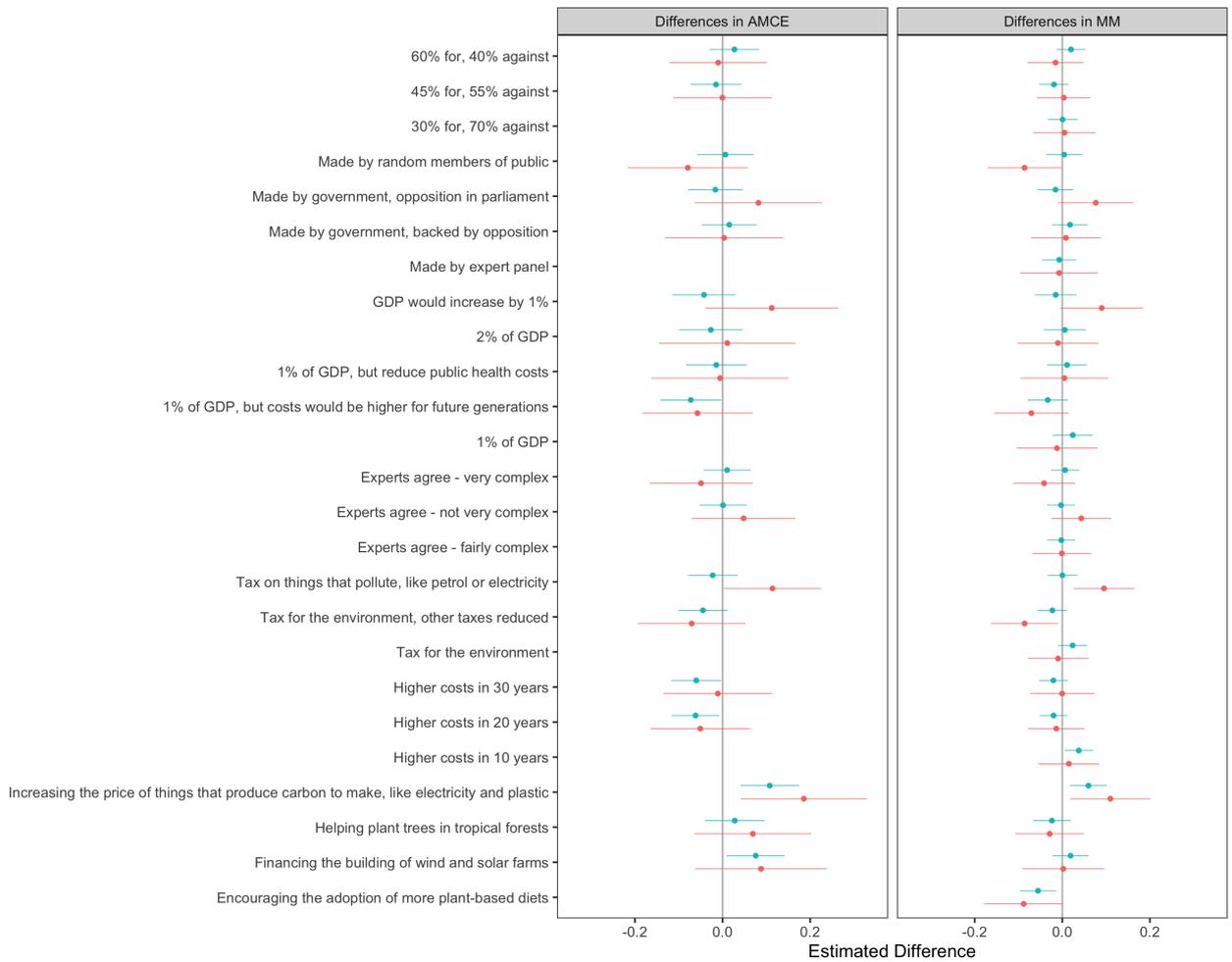


Figure A3: Differences in marginal mean differences and average marginal component effects of attributes on policy choice between those who think dealing with the climate is a hoax and those that do not

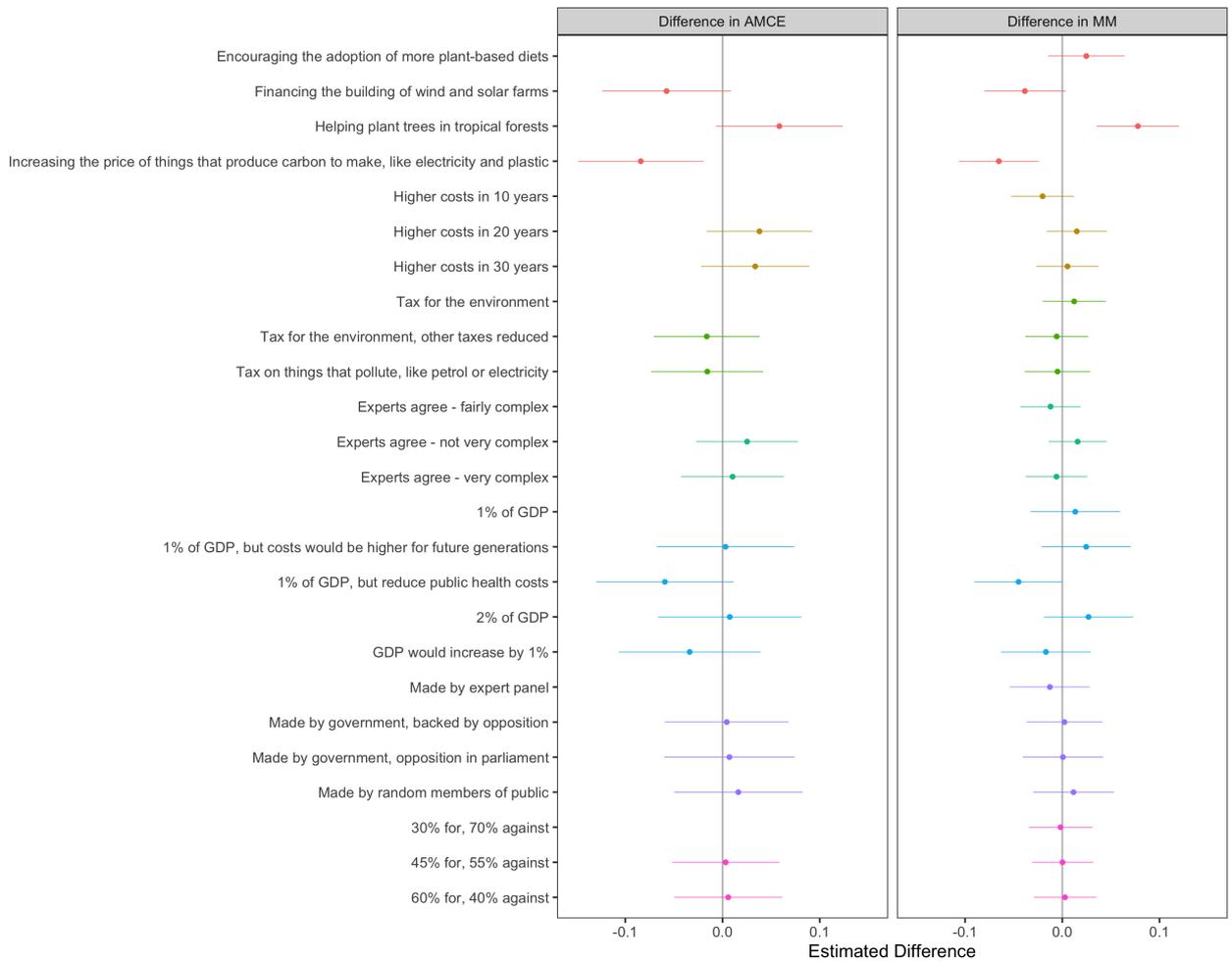


Figure A4: Differences in marginal mean differences and average marginal component effects of attributes on policy choice between those who trust government to tackle climate change

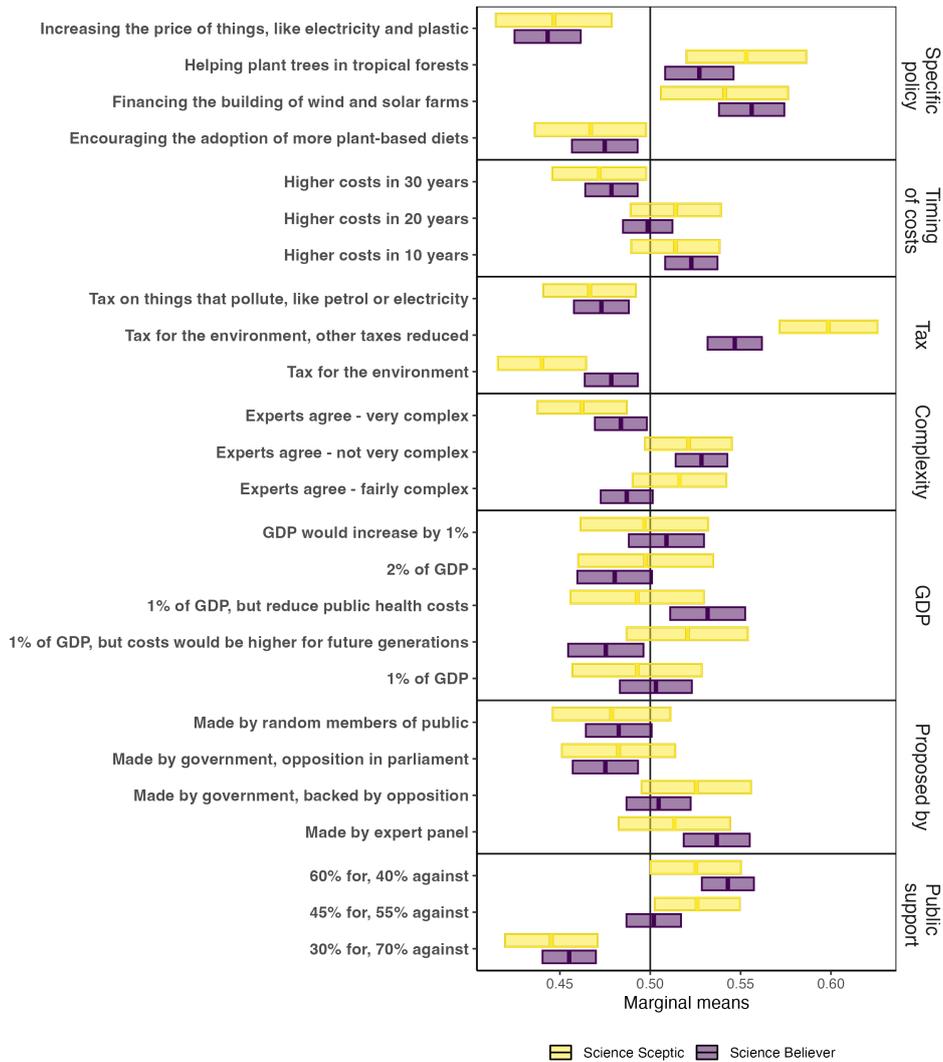


Figure A5: Marginal means for those that believe scientists are making up climate change ('Science Sceptics') and those that do not ('Science Believers')

4 Robustness tests

In the following figures we present the profile and task robustness tests. These indicate whether the results differ depending which side the feature was on (i.e., Proposal A or B) and which iteration of the conjoint the decision was made.

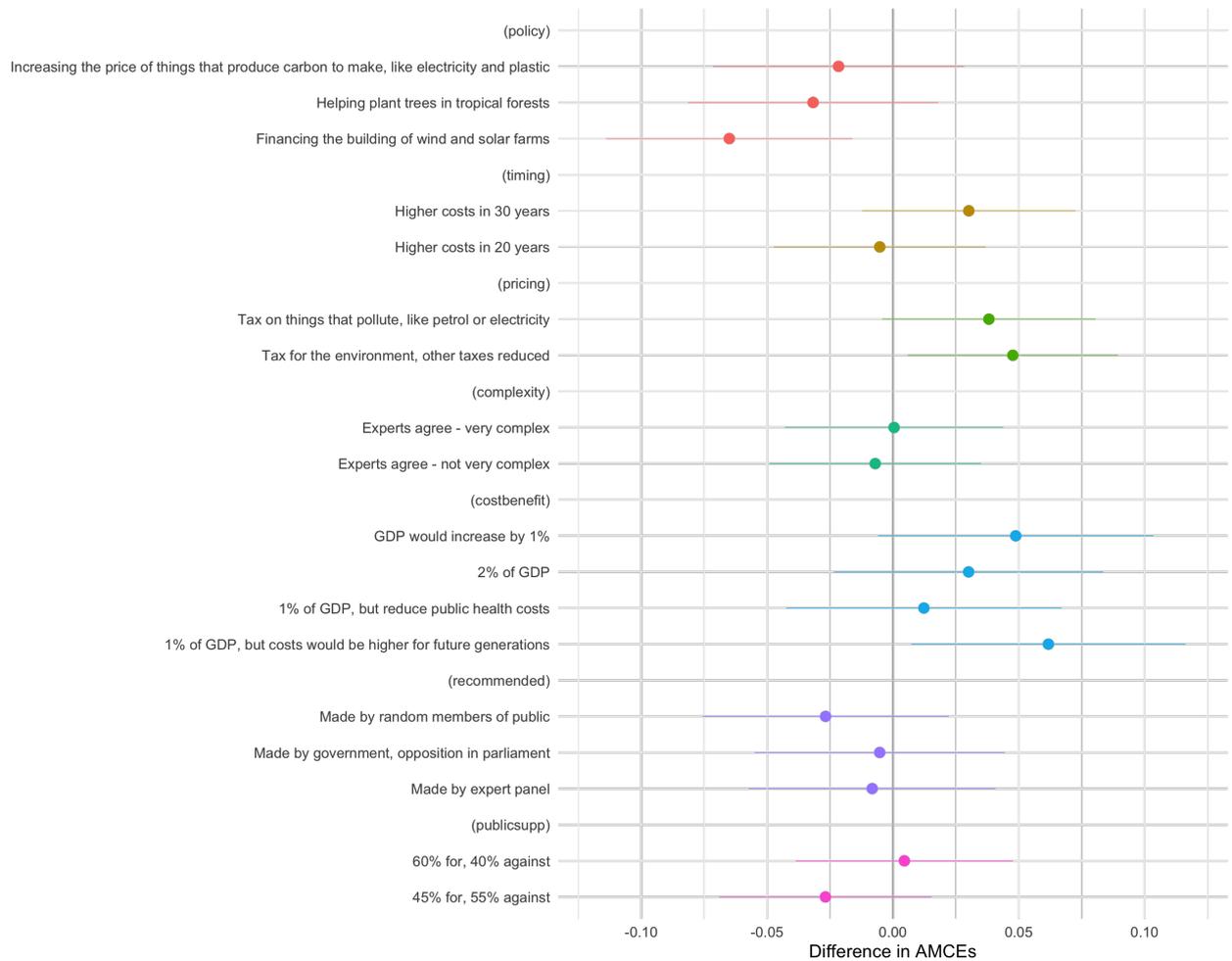


Figure A6: Differences in AMCEs between the two profiles

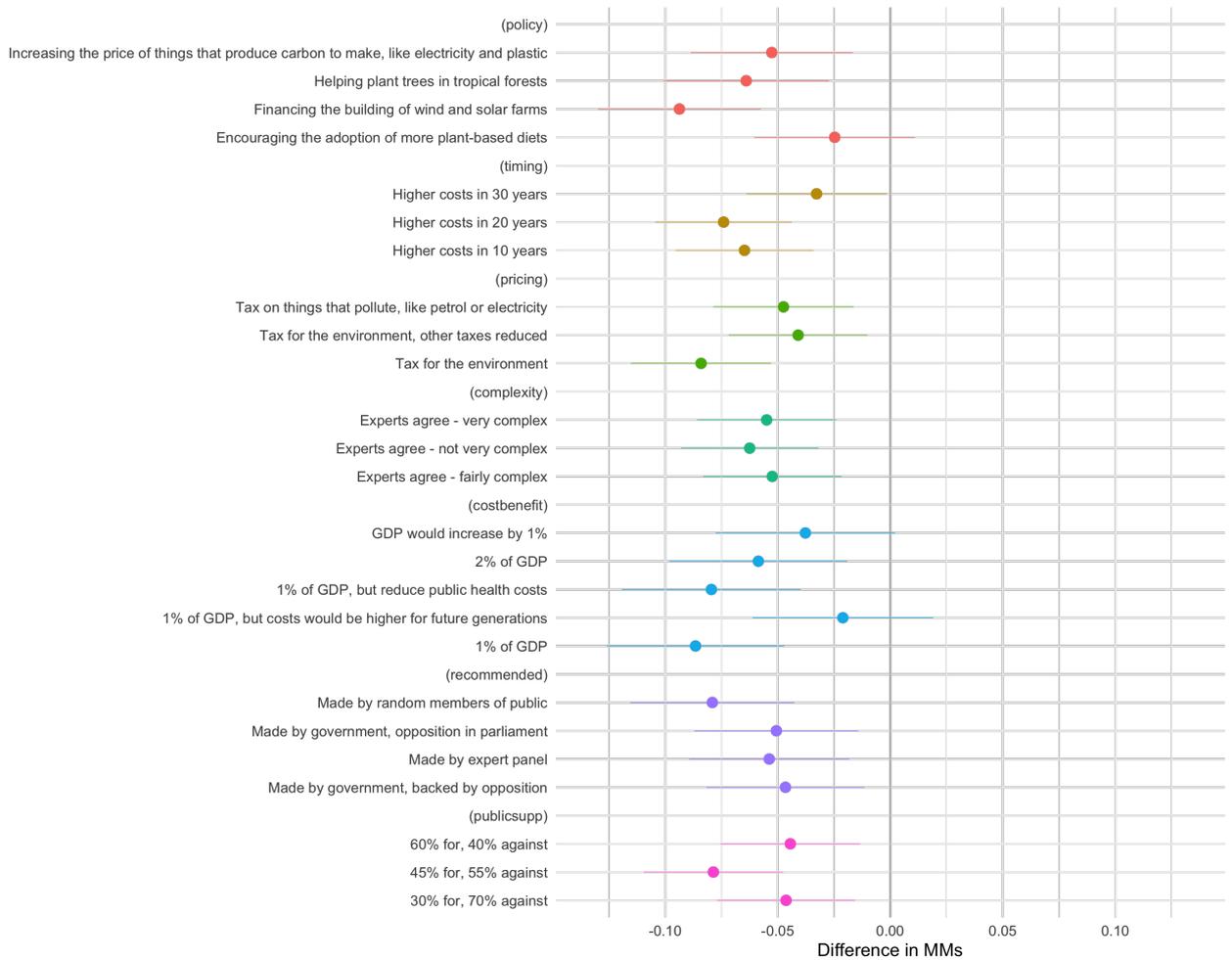


Figure A7: Differences in MMs between the two profiles

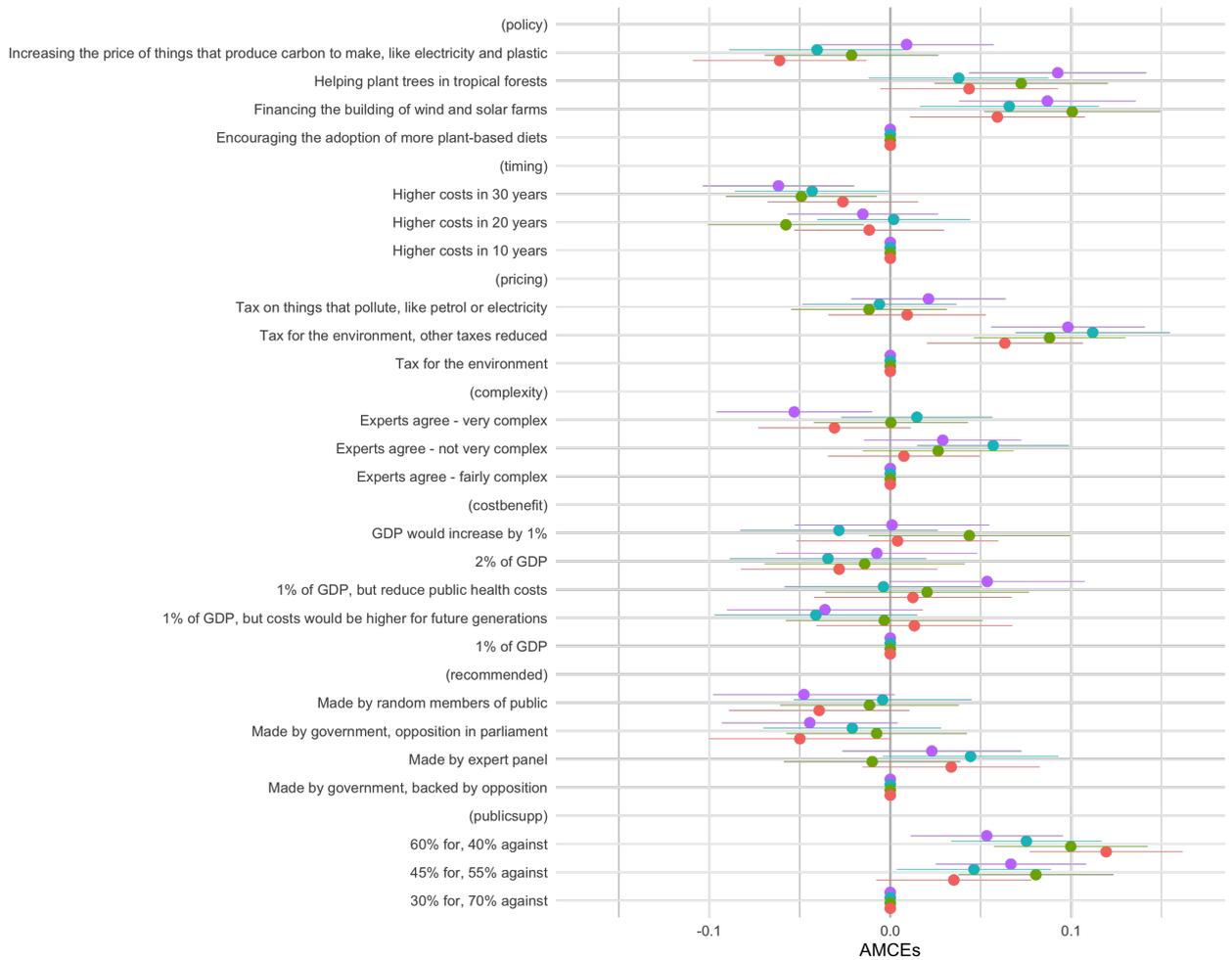


Figure A8: AMCEs by tasks 1-5

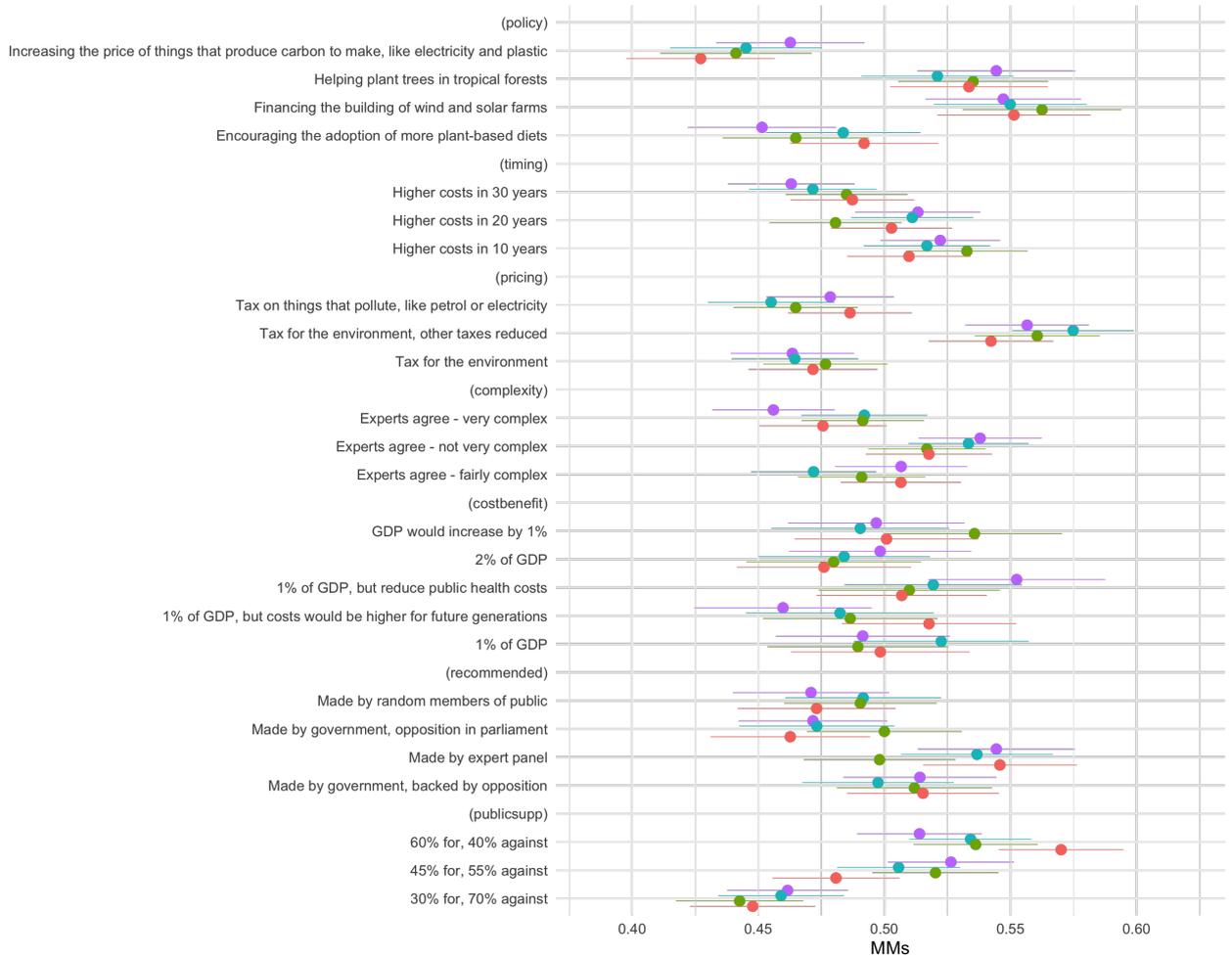


Figure A9: MMs by tasks 1-5