


Climate change in the print media: a comparative perspective

Presentation for the workshop

Exploring Regional Climate Services: meeting stakeholder needs for practical climate information

November 21-23, 2011, University of Victoria

Reiner Grundmann
Sociology and Public Policy
School of Languages and Social Sciences
Aston University



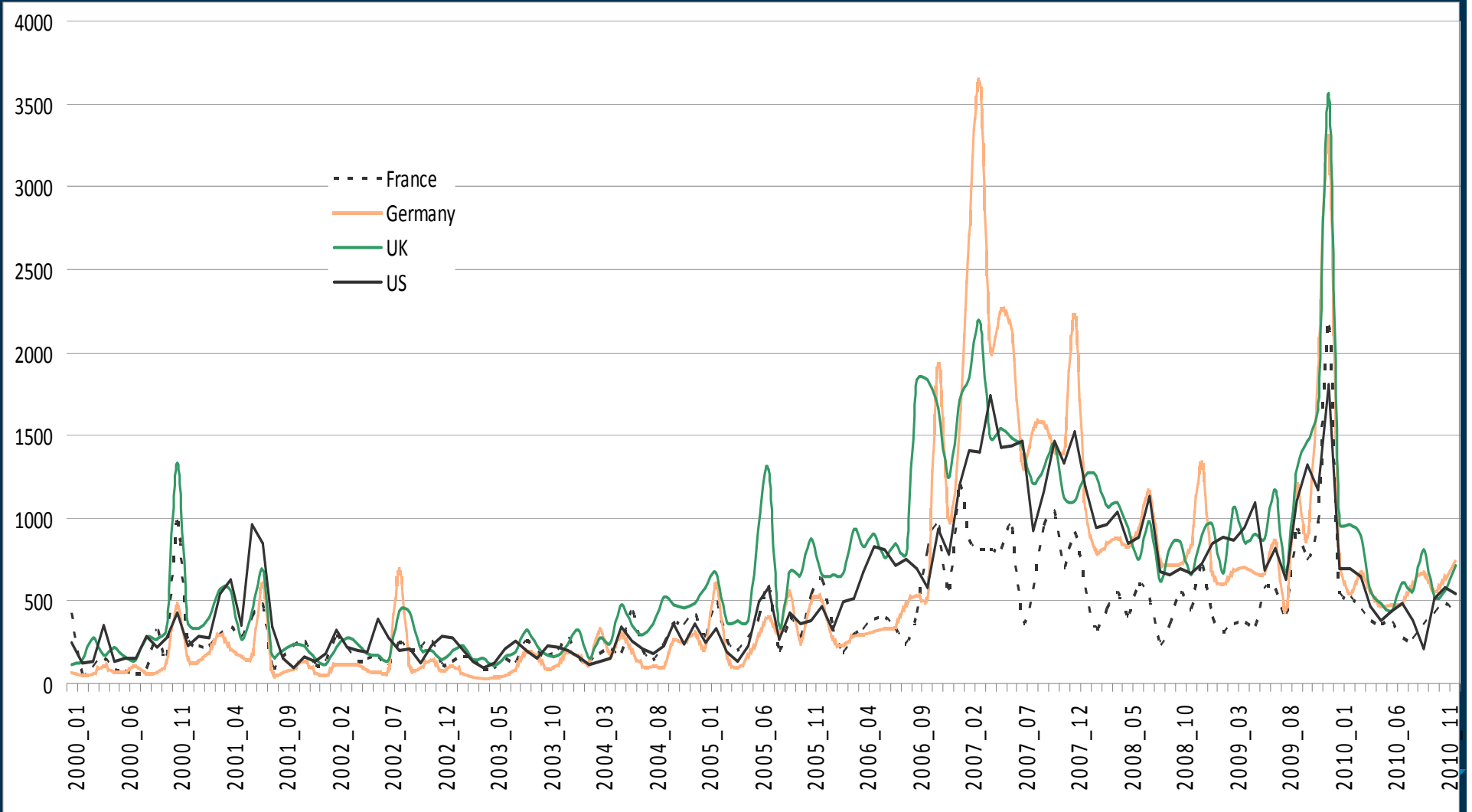
Overview

- ▶ Own previous research
- ▶ Climate services UK
- ▶ Pilot study, UK
 - ▶ Comparison of the discursive characteristics
 - ▶ of climate change
 - ▶ of renewable energy
 - ▶ in national and local /regional press
- ▶ Summary

Previous research about climate and energy

- ▶ Corpus linguistics methodology
 - ▶ quantitative/ qualitative
 - ▶ inductive/ deductive
- ▶ Climate change in the printing press
 - ▶ DE, US (Grundmann 2007)
 - ▶ FR, DE, UK, US (Grundmann & Krishnamurthy 2010)
 - ▶ FR, DE, UK, US (Grundmann & Scott, forthcoming)
- ▶ Energy security in the Global South and North
 - ▶ FR, DE, UK, US, BR, CN, IN, ZA (Grundmann, Scott and Wang, forthcoming)

Climate change in the media



Climate services UK

- ▶ Delivered mainly through MET office
 - ▶ Main aim to deliver trustworthy predictions
 - ▶ interpret those predictions in terms of the risks of hazardous weather and climate extremes
 - ▶ Provide products and advice to help society plan for and adapt to climate variability and climate change in a timely fashion
 - ▶ Renewable energy
 - ▶ Adaptation



Global climate information for regional planning, adaptation and decision-making in the 21st century.

A global partnership led by the Met Office.

Living With

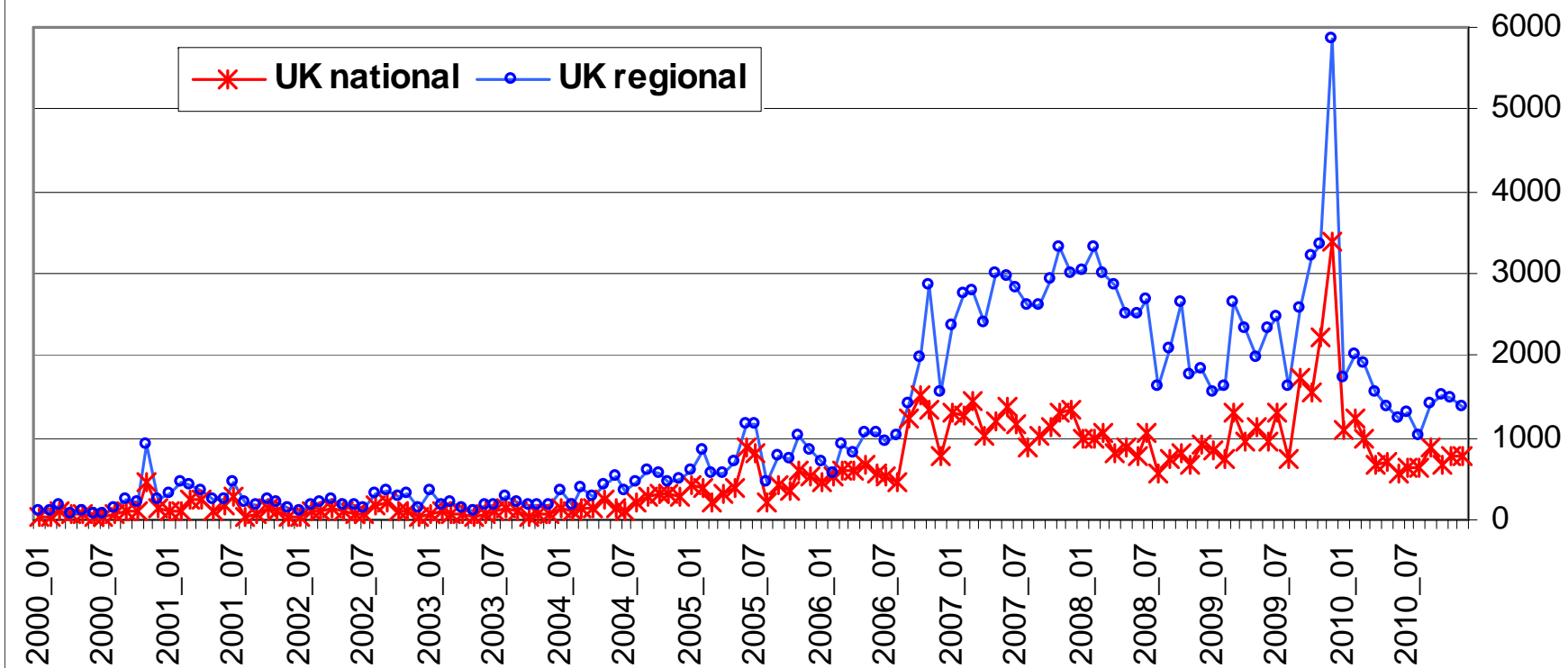
Pilot study, UK

- ▶ Methods:
- ▶ Print newspaper analysis based on Nexis UK full text data
 - ▶ national and local press
- ▶ Creation of two corpora for each, based on search terms
 - ▶ ‘climate change’
 - ▶ ‘biomass’, ‘solar energy’, and ‘wind power’
- ▶ Corpus linguistics analysis (WordSmith software)
- ▶ word frequencies, word clusters, collocations (key words)



- ▶ More people read local papers compared to the national press:
 - ▶ “There are 1200 regional and local newspapers and 1400 associated websites in the UK. The local press is the UK’s most popular print medium, read by 38 million people a week” (<http://www.newspapersoc.org.uk/>)
 - ▶ ca. 8m circulation of 10 national papers, 19m readers
 - ▶ ca. 20m readers of 14 Sunday papers ([National Readership Survey](#))

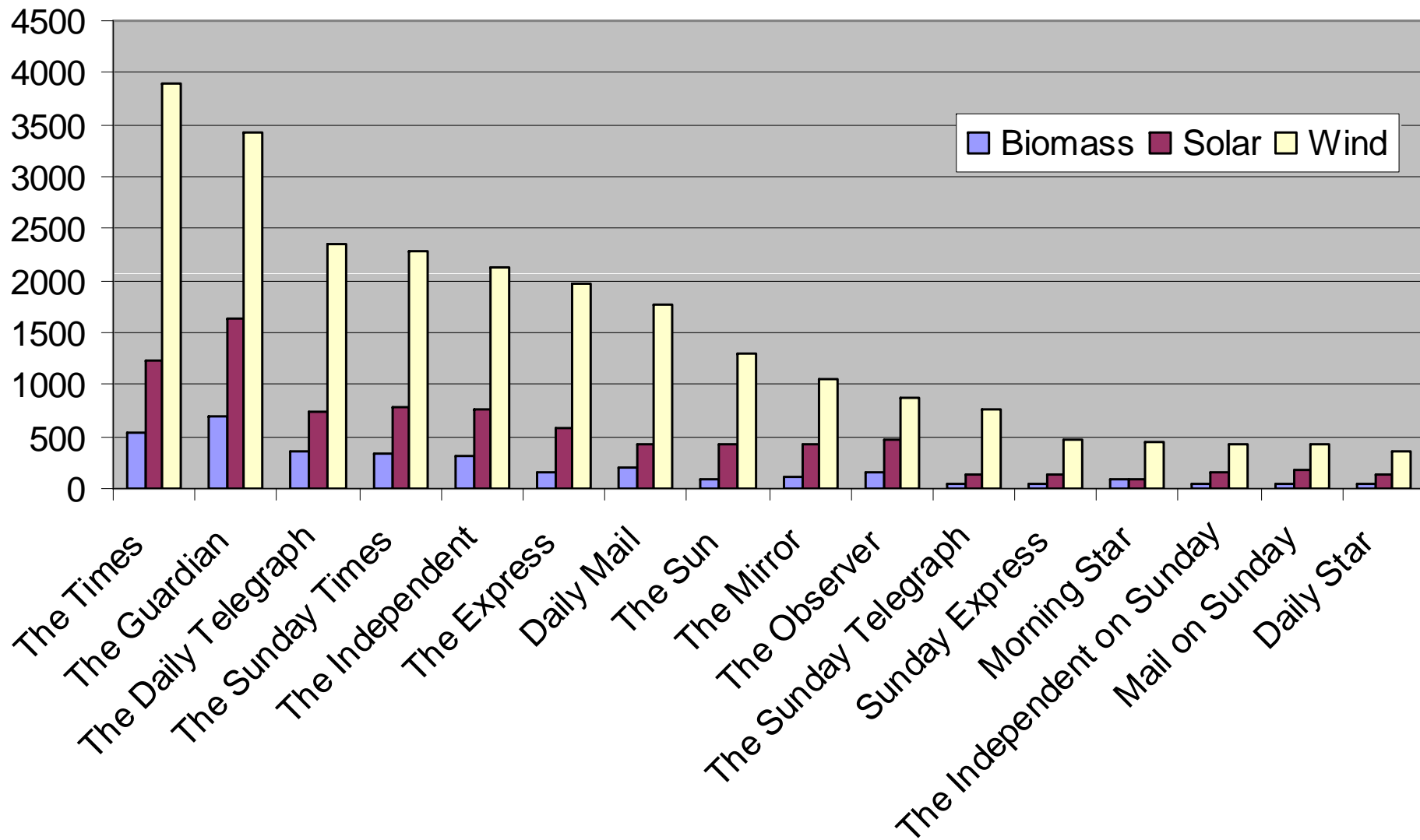
Climate Change in national and regional press



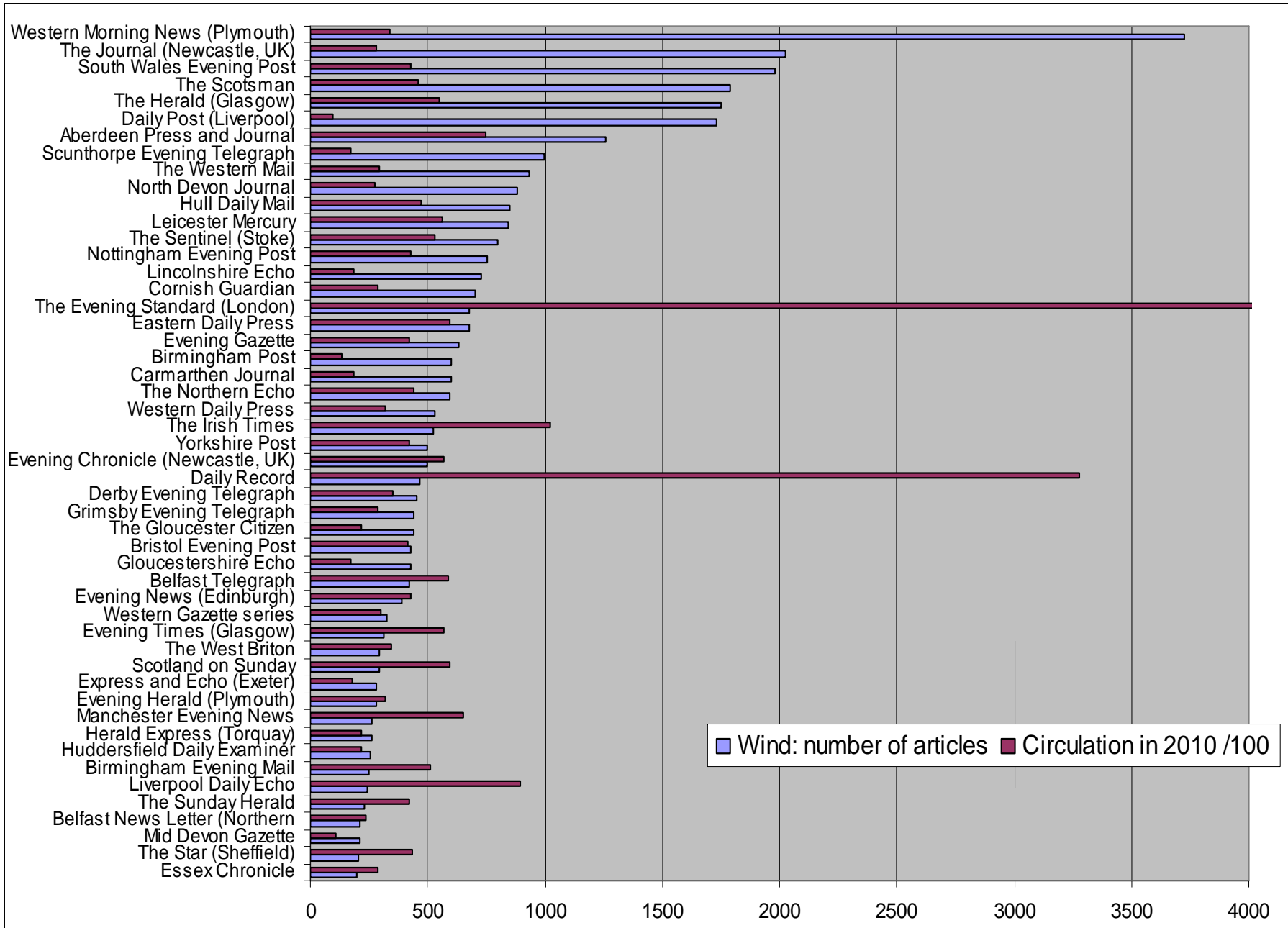
Articles on renewable energy

	National Press	Regional/ local press
Biomass	3,277	12,543
Solar	8,536	22,704
Wind	24,388	47,627

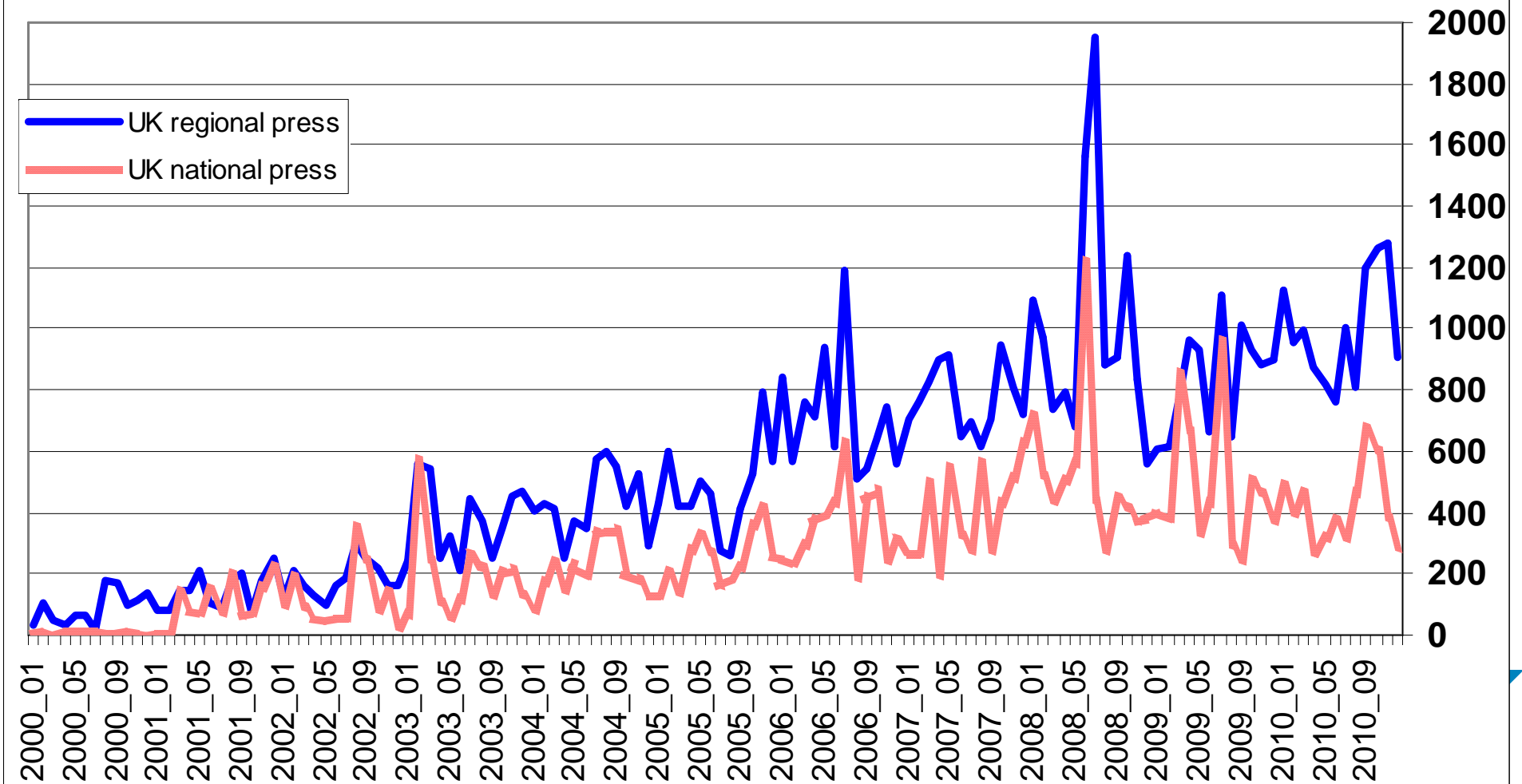
UK national newspapers, 2000-2010

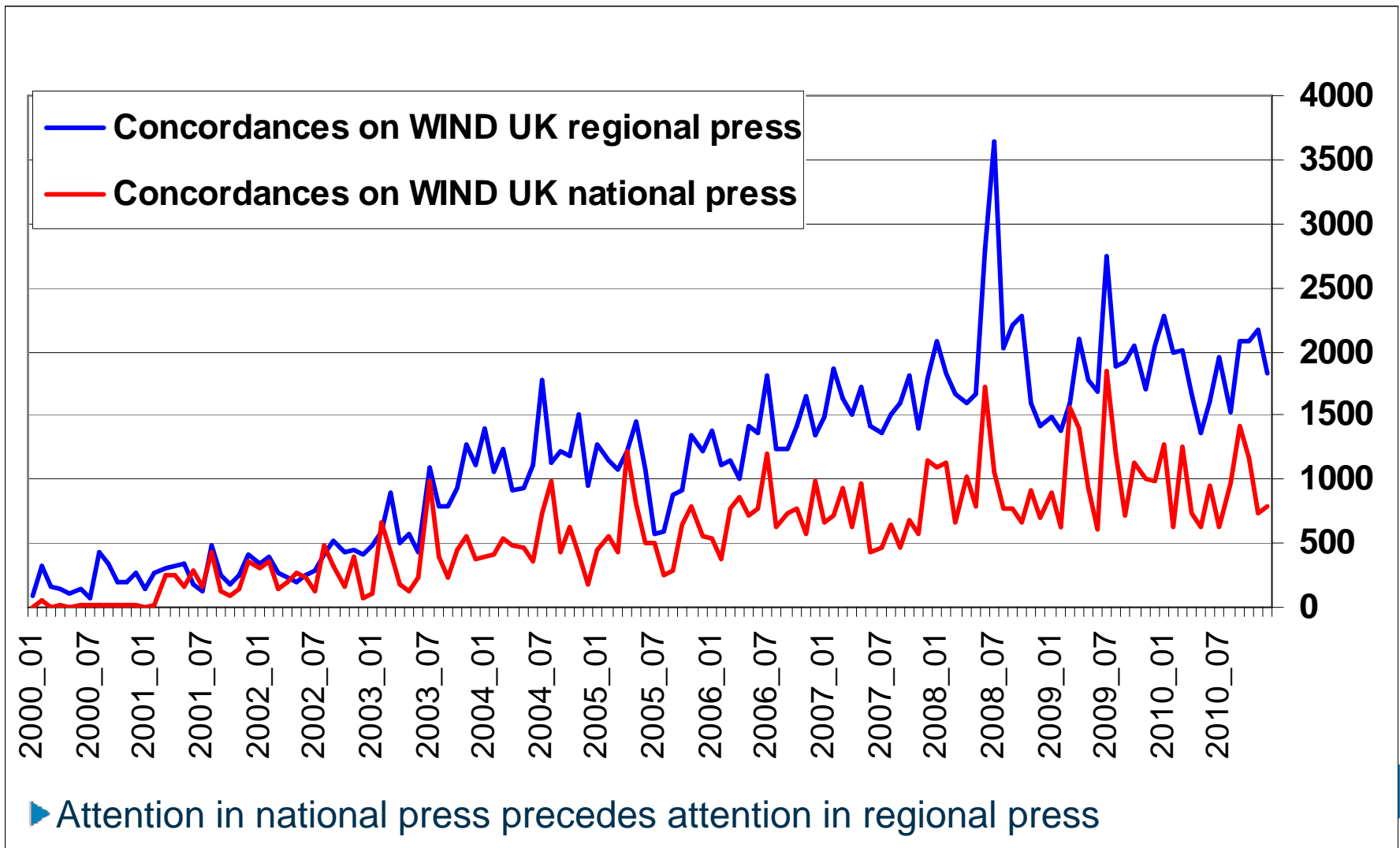


Regional press on wind energy, 2000-2010



UK press, Concordances on RENEWABLE





Word Clusters Climate Change



Climate change corpus

Top 20 clusters, UK national press

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON
THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARY
PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE IPCC
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE
FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL
THE UN'S INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL
UN'S INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON
THE SCIENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
ISSUES SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE

Top 20 clusters, UK regional press

THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE
THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE
OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE AND
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST
ISSUES SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE
AS A RESULT OF
GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARY
IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON
OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE



Renewable energy corpus

Top 20 clusters, national press

OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARY
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARY
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE
THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON
ED MILIBAND THE ENERGY
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE
MILIBAND THE ENERGY AND
MILIBAND THE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
ED MILIBAND THE ENERGY AND
DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY AND
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SAID

Top 20 clusters, regional press

OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE
THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE
TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE AND
ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARY
THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARY ED MILIBAND
DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY AND
DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE
THE BATTLE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE



Word frequencies, renewables

National		Regional	
energy	84 568	energy	143 725
wind	67 886	wind	133 600
power	63 972	power	86 135
electricity	32 039	turbines	67 216
green	26 569	People	53 891
solar	25 564	Renewable	50 058
nuclear	24 879	Electricity	45 089
Britain	24 737	Solar	42 002
Renewable	23 494	Green	39 632
Turbines	23 020	UK	38 550
UK	23 008	Local	37 141
Carbon	22 632	Farm	36 974
People	22 068	Planning	35 684
Government	18 817	Development	34 192
Change	18 387	Site	32 106
Emissions	17 957	Project	31 998
first	17 707	Turbine	31 851
oil	17 213	Plans	31 722

Collocations, 'renewable'

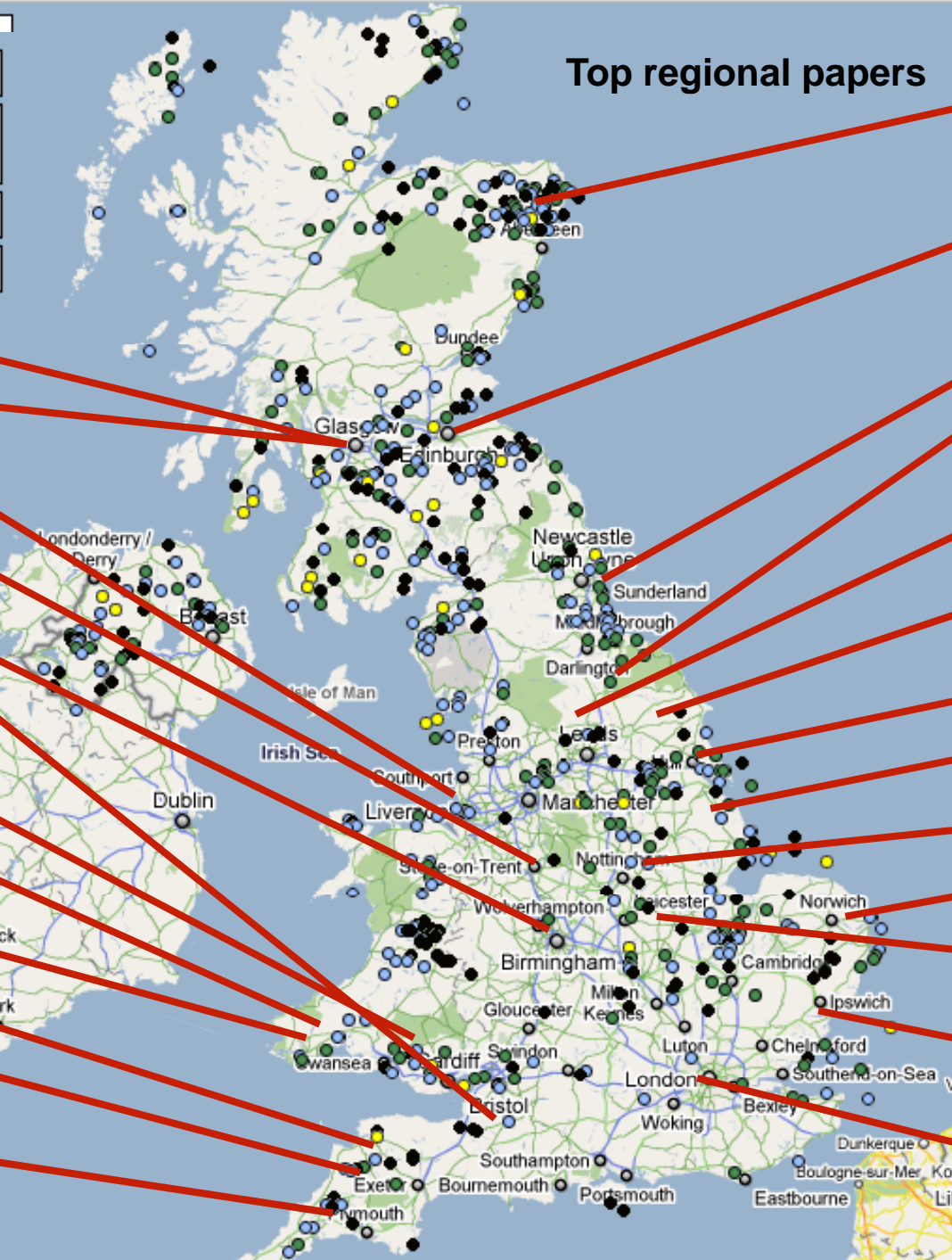
National			Regional	
ENERGY	18 024		ENERGY	44 370
RENEWABLES	10 102		RENEWABLES	15 325
SOURCES	5 180		SOURCES	7 795
FROM	4 281		FROM	6455
ELECTRICITY	2 002		ELECTRICITY	3 226
POWER	1 947		POWER	2 531
WIND	1 588		WIND	2393
PROJECTS	812		TECHNOLOGIES	2 052
TARGETS	759		TARGETS	1 816
GOVERNMENT	690		PROJECTS	1 650
OBLIGATION	679		SYSTEMS	1 417
TECHNOLOGIES	666		GENERATION	1 384
ELECTRICITY	628		TECHNOLOGY	1 364
GENERATION	621		MORE	1 279
2010	619		NPOWER	1 191

UK windfarms

- Operational
- Under construction
- Consented
- Submitted

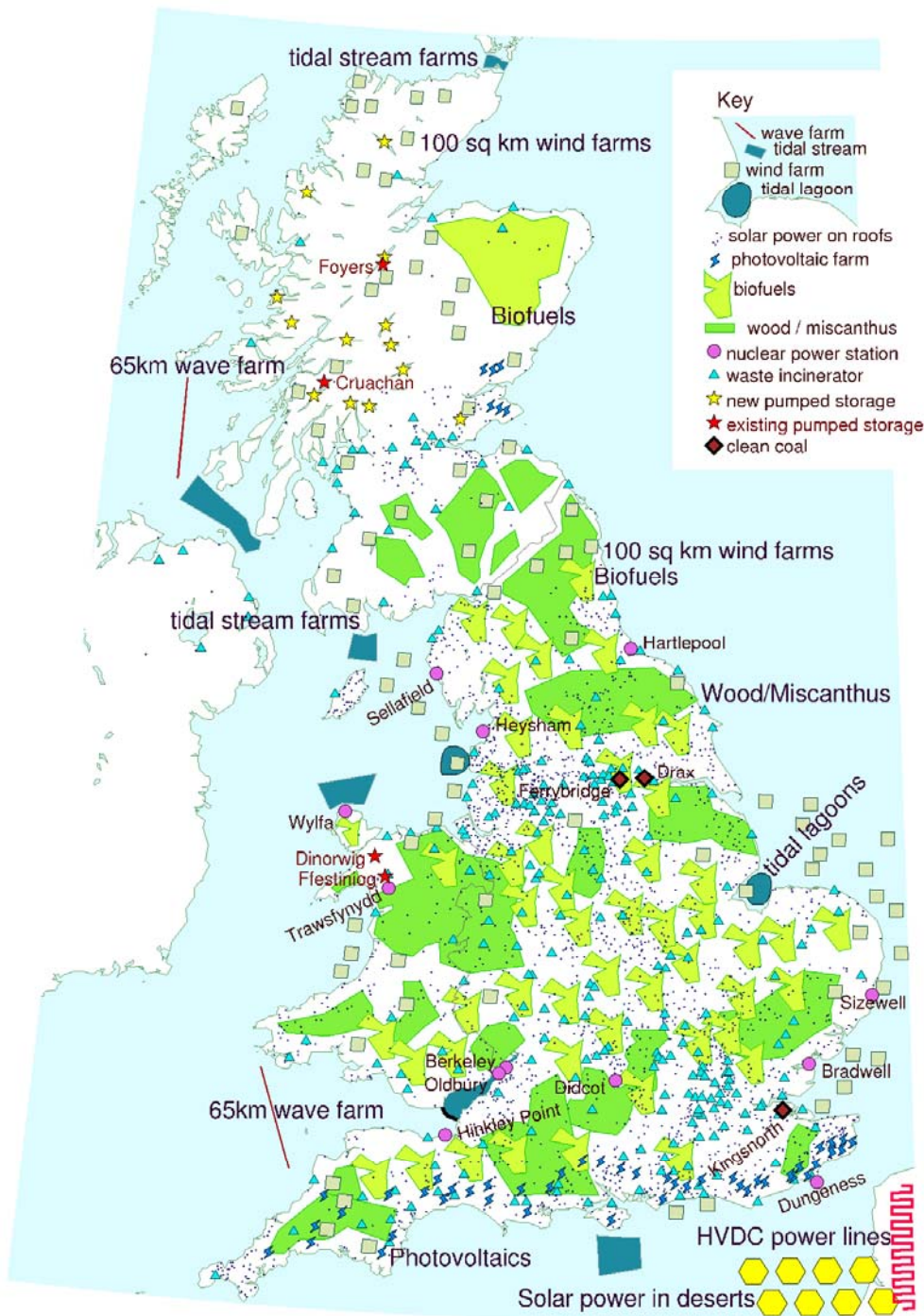
Top regional papers

The Daily Record
The Herald (Glasgow)
Daily Post (Liverpool)
The Sentinel (Stoke)
Birmingham Post
Western Daily Press
The Western Mail
Carmarthen Journal
South Wales Evening Post
North Devon Journal
Cornish Guardian
Western Morning News (Plymouth)



Aberdeen Press and Journal
The Scotsman
The Journal (Newcastle, UK)
The Northern Echo
Yorkshire Post
Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph
Hull Daily Mail
Lincolnshire Echo
Nottingham Evening Post
Eastern Daily Press
Leicester Mercury
Evening Gazette
The Evening Standard (London)

Word clusters
Renewable energy



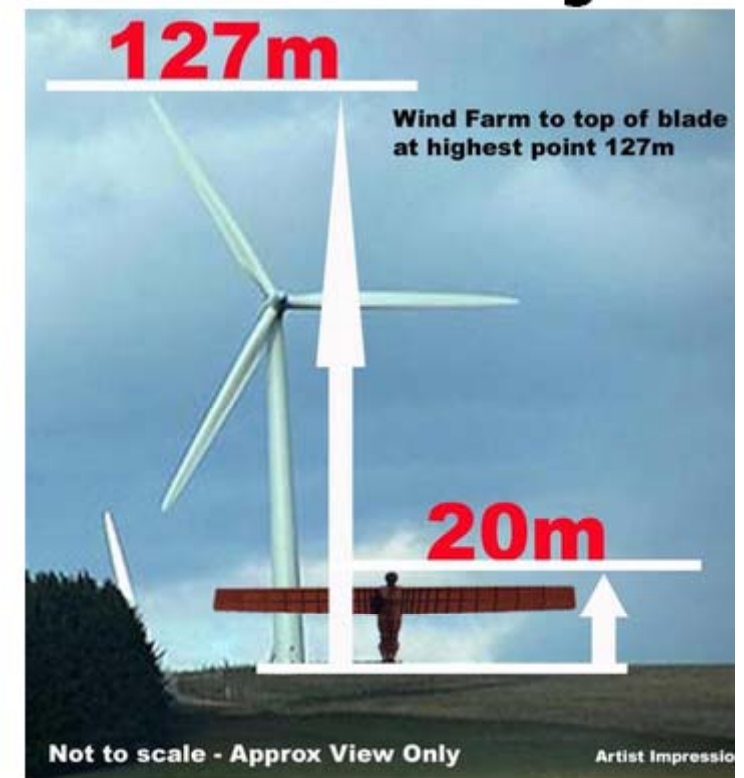
- ▶ David J.C. MacKay, *Sustainable Energy - without the hot air* (2008)
- ▶ 'Plan M'



Word clusters and salient words in renewable corpus

- ▶ National press:
 - ▶ *British Gas and Npower*
 - ▶ *Chief Executive of RWE Npower*
 - ▶ *Backing from the Government*
 - ▶ *Npower £2.2 billion Gwynt y Mor*
 - ▶ *Financial backing from the Government*
 - ▶ Salient words:
 - ▶ *Brown, strategy, renewable targets, EU*
- ▶ Regional press:
 - ▶ *RWE Npower renewables said*
 - ▶ *Npower renewables wants to build*
 - ▶ *Development manager said*
 - ▶ Salient words:
 - ▶ *planning, permission, submitted, development, erect, scheme.*

The Scale of things



Should this be near a National Park?

This artist's impression gives you a rough idea of the pure size the proposed wind turbines in this area. The Angel of the North 20m tall from base with a wing span of 54m. The proposed turbines are approx 127m to the highest tip of the blade.

'Windfarm' in national and regional press



- ▶ 650 concordances of 'windfarm' in national press
- ▶ Top clusters:
 - ▶ *opposition to wind farms, growing opposition to onshore windfarms, but also opposition to nuclear power.*
- ▶ 1685 concordances in regional press
- ▶ Top clusters:
 - ▶ *opposition to, District Opposition To Onshore Turbines; referring to Elsham District Opposition to Onshore Turbines (EDOOT).*
 - ▶ EDOOT does not get a single mention in the national press.



Issues raised by readers of regional papers

- ▶ Unique beauty of the scenery
- ▶ Economic significance of the tourist industry
- ▶ Costs -- Rebuke of economic arguments made by the Wind Energy Association
- ▶ Technical issues about the complexity of the national grid and its load management
- ▶ Noise
- ▶ Birds and wildlife
- ▶ Safety (flight paths and ice shedding)



Summary



- ▶ Local and Regional press plays an important role
- ▶ Differences in timing and emphasis
 - ▶ national papers usually lead and report on government
 - ▶ regional papers show higher levels of reporting, but on facts ‘on the ground’
- ▶ Disconnect
- ▶ Ed Miliband, former Energy Secretary described opposition to wind farms as “socially unacceptable ... like not wearing your seatbelt or driving past a zebra crossing”
- ▶ Public resistance has many sources
 - ▶ economic
 - ▶ environmentalist
 - ▶ aesthetic
 - ▶ safety
 - ▶ noise



Lessons

- ▶ Specific characteristics of UK discourse
- ▶ Embedded in political culture
 - ▶ centralized, hierarchical political system
 - ▶ top down policy implementation
 - ▶ Examples:
 - ▶ climate services
 - ▶ renewable energy projects



" What did you take away from the meeting ? "



Thank you

- ▶ r.grundmann@aston.ac.uk
- ▶ <http://aston.academia.edu/ReinerGrundmann/Papers>

