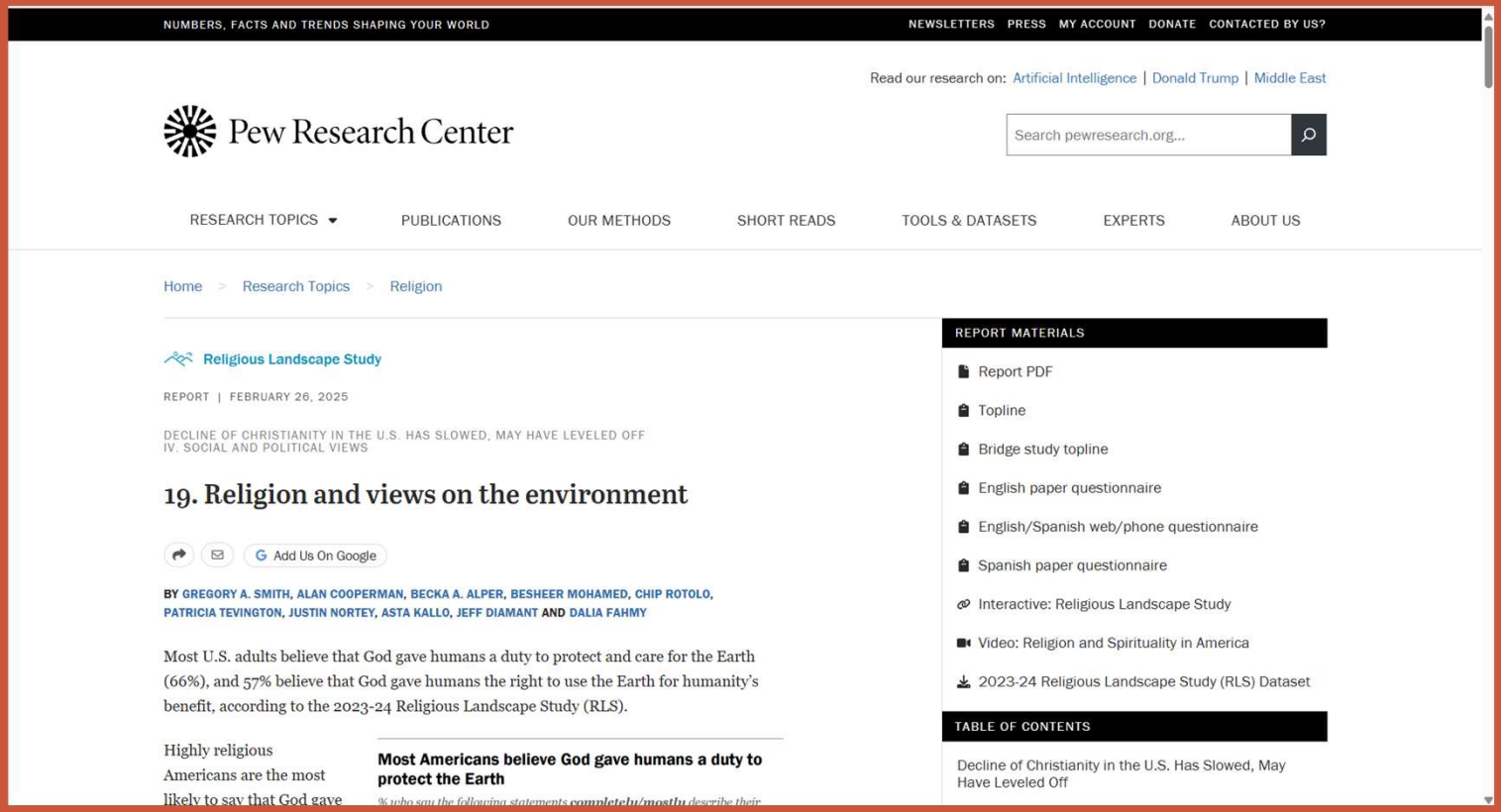
HOW RELIGION IMPACTS CLIMATE VIEWS

Statswarriors: James Kelly, Cal Feinberg, Athmika Krishnan, Julia Sanders

OUR DATASET


NUMBERS, FACTS AND TRENDS SHAPING YOUR WORLD
NEWSLETTERS PRESS MY ACCOUNT DONATE CONTACTED BY US?
Read our research on: Artificial Intelligence | Donald Trump | Middle East
Pew Research Center
Search pewresearch.org...
RESEARCH TOPICS PUBLICATIONS OUR METHODS SHORT READS TOOLS & DATASETS EXPERTS ABOUT US
Home > Research Topics > Religion
Religious Landscape Study
REPORT | FEBRUARY 26, 2025
DECLINE OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE U.S. HAS SLOWED, MAY HAVE LEVELED OFF
IV. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VIEWS
19. Religion and views on the environment
Add Us On Google
BY GREGORY A. SMITH, ALAN COOPERMAN, BECKA A. ALPER, BESHEER MOHAMED, CHIP ROTOLO, PATRICIA TEVINGTON, JUSTIN NORTEY, ASTA KALLO, JEFF DIAMANT AND DALIA FAHMY
Most U.S. adults believe that God gave humans a duty to protect and care for the Earth (66%), and 57% believe that God gave humans the right to use the Earth for humanity's benefit, according to the 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study (RLS).
Highly religious Americans are the most likely to say that God gave
Most Americans believe God gave humans a duty to protect the Earth
REPORT MATERIALS
Report PDF
Topline
Bridge study topline
English paper questionnaire
English/Spanish web/phone questionnaire
Spanish paper questionnaire
Interactive: Religious Landscape Study
Video: Religion and Spirituality in America
2023-24 Religious Landscape Study (RLS) Dataset
TABLE OF CONTENTS
Decline of Christianity in the U.S. Has Slowed, May Have Leveled Off

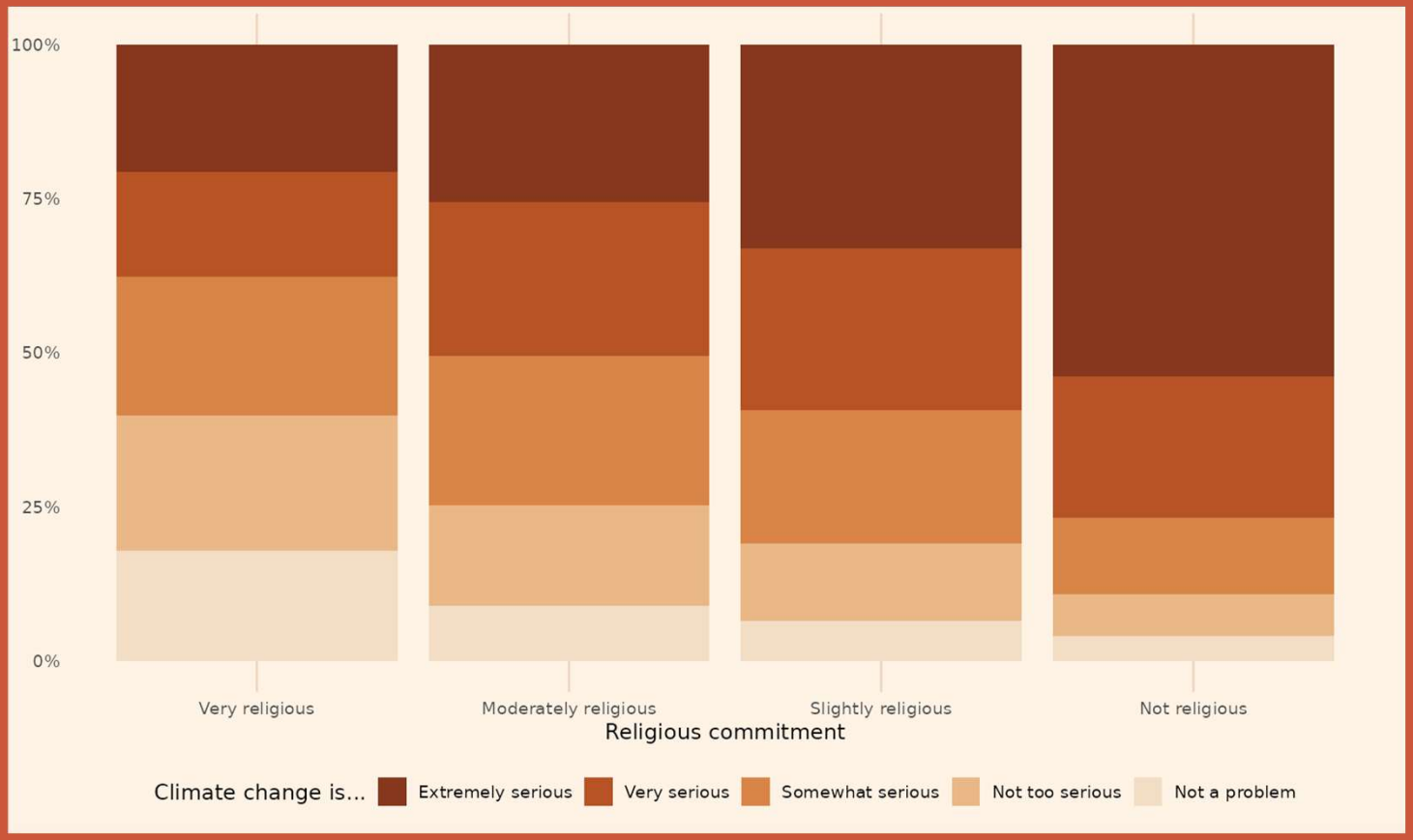
GUIDING QUESTION:
HOW DOES RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT CORRELATE TO VIEWS ON CLIMATE CHANGE?

HYPOTHESIS:
PEOPLE WHO ARE MORE RELIGIOUS WILL CARE MORE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT

HOW SEVERE IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

- How does belief in God and religious commitment affect individual's belief in the severity of climate change?
- Variables studied:
  - religiosity = "To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person?" (1 Very religious - 4 Not at all religious)
  - clim_view = “In your view, climate change is a very serious issue…” (1 extremely serious – 5 not a problem)

BELIEF IN THE SEVERITY OF CLIMATE CHANGE BY RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT ✳

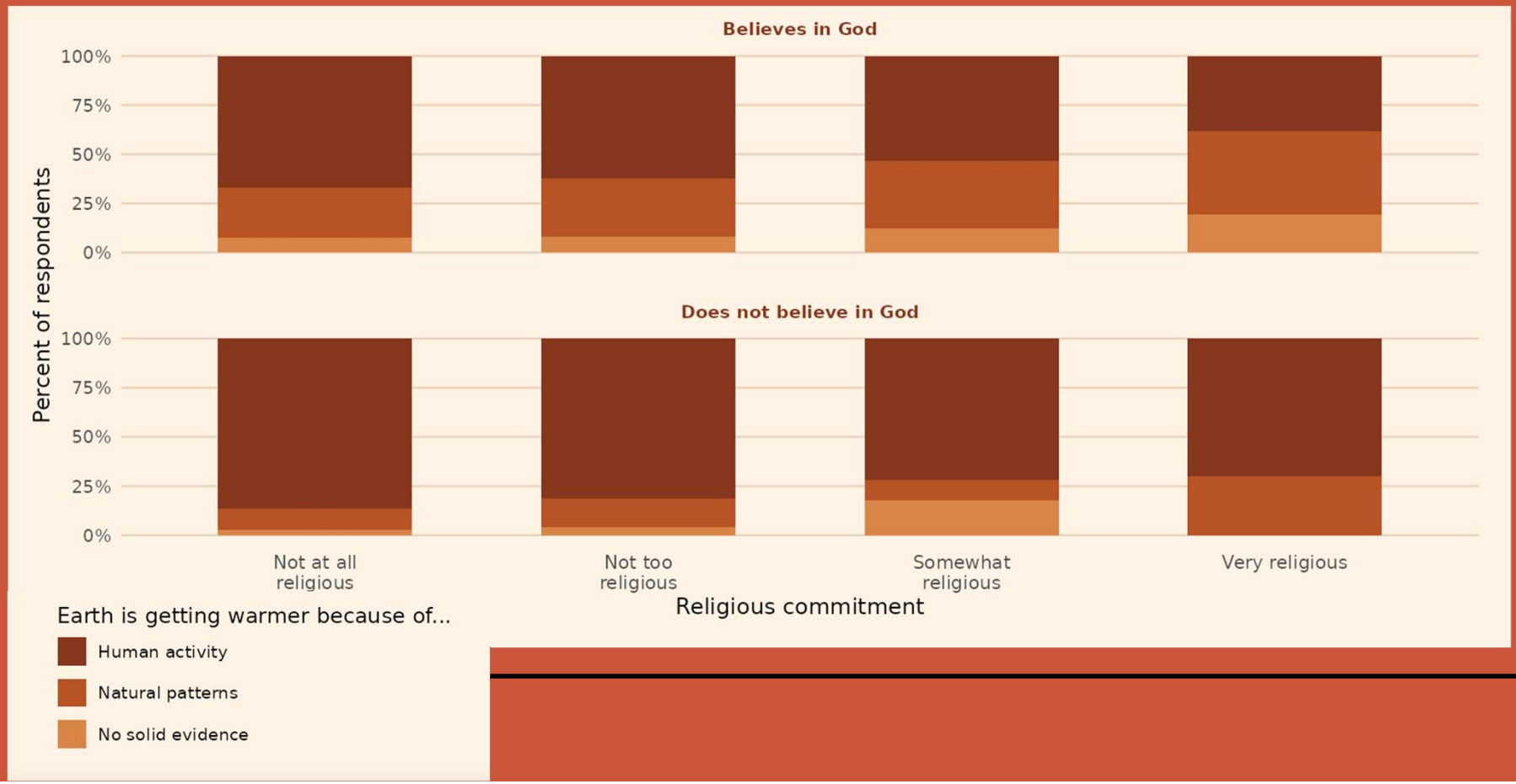


- Very religious: lower percentage of individuals who believe that climate change is extremely serious
- Not religious: higher percentage of individuals who believe that climate change is extremely serious

WHAT CAUSES CLIMATE CHANGE?

- How does belief in God and religious commitment affect individual's belief in the severity of climate change?
- Variables studied:
  - god_y_n – Do you believe in God?
  - Religiousity – To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person? (1 very religious – 4 not at all religious)
  - clim_view – In your view, is climate change a very severe issue? (1 - 4)

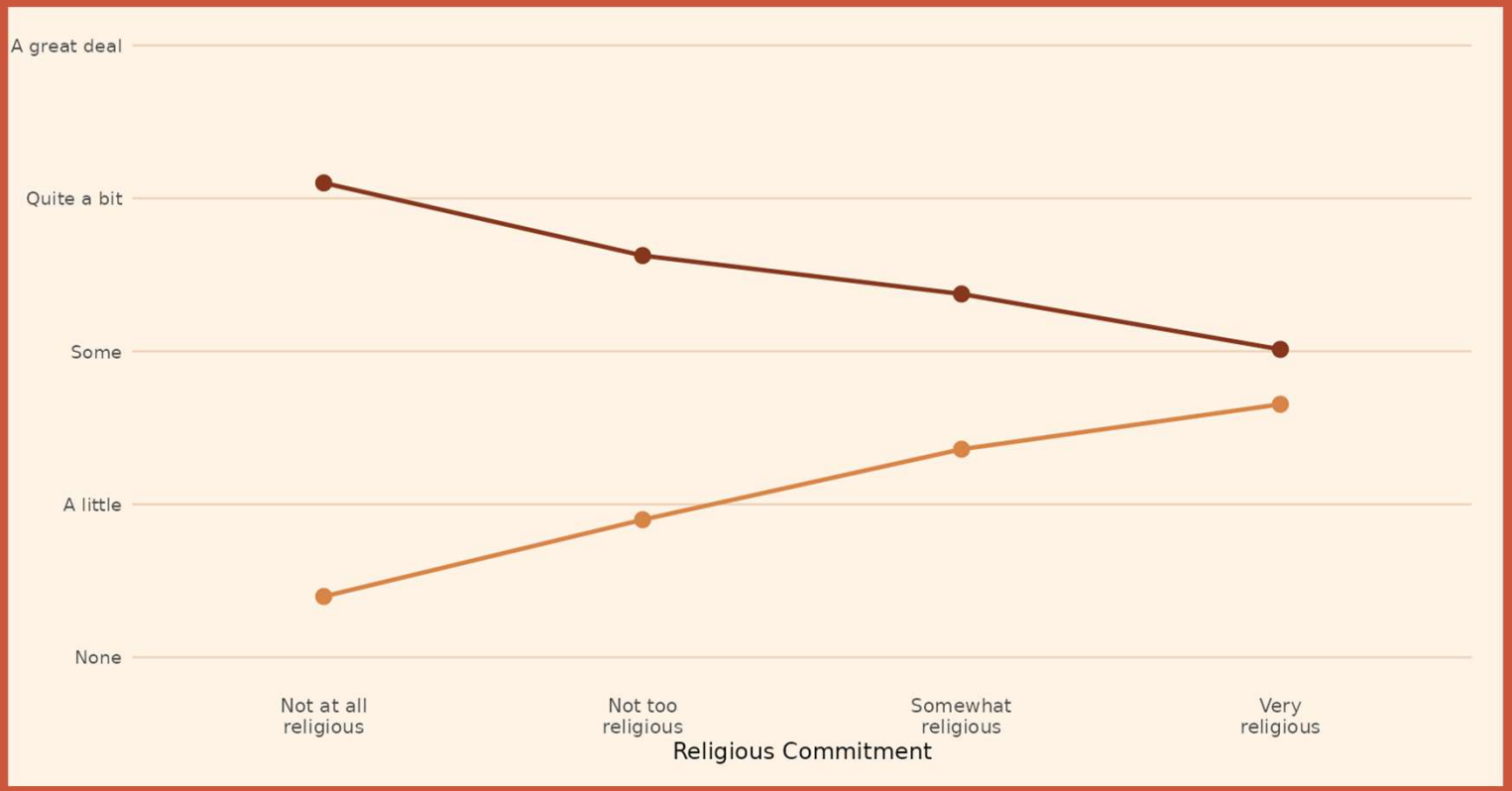
IMPACT OF BELIEF IN GOD & RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT ON BELIEF IN CAUSES OF CLIMATE CHANGE



WHO DO PEOPLE TRUST ON CLIMATE?

- How does religious commitment affect individual's trust in scientists vs religious leaders on the topic of climate change?
- Variables studied:
  - science_trust_info – How much do you trust a climate scientist to give full and accurate information
  - religious_trust_info – How much do you trust a climate scientist to give full and accurate information
  - religiosity = "To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person?" (1 Very religious - 4 Not at all religious)

IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT ON TRUST IN INFORMATION SOURCES ON CLIMATE CHANGE

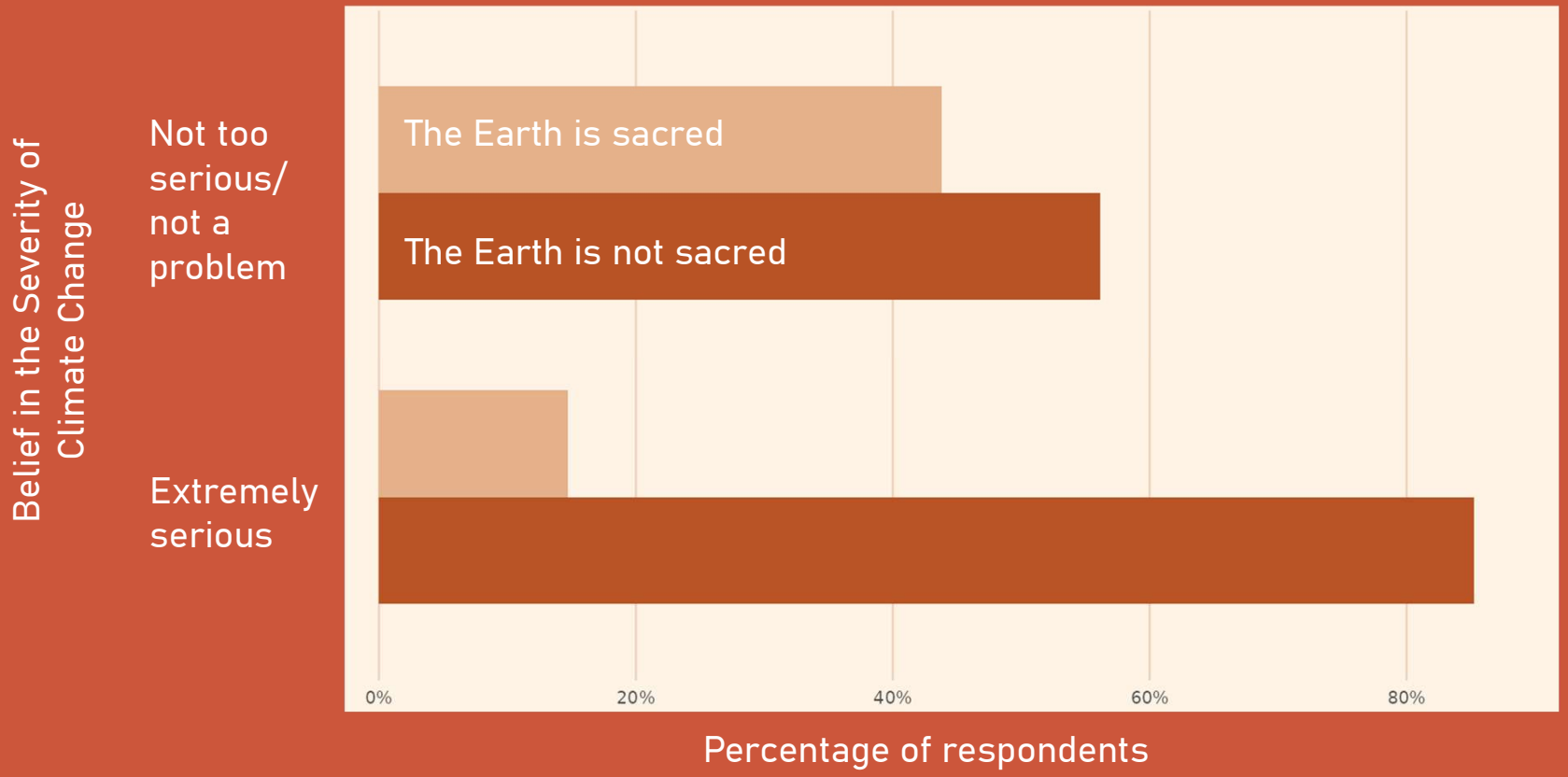


IS THE EARTH SACRED?

- How does belief on climate change impact opinion on the sacredness of the Earth?
- Variables studied:
  - clim_view = “In your view, climate change is a very serious issue…” (1 Extremely Serious – 5 Not a problem)
  - onlyhome_sacredearth – “Do you believe the Earth is sacred because it is our only home?”
  - god_sacredearth – “Do you believe the Earth is sacred because it was created by God?”



IMPACT OF BELIEF IN THE SACREDNESS OF EARTH ON CLIMATE CHANGE PERSPECTIVES



REFLECTION: OUR HYPOTHESIS ✳ WAS NOT SUPPORTED BY THE DATA

An individual's expression of greater religious commitment was correlated with:

- Greater belief in God
- Decreased belief in the severity of climate change
- Decreased trust in climate scientists and increased trust in religious officials on the subject of climate change
- Decreased belief in human-causation of climate change

THANK YOU