

Journalists and Lobbyists

A too cosy symbiosis?



NEW ZEALAND
FOOD & GROCERY COUNCIL





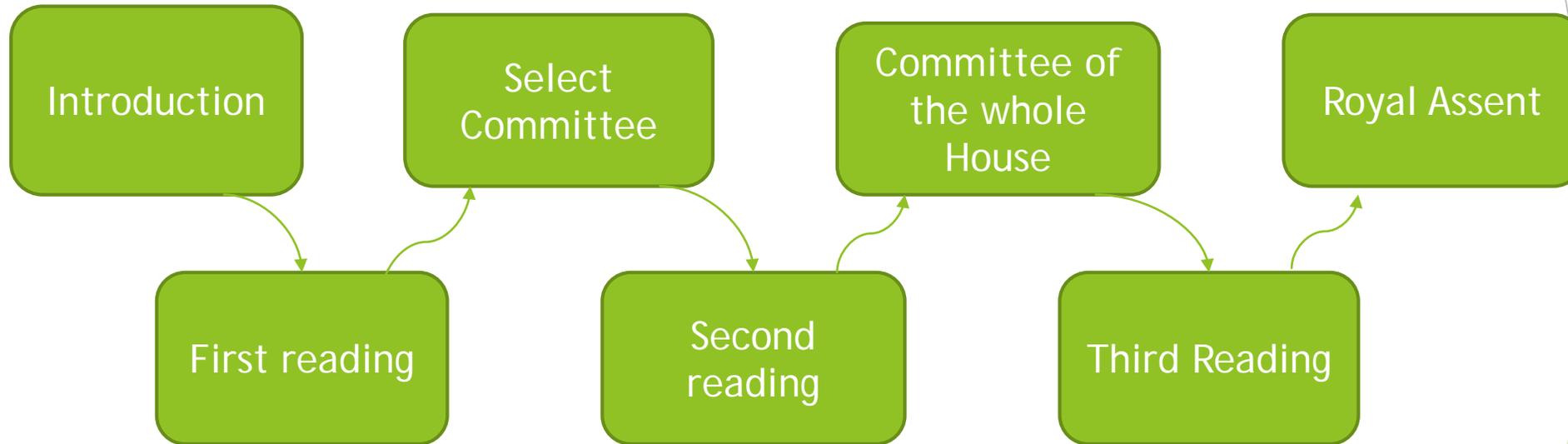
Grey Power



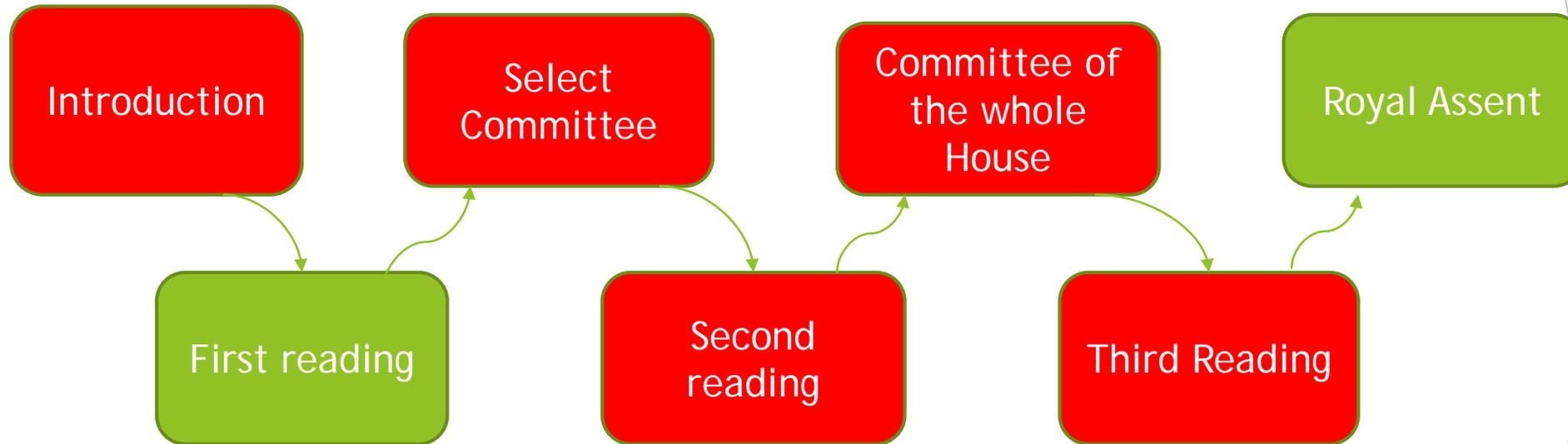
CHILD
POVERTY
ACTION
GROUP



Why should we care about lobbyists?



Why should we care about lobbyists?



Lobbying was once an activity based around gaining access to decision-makers, but it has evolved into an industry utilising: pressure and interest groups; policy advice; social responsibility programmes; stakeholder analysis; public affairs and lobbying work; to achieve a strategic outcome

(Harris, 2002)

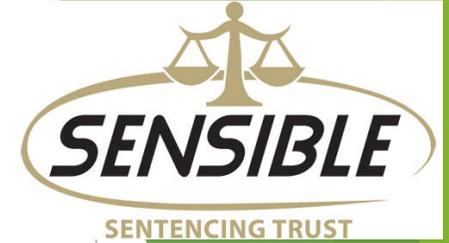


The New Zealand Herald
nzherald.co.nz

- ▶ Lobby group or lobbyist
- ▶ Advocacy group,
- ▶ Rights group,
- ▶ Interest group
- ▶ Pressure group
- ▶ Single-interest group
- ▶ Front group

Of the thousands of articles ...

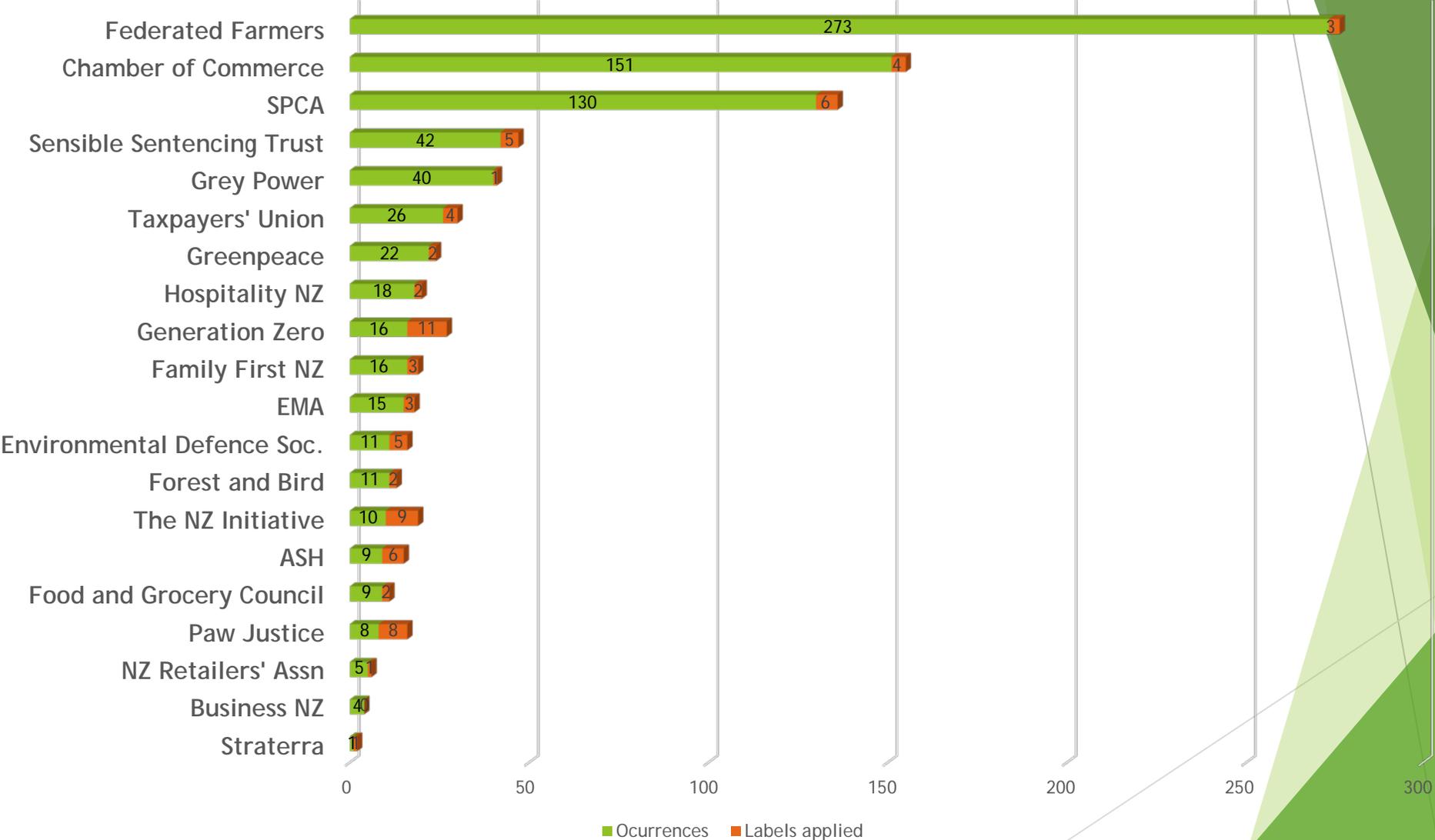
Label	No. of times used
Lobby group/ lobbyist	68
Advocacy group	16
Rights group	2
Interest group	2
Pressure group	1
Single-interest group	0
Front group	0
Total	89



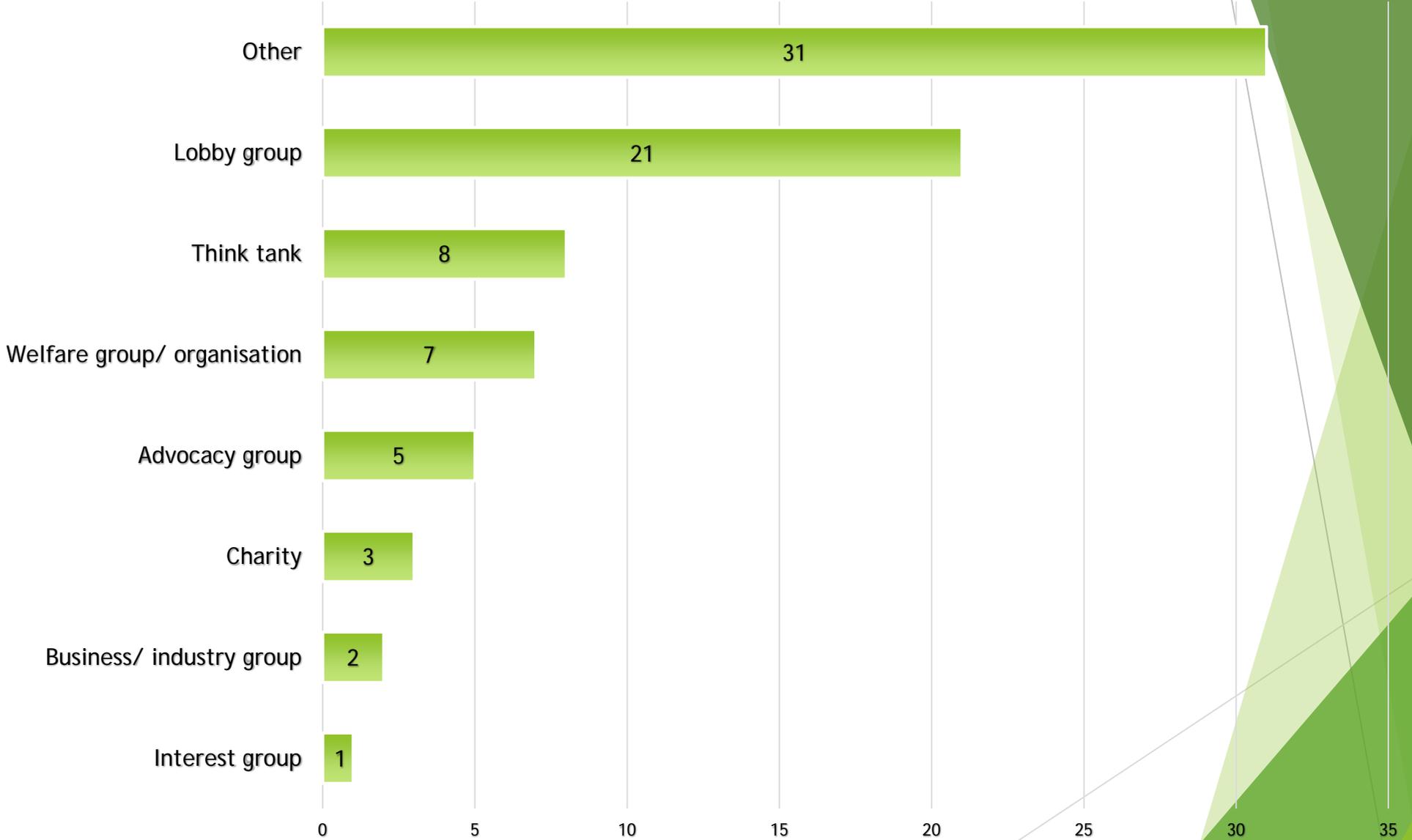
817 stories



817 stories included one of these groups
Only 78 labels were applied to groups (9%)



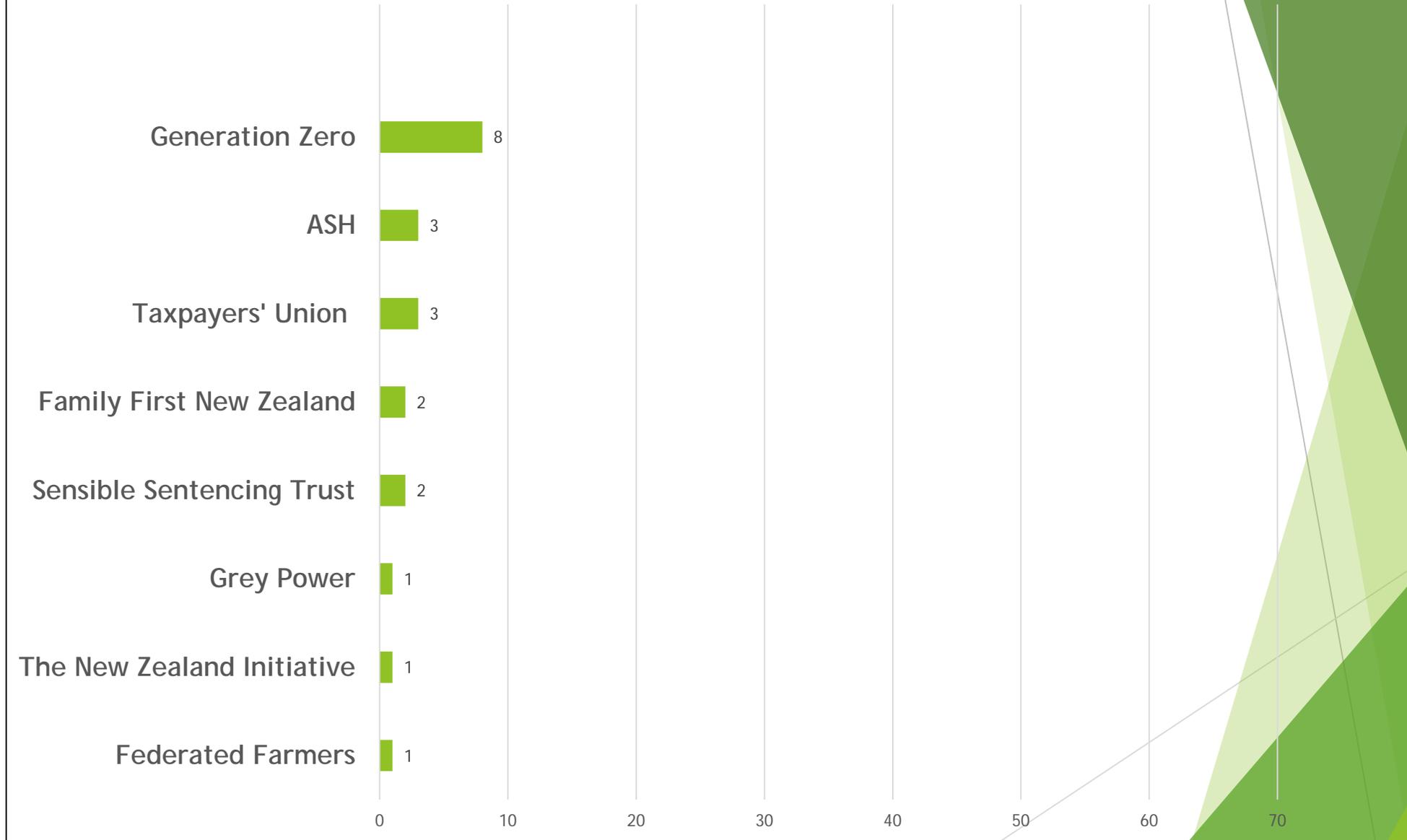
Labels used in the 78 stories



Examples

- ▶ Hospitality New Zealand - *part of the alcohol industry*
- ▶ Chamber of Commerce - *voice of business*
- ▶ Taxpayers' Union - *watchdog group*
- ▶ Forest and Bird - *conservationists*
- ▶ Sensible Sentencing Trust - *child exploitation and sexual abuse advocates*
- ▶ ASH - *anti-smoking purists*
- ▶ Greenpeace - *not eco terrorists*
- ▶ Family First New Zealand - *kill joys*

Who was called a *lobby group*?



Comparing the news organisations





Conclusion

- ▶ The media are inconsistent in whether or not they label lobbying organisations in news stories.
- ▶ 90 percent had no label.
- ▶ Lobby groups are left to operate under the radar.
- ▶ The public is being left in the dark about why groups may be taking a stance on an issue.