

*Climate Outreach is Europe's leading climate communication expert*

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The question of how the IPCC can more effectively communicate its work is central to the challenge of catalysing public engagement with climate change. The problems and issues that the IPCC grapples with on communication are (to a large extent) the same barriers that stand in the way of more effective public engagement in general.

Whether led by governments, science-communicators, or NGOs, very few campaigns or initiatives have been able to communicate about climate change in a way that effectively speaks to a broad range of public values: for most people, climate change is a scientific but not yet a social reality. Most people have not yet heard a story about climate change that sounds like it was written 'for them'.

At [Climate Outreach](#), we specialise in widening and deepening public engagement with climate change. We work with partners from across Europe (and across the political spectrum), to bridge the gap between climate communication research on one hand, and the needs of practitioners on the other.

A consistent and recurring challenge is how to bring together the diverse range of expertise required to develop effective public engagement initiatives. Climate scientists, university communications staff, media experts, social scientists, visual designers, campaigners, storytellers, community leaders and artists all have a role to play. But bringing these perspectives and partners together requires a **strategic and coordinated approach**.

Working together, we can:

- Understand the values and perspectives of different public audiences

- Synthesise and translate the growing body of academic research on communicating climate change
- Apply this knowledge in a systematic and strategic way to key events and interventions in the public discourse on climate change (an IPCC Report is a very good example of this!)
- Design, trial, and evaluate communications materials and opportunities for participatory public engagement across different regions of the world
- Catalyse a level of engagement with climate change - causes, consequences and societal responses - that does justice to the phenomenal level work that comprises the IPCC process

In 2014, we published a report titled [‘Science & Stories: Bringing the IPCC to life’](#). Based on a series of 16 interviews with leading figures from the UK media and civil society – experts on translating the science of the IPCC for their audiences – we argued that catalysing a proportionate political and public response to climate change means rethinking how climate change is communicated: from science to human stories.

Our report argued for IPCC outputs to be coupled with human stories and powerful narratives which can show the human face of the IPCC, and bring the science to life. By providing science ‘on demand’, tailored to the needs of different audiences and stakeholders – its relevance and influence could drastically increase.

These are not challenges that the IPCC can meet on its own - and they are challenges shared by the wider climate communication community. But by working with a range of partners who can lend cultural credibility to the scientific consensus they convey – voices and groups from across the social and political spectrum – the findings of the IPCC can be brought to life.