

Communications as a science

16 – 20 November 2020

Asia regional workshop on Zoom



Learning objectives

- Understand the importance of communications
- Understand the evidence and core principles of communications
- Understand the research methodology for developing communications

Content

- 1 Why is it important to communicate carbon pricing?
- 2 The scientific basis of climate communications.
- 3 Guiding principles for communicating carbon pricing
- 4 Developing a research program

Why is it important to communicate carbon pricing?

Improve policy design

- Valuable feedback through interactions between policymakers and stakeholders

Help generate sustainable support

- Explaining reasons for carbon pricing, how it works and why it is desirable
- Make key stakeholders supportive advocates

Anticipate opposition

- Testing messages with different audiences

To ensure that a policy will be supported by the public and sustained across governments

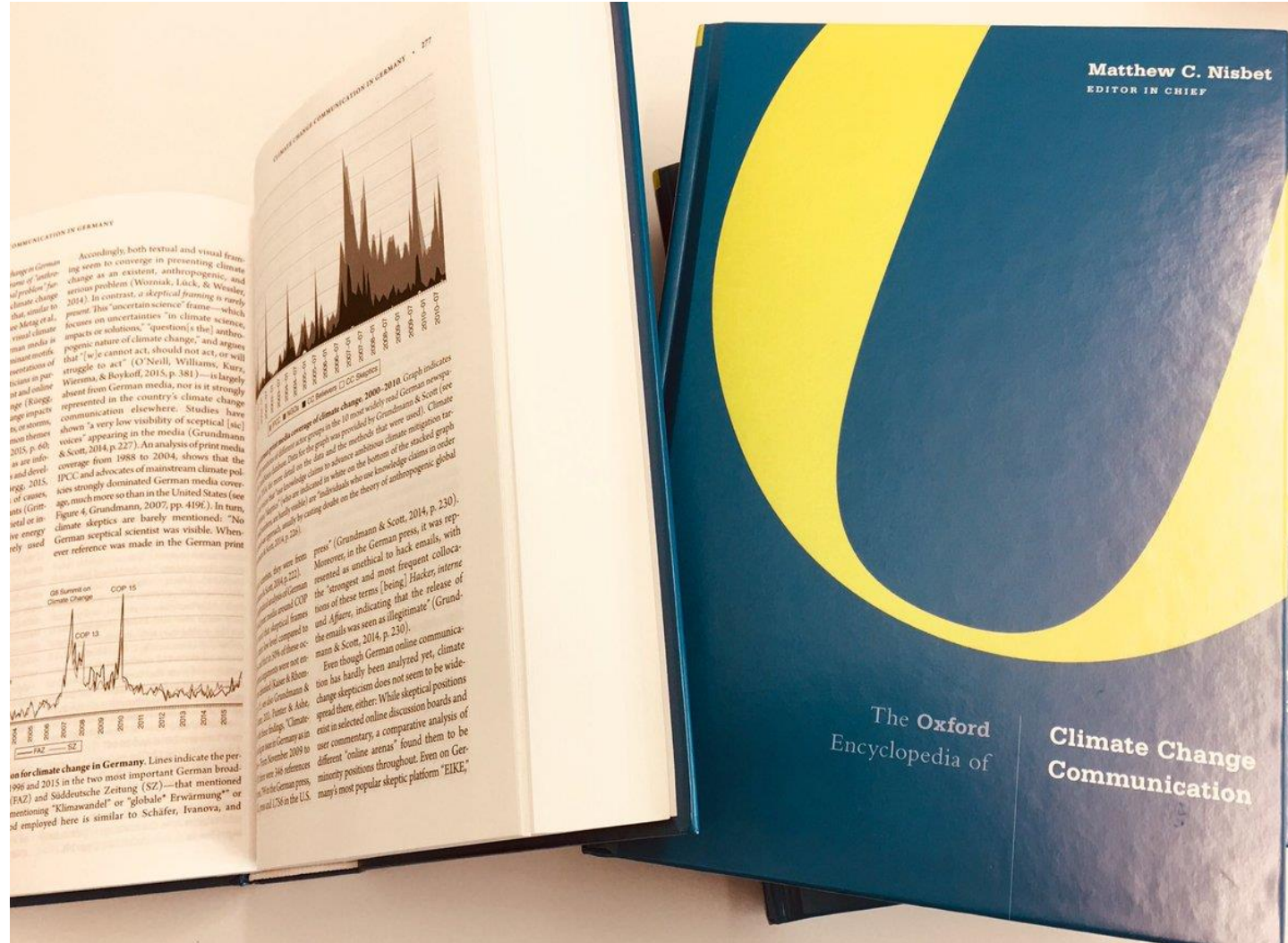


Climate Change communications is a science

- Based on research evidence
- Analysis by university academics
- Published in peer-reviewed journals
- International debate and challenge
- Multi-disciplined- psychology, social research, statistics
- Tested across multiple media

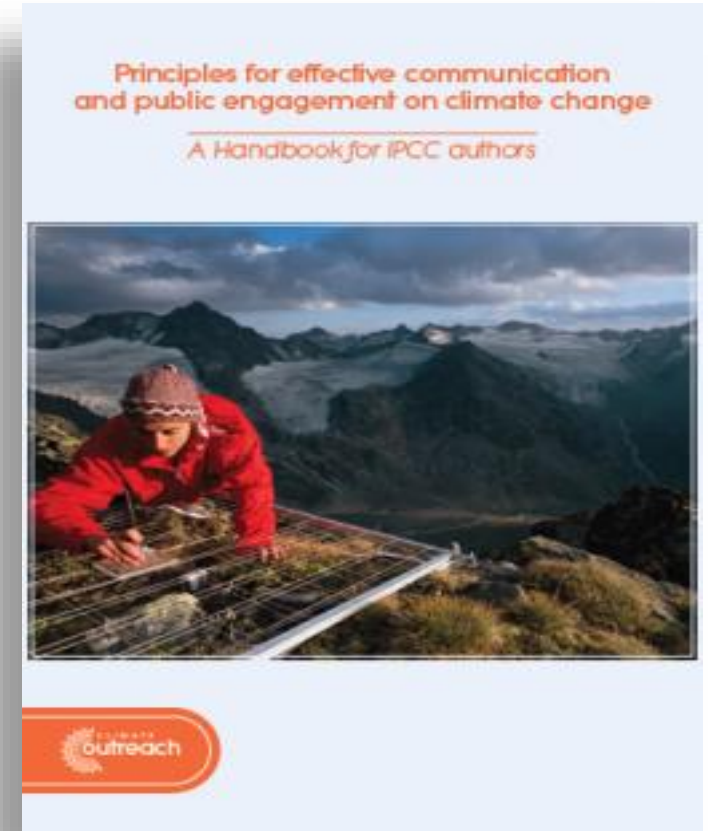
Oxford Encyclopaedia of Climate Change Communications

3 Volumes
115 chapters
200 contributors
2424 pages
\$500



Advice to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Climate change is *understood* and *believed* as a socially constructed **narrative** conveyed by **trusted communicators** that reflects their **identity** and validates their **values**.



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What is the difference between communications and propaganda?

Communications	Propaganda
<i>Communicare-</i> to share	<i>Propagare – to spread</i>
Informing	Persuading
Two-way process	One-way
Open to feedback	Feedback not allowed

Evidence-based principles for carbon pricing communications

Values-driven	Broad-based
Early and sustained	Trusted
Seen to work	Tested
Consistent	Two-way
Simple	No magic words

Communications should start in the early stages of policy design

The concerns of citizens and stakeholders should inform the design of the policy **from the very beginning**.

The choice of policy, especially between carbon tax and ETS should be informed by citizen and stakeholder attitudes.

The name of the policy may be very important and should be chosen carefully.

**Integrating
communications with
policy**

Research



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Research

Quantitative research

- Surveys
- Polls



Qualitative research

- Interviews
- Focus groups

Research: best practice

Survey: identify attitudes and the key target audiences.



Focus groups: recruit from the identified target audiences, explore their attitudes and responses, and test alternative forms of communications.



Survey: test messages derived from the focus groups.

Research: audience segmentation



Find out how attitudes are distributed across the population



Identify distinct audiences holding similar positions

The four segments

Base

Supportive of carbon pricing and action on climate change

Opponents

Rejecting carbon pricing and climate action

Swing

Moderate but weak support but open to change

Disengaged

Not expressing interest or opinions on the topics.

Research: commissioning research

- Marketing agency
- University social research unit
- Internal government or departmental research unit
- External experts and consultants
- Leveraging/desk review or existing academic research

Research: questions to ask

1. General attitudes

Public attitudes on climate change

Attitudes to related issues (such as air pollution)

Attitudes towards the government

Levels of trust – and who they trust

Research: questions to ask

2. Specific carbon pricing questions

Do people understand how a carbon price works?

What are their responses to the proposed policy?

How might it best be named?

What are the responses to different test narratives?

What are the responses to different uses of the revenues?



Case Study: Colombia

Colombia: Research 2019-2020

- Two focus groups (representative sample)
- National survey (door-to-door, 15 mins, 1,200 people)
- 25 interviews across government
- 5 days desk research

Cost:	Focus groups	\$1,750 each
	Survey	\$12,000

Colombia: findings

Audiences: Environmental concern highest with 18-24 year olds. Lower support for ETS with older conservatives. Greatest differences are regional not demographic.

Concerns: air pollution, employment, agriculture, climate change, distrustful of government.

Identity: Nature, Environment, entrepreneurial, hardworking, not frightened of change, wanting to contribute to global issues

Proud of forests, nature, agriculture, food



Colombia: outputs

Advice for policy formation and revenue use

A name and brand for the policy

Core and sub narratives for different audiences

Training for government communicators

Brochure

Standard presentations

Social media postings

2 videos

2 podcasts



Research: a low-cost approach

Structured
interviews

Double-up on
other
research

Draw on
existing
networks

Incorporate
into
stakeholder
engagement

Questions?

