Preparing for communications design

Carbon Pricing Communications Training

Session 2
Learning objectives

• Understand the importance of preparing for the design of a communications strategy
• Understand strategic decisions in structuring a communications strategy
Content

1 Introduction
2 Identifying national circumstances
3 Defining communication objectives
4 Communication policy objectives prioritization
Introduction

Good carbon pricing communications begin early, in parallel with policy development.

- National circumstances
- Objectives of the communications strategy
## Identifying national circumstances

The national context impacts communications decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly-polarized environemnt</th>
<th>Country dependent on domestic fossil fuels</th>
<th>Moderate concern on climate change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language and messages</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Language that speaks across political boundaries</td>
<td>• Language that respects role of fossil fuels</td>
<td>• Choose main message, e.g. climate change or air quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Language that warns of vulnerability from overdependence</td>
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<td>Audiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Open audiences are key</td>
<td>• Audience directly affected by carbon price (e.g. those working in the energy industry) is important</td>
<td>• Identify primary concerns for different audiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrating communications and policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ensure carbon price does what it says</td>
<td>• Consult affected groups and consider their concerns in policy design, e.g.: oil and gas sector</td>
<td>• Aim for multiple positive outcomes (climate and non-climate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15 minutes

Which national circumstances are at play in your country context that may impact communication design choices?
Defining communication objectives

- Gaining and maintaining support for carbon pricing policy
- Obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups
- Making the carbon price signal visible
- Ensuring an informed debate on carbon pricing

Objectives should be regularly re-examined to allow communications to adapt to evolving circumstances
Defining communication objectives

Gaining and maintaining support for carbon pricing policy

Strong and broad support can ensure the carbon pricing policy’s stability and resistance against changing political winds

Youth strike for climate action in Bangkok, Thailand | Tappanai Boonbandit
Defining communication objectives

Obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups

Help ensuring that the carbon price is robust and broadly understood and accepted
Defining communication objectives

Making the price signal visible

Option 1: Make the carbon pricing signal visible

Option 2: Minimize the visibility of the carbon price signal

Nuanced approach: Communicate costs to limited audience

Communication about fuel subsidies at petrol station in Malaysia | Paul Tan
Defining communication objectives

Any policy debate benefits from a good understanding of facts, options and scenarios.

Research can help focus communications on gaps in understanding of different audiences.
Communication policy objective prioritization

Most to least central objectives

- Gaining and maintaining support for carbon pricing policy
- Obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups
- Ensuring an informed debate on carbon pricing
- Making the carbon price signal visible
Proactive communication with the public?

• Does the policy require high-profile independent legislation? Or a public vote?
• Does the Constitution require public consultation on the policy?
• Is there likely to be significant opposition?
• Is the carbon price associated with a specific political party?
• How relevant is the public opinion for policymaking?
Shangri La wants to design a carbon tax policy, and has engaged you as a communications expert.

- The country has a high level of political polarization, with about 1/3rd of the population being highly concerned about climate change. The rest of the public does not consider climate change a major short-term issue for the country, and is more concerned about economic stability.
- The country is highly dependent on fossil fuels
- Adoption of the carbon tax requires a public vote through a referendum.

### Plenary exercise | Preparing for communications design

- Gaining and maintaining support
- Obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups
- Ensuring an informed debate
- Making the carbon price visible
Questions?
Tomorrow’s session: research and messages design

- Identifying audiences
- Developing narratives