

How to communicate Climate Change and Ecolife project approach

Alessandra Tedeschi, DBL
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Outline

1. Communicating on Climate Change
2. Communication Challenges
3. Practical tips and suggestions on how to communicate on Climate Change
4. The Ecolife project approach

Communicating on Climate Change

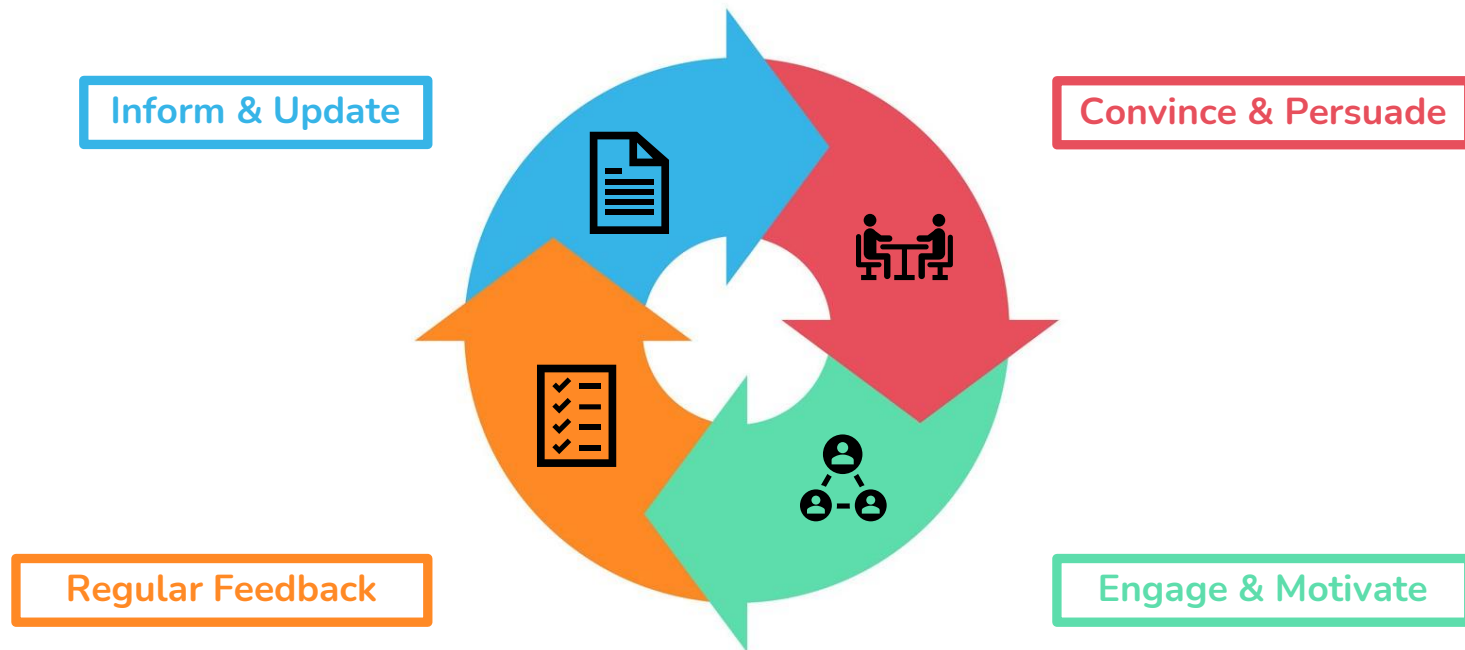
Communicating on climate change is about educating and mobilizing audiences to take action to confront the climate crisis.

Everyone can play a part by raising their voice, sharing solutions, and advocating for change – shaped by different experiences, cultural contexts, and underlying values.

It can be difficult to effectively convey climate change-related concepts, as their effects can be seen through long spans of times, and mostly have no immediate blatant effects.

Communicating on Climate Change

A well-designed Communication on Climate Change is a reiterative process, which can be summed up in 4 main steps.



Inform & Update

It is important to give the **necessary information** to our audience. Aiming at **expanding knowledge on climate change**, focus on communicating not only facts, but also provide **information on the benefits** that initiatives, activities and actions bring in many levels.

Inform & Update

Example: ride a bus/bike instead of driving a car

- *Environmental*: less emissions (buses run anyways)
- *Economic*: less expenditure in fuel
- *Social*: less traffic in urban areas, foster urban transport usage and enhancement
- *Personal*: less expenses, less stress

Inform & Update



Convince & Persuade

A crucial part of communicating on climate change is to convey the notion that **EVERYONE** can do something impactful for the environment, regardless the scope of our actions.

Little actions from lots of people have their impact, as Japanese author Ryūnosuke Akutagawa said:

«Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean»

Engage & Motivate

It is important to **engage people in greener habits and lifestyles**, motivating them to choose not only according to their personal needs, but also in regards of the **environment**. This can be achieved by showing that **solutions** can be *feasible* and *easily done*.

Engage & Motivate

Example: bring your own bag when doing groceries

- **Little effort:** just remember the bag from home!
- **Big impact:** no more extra plastic bags at home and less plastic footprint.

Engage & Motivate



Regular Feedback

Keeping the community **updated** about actions and activities **regarding climate change** and environmental issues, while also keeping them **aware** of the **impact of their actions** toward a more sustainable lifestyle can help the community and **people engaged and motivated**.

Regular Feedback

Plan regular feedback exchange, with structured presentation of informations, integrating quantitative data on the impact of the actions

Newsletter



Social Media



Communication Challenges

Communicating on Climate Change has critical aspects, which can effectively **hinder** the **efficacy** of the communication.

- Difficulty to showcase the **link** between **people** and the **environmental impact** of their actions.
- Climate change's **irregularity** and people's **low awareness** on climate change.

Communication Challenges

Communicating on Climate Change has critical aspects, which can effectively **hinder** the **efficacy** of the communication.

- General sense of **helplessness** and **low agency**, due to the global extent of the problem.
- **Lack of information** on individual and collective **actions towards sustainability**, and low awareness of the impact of such actions.

Practical Tips

To establish an **effective communication** (e.g. a class, a campaign at school), it can be useful to keep in mind some things to get our point across.

- *What* do we want to tell?
- *Who* is/are our target audience? (Class VS Parents)
- *Which medium/media* are the most suitable to communicate with our target audience?

Practical Tips

To establish an **effective communication** (e.g. a class, a campaign at school), it can be useful to keep in mind some things to get our point across.

- *What is our message?* (e.g. raise awareness, divulgative)
- *Which language is most suitable?*
- *What level of scientific background we want to convey*

Practical Tips

Use authoritative scientific information

Misinformation and *disinformation* are widespread on the issue of climate change, and they are **major obstacles towards progress** in tackling the climate crisis.

Deceptive or misleading content **distorts the perception of climate science and solutions**, creates confusion, and often leads to delays in action or even **harmful action**.

Practical Tips

How?

- Check your sources: make sure they are *reliable* source, **science-based** and **objective**. Peer-reviewed articles generally provide the most reliable information.
- Stop misinformation: Things you post online can spread very fast. **Pause before you share something**. Find out who made it, what sources it is based on, who paid for it, and who might be profiting from it.

Practical Tips

How?

- Beware of greenwashing: *Greenwashing* means **presenting a product/company as environmentally friendly when they actually aren't**. Double-check what brands are doing to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Use trusted messengers: When assigning homework or asked for more details on a specific phenomenon, **suggest only reliable sources** of information (e.g., institutional channels, NGOs, academia, UN bodies).

Practical Tips

DID YOU KNOW? Greenwashing techniques



COLOURS

Definition

Using colours and images to suggest that the product is eco-friendly, when in fact there are very little differences

If it looks green, it's not necessarily green!



Practical Tips

Convey the problem and the solution

Explaining the scale of the **climate crisis** can seem **overwhelming**, leading people to lose interest. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges we have faced, but the fight is far from lost.

Convey a **hopeful message** focused on the **solutions**, helping people feel **empowered** and **motivated** to engage, and get around disillusionment and “crisis fatigue”.

Practical Tips

Convey the problem and the solution

How?

- Tell a story – make it real: When presenting data, make it relatable and personal. **Get the audience to care**, and make shared global challenges seem less daunting. Start with a related issue that is **important to your audience** (e.g., air pollution, urban green areas, waste management).

Practical Tips

Convey the problem and the solution

How?

- Empower people: Let people know that they have the **power to effect change**. Individuals can help drive change by shifting consumption patterns and demanding action by governments and corporations. **The more people act now** and speak up for change, **the bigger the pressure** on leaders to act.

Practical Tips

Convey the problem and the solution

How?

- Link to justice: Climate change is also an issue of justice. Those who contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions are too often affected the most. **Solving the climate crisis** also means **addressing injustice** and **inequity**, which can create opportunities for all.

Practical Tips

Tuvalu's Minister for Justice, Communication & Foreign Affairs Simon Kofe gives a COP26 statement while standing in the ocean in Funafuti, Tuvalu November 5, 2021.



Practical Tips

Convey the problem and the solution

How?

- Avoid stereotypes: **Poorer countries** and underserved communities are often portrayed solely as victims of climate change, rather than **positive agents of change**. Make sure to **highlight their voices**, expertise, innovations, positive action, and solutions,

Practical Tips

Mobilise action

Cutting greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 requires nothing less than a **complete transformation** of how we produce, consume, and move about.

Surveys indicate that a **majority of people** around the world **want their governments to take action** and most citizens in advanced economies are willing to make changes in their own lives.

Practical Tips

Mobilise action

How?

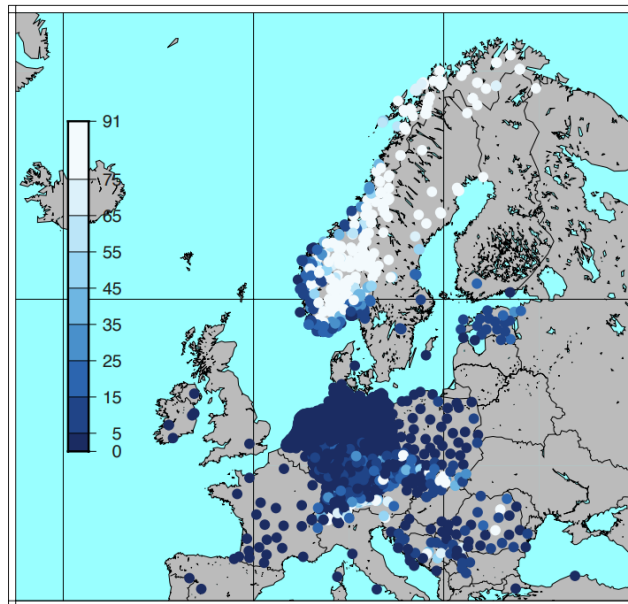
- Convey urgency: **Make it about now**. Make sure people know that action can't wait. Studies show that explaining the human causes of climate change increases public support for action.

Practical Tips

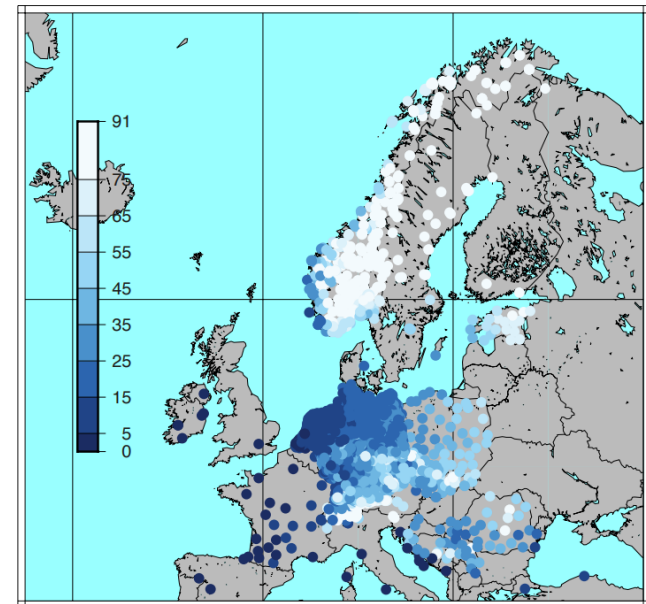
(L) Number of 'snow days' (min.1 cm snow) in winter 2020.
(R) Average number of snow days in winter for the 1981–2010 reference period.

Data: ECA&D.

Number of snowdays winter 2020



Average number of snowdays winters 1981-2010



Practical Tips

Mobilise action

How?

- Focus on the opportunities: Get your audience **excited about the prospects of a sustainable world**. Addressing climate change will bring about cleaner air, renewable energy, better health, etc. **Showcase the benefits** to rally support and galvanise action.

Practical Tips

Mobilise action

How?

- Make it relevant: Limiting global warming to 1.5°C can be hard to relate to. **Frame** it in a way that will **resonate with your audience**, by linking it to shared values (family, nature, community, and religion). Safety and stability can be effective frames for creating a sense of urgency.

Practical Tips

Mobilise action

How?

- Engage youth: The global youth climate movement has played a powerful role in driving action. **Featuring voices of youth** will make you **more relatable** to young people and get more **involvement** in demanding change. Avoid presenting climate change as a problem only for future generations.

Practical Tips



Running out of time action – 16th Dimotiko Larissa

Ecolife project approach

The LIFE+ Ecolife project aimed at **raising awareness** about their **environmental impact** to **limit non-sustainable behaviors** and habits. Its results were strictly linked to the number of people involved and their commitment.

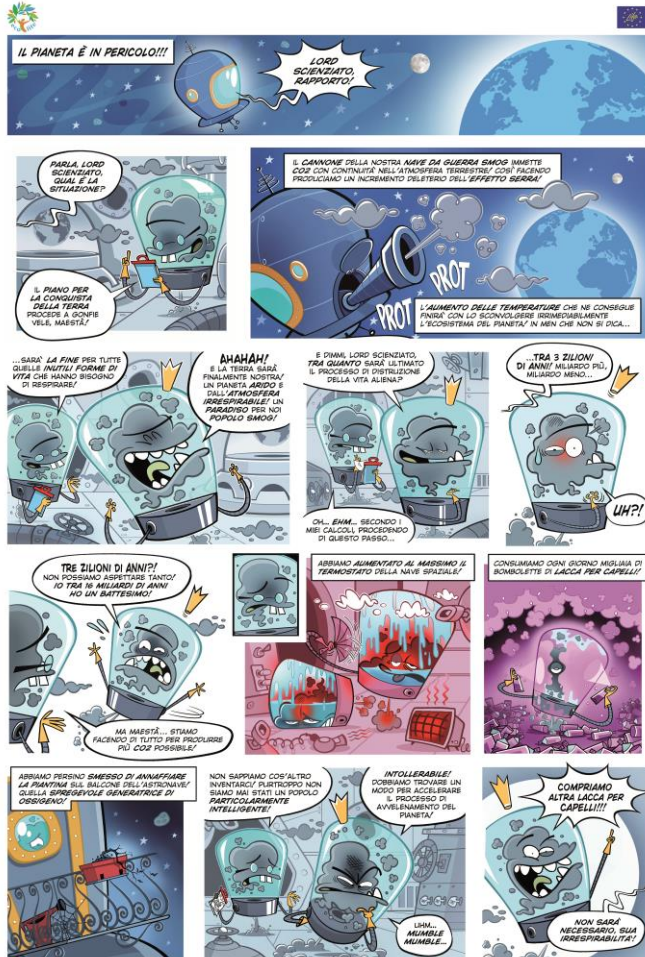
To enhance the its scope of engagement, the project defined its tools of communication and its target audience.

Ecolife Communication tools

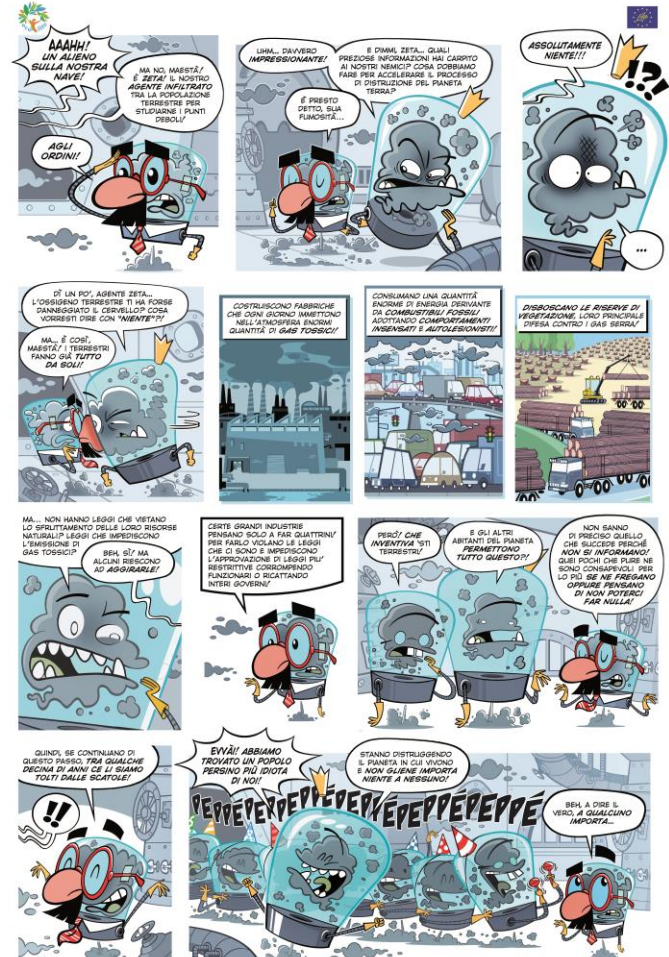
Ecolife differentiated its communications through the use of different mediums.

- Comic book and exhibition: simple communication based on graphics adapt for a general public, it aimed to inform people about climate change
- Online simulations and games: for a younger audience, as there are many resources on internet and social media





Ecological Lifestyles for CO2 Reduction – EcoLife è un progetto cofinanziato dalla Commissione Europea nell'ambito del programma LIFE+2012 Informazione e Comunicazione, promosso da



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Ecolife Communication tools

Ecolife differentiated its communications through the use of different mediums.

- Practical tips for more sustainable habits: provide **simple, applicable and immediate solutions** that can engage people on **living more sustainably** -> **CHOICE Vademecum for school families**



Ecolife Communication tools

Ecolife differentiated its communications through the use of different mediums.

- Local communities: to **engage** with your local institutions and to have a physical point of contact with people and **become a reference for your community**.
- Website, newsletter, social networks: to inform but also to launch **online contests** (e.g., **pictures, short novels**).

Sources

- <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/communicating-climate-change>
- Ecolife project Brochure:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QYzZQUgrHyXHyb9eBxlMmaRlMpM1AeNR/view?usp=share_link

Thank you for your time!

Alessandra Tedeschi
alessandra.tedeschi@dblue.it