



MESSAGES TO ENGAGE CITIZENS IN ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The climate crisis is real and is endangering the future of our planet. You can be an important part of the solution!

First, the steps you take to reduce your personal carbon footprint are meaningful. Not only do your **individual actions** help fight climate change, but they have the power to shape the actions of those around you. Your climate-friendly consumption choices will deepen your personal commitment to environmental sustainability, and your example will raise awareness and inspire broader climate action.

The scale of the climate crisis requires **collective action** as well. And there are many effective groups dedicated to climate action that will welcome your involvement. Some groups are working locally to help your community become more sustainable. Others are working on a state or federal climate initiative. What is your passion? Where do you want to contribute your time, skills, and resources?

Ultimately, climate change requires large-scale solutions enacted by government. We need **political action**. You have an important role to play in the civic process by electing people who prioritize climate action and holding them accountable. Be a climate voter. Ask candidates how they plan to fight climate change. Get to know your elected officials and let them know how you want them to vote on climate policies. Write letters and make phone calls. Sign petitions. Participate in a climate march.

As dire as the climate projections are, know that we still have time to make a difference. Every fraction of a degree of warming matters. The decisions we make in the next ten years are critical and can help prevent the most devastating impacts of climate change. There is no “one way” to fight climate change. But the time is now, and the fight needs all of us.

It's time for All Hands On Deck!

Helpful Links

[Engaging Global Warming's Six Americas](#): Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (Ongoing)

An ongoing research project, begun in 2008. Based on survey responses from a large nationally representative survey of American adults, six distinct categories of concern and engagement related to climate change emerge. Graphics present the data clearly so information is easy to access. Results from the [most recent assessment \(Nov 2019\)](#) can be found here. A short "Six Americas" [quiz](#) is available online for those who want to try it!

[Identifying Climate Messages That Work](#): Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (January 2014)

Where to find research to "identify the combination of messengers, message frames and formats that best engage key audiences, such as each of Global Warming's Six Americas, Republicans, evangelicals, Latinos, youth, etc. in specific states and localities."

[What's Wrong With the Way We Communicate Climate Change](#): Environmental and Energy Study Institute (May 2019)

This article discusses a key obstacle in people's perceptions about the significance of climate change – the absence of direct, personal impact. Based on extensive work done by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication. Supported by interactive graphics and suggestions on communicating in a way that overcomes the obstacle and tips on how to overcome this barrier.

[12 Tools for Communicating Climate Change more effectively](#): The Guardian (July 2015)

Published in July 2015, a good, general summary of the 12 principles of strong communications described in the [Uncertainty Handbook](#), developed by the University of Bristol, Bristol England.

[Framing discourse around conservative values](#): Oregon State University (April 2016)

Highlights findings from a 2016 Oregon State University study that indicated "Conservatives' attitudes toward climate change and other environmental concerns shift when the issues are reframed in terms more closely aligned with their values."

[Can we talk climate?](#) The Nature Conservancy (December 2018)

Even though concern about climate change is increasing, recent reports indicate that roughly two-thirds of Americans don't talk about climate change. Find out why and what can be done about this conversation gap! A helpful [e-book of tips](#) is included as a guide to being a part of the solution.

[IPCC: Handbook of Principles for effective communication on Climate Change](#) Technical Support Unit of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (January 2018)

A Handbook intended for IPCC authors that focuses on social science insights on how to communicate climate science in a way that makes that message easier for non-scientific audiences to understand, and makes it more relevant to their lives and experiences.

[Climate Change Empowerment Handbook](#) The Australian Psychological Society (2017)

Eight strategies, drawn from extensive research across relevant psychological areas to help us cope with the realities of climate change. The strategies are contained in the acronym A.C.T.I.V.A.T.E. Access the handbook [here](#).