



Can You Hear Me If I Just Yell A Little Louder?

Hope, Hype, and Communicating Climate Change

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Genus Tischeria




Leaf mining moths

THE WEST WING



SERIES FINALE, MAY 14

 NBC



Three Myths About Communicating Climate Change



Myth 1

One size fits all

How Scientists See the World





rump-a-rooz®
one size



small



7 - 14 lbs

medium



12 - 25 lbs

large



23 - 38 lbs



Global Warming's "Six Americas"



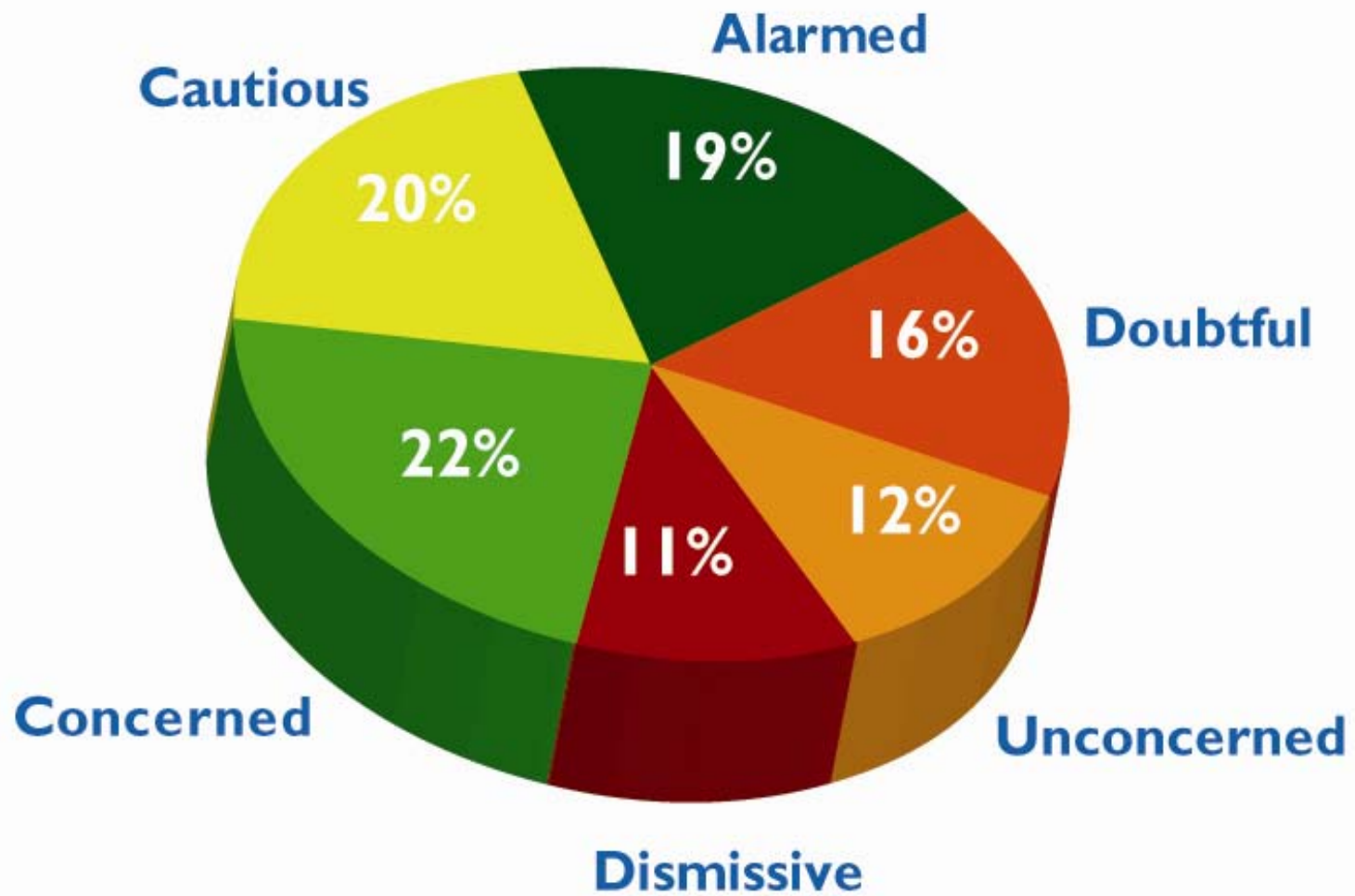
An Audience Segmentation

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George Mason University
Center for Climate Change Communication





The Alarmed (19%)

Members of this segment feel **personally threatened** by global warming, and hold behavioral intentions and policy preferences consistent with their belief that **aggressive actions are needed immediately** to deal with the threat.



The Concerned (22%)

This segment is composed largely of people who are **very concerned** about global warming, but who feel **less personally threatened** by it than members of the Alarmed segment. Despite their lower levels of perceived personal threat, they nonetheless strongly **support aggressive government policies** and say they are **willing to change** their own climate change-related behaviors.



The Cautious (20%)

This segment is concerned about global warming, **moderately supportive** of climate change policies, and indicates a **willingness to change** their own climate change related-behaviors, but they also view global warming as a **more distant threat** – primarily to other people – that won't manifest for another decade or two.

The Unconcerned (12%)

Although members of this segment are significantly less concerned about global warming than are members of the Cautious segment, they are stronger supporters of government policies to combat global warming and more willing to change their own behavior. Their willingness to change, despite low confidence in the reality of the threat, may reflect a “better safe than sorry” stance, or they may simply have other reasons for endorsing these actions that are not reflected in our questions – reasons such as reducing American dependence on foreign oil.



The Doubtful (16%)

Members of this segment are significantly **less likely to believe that global warming is happening or human caused.** Of those who think it might be happening, most see it as **a distant threat** that won't harm people for at least 50 years.

The Dismissive (11%)

Members of this segment are **not at all convinced** that global warming is happening and therefore **don't support any form of societal response**. The Dismissive are the only segment that can fairly be described as **completely unconcerned** about global warming, probably because they don't believe it is happening. Nearly all members of this segment believe that there is either a **lot of disagreement among scientists** or that most scientists say global warming is not happening.



Myth 2

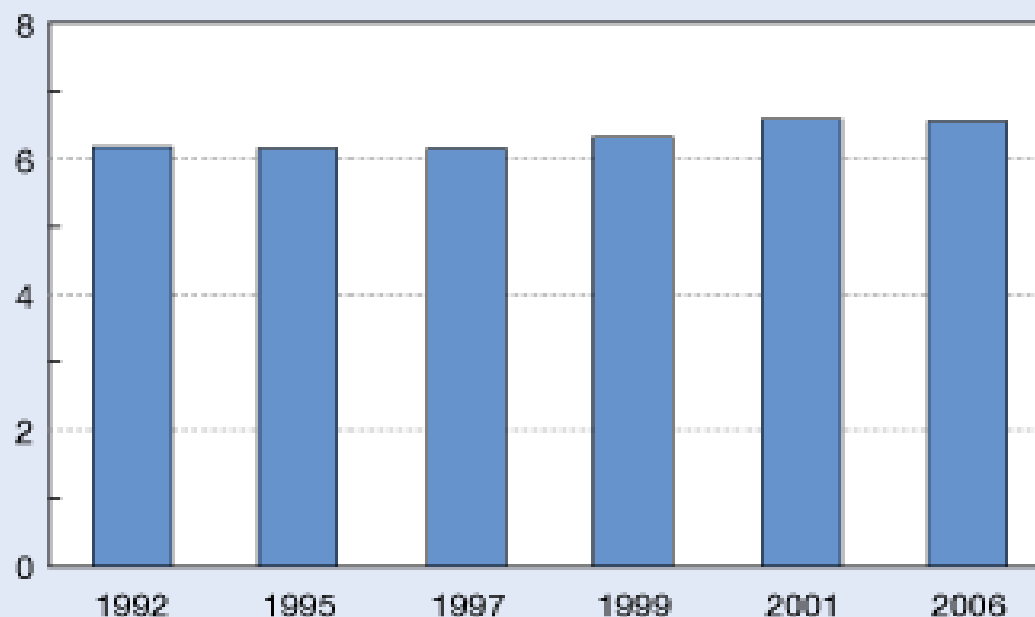
If only you knew
what I know, you'd
be a believer too



Public Understanding of Climate
Change Under the “Deficit Model”

Figure 7-6
**Correct answers to scientific literacy questions:
1992–2006**

Mean



NOTES: Number correct of 12 questions. See notes to appendix table 7-4 for explanation of “factual knowledge of science scale 1” used for this figure. See appendix tables 7-5 and 7-6 for responses to individual scientific literacy questions included in scale. Table includes all years for which data collected.

SOURCES: National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Statistics, Survey of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology (1992–2001); and University of Chicago, National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey (2006).



Myth 3

Fear Sells





DRUNK DRIVING IS ILLEGAL FOR A REASON

He said he was okay to drive. He said he drove better after a couple of drinks anyway. They came out of nowhere. He was sure that light was green. It wasn't the whisky. It was only a couple of drinks.

DAMN RIGHT YOUR DAD DRANK IT



Canadian Club® Blended Canadian Whisky, 40% Alc./Vol.
©2007 Canadian Club Import Company, Deerfield, IL

Canadian Club.

SHOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE NEAR A VAN

Courtesy Defenders of Wildlife



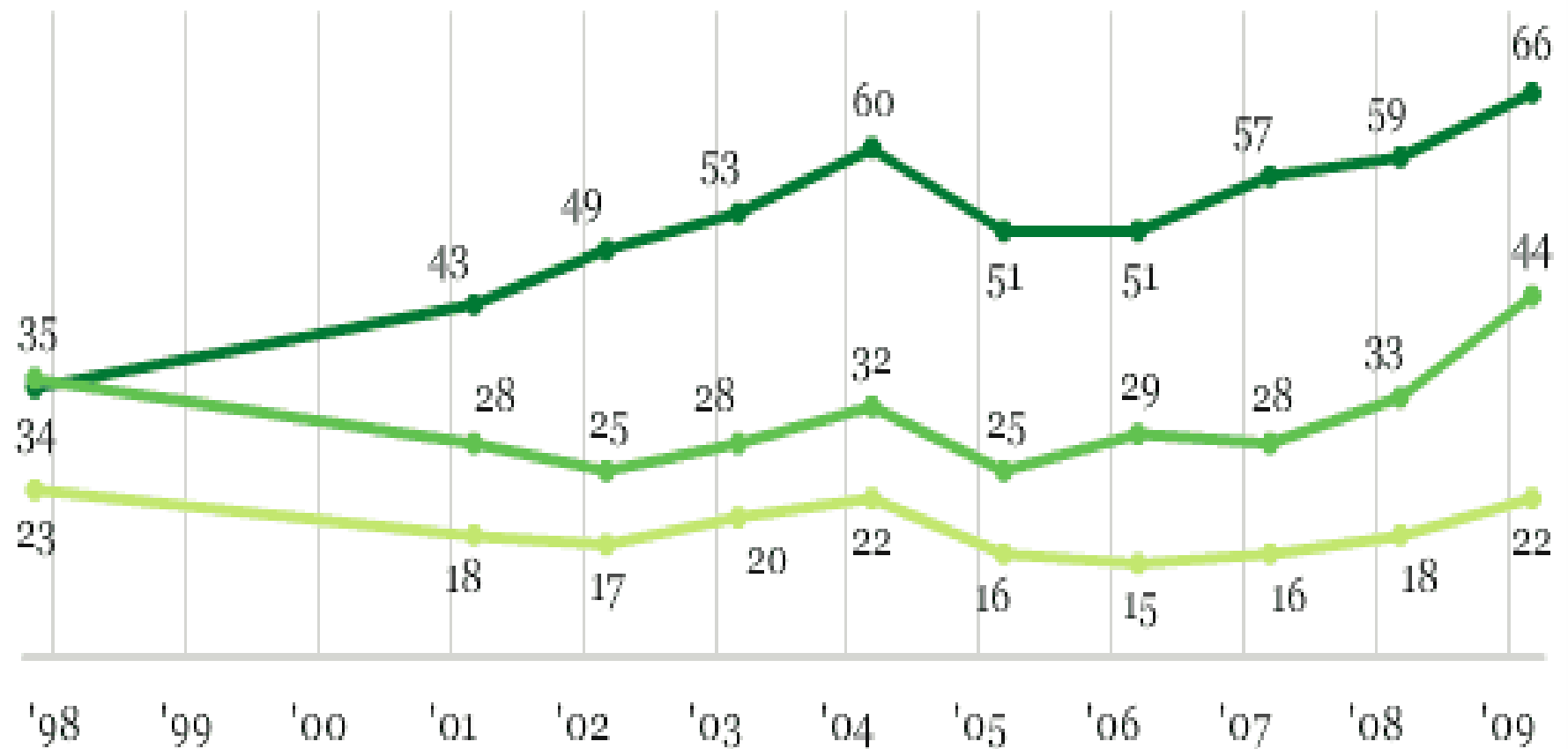


DISSENTERS BLOWN OFF • POLITICS FLOOD SCIENCE • MANKIND DOOMED


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Percentage Saying News of Global Warming Is Exaggerated, by Party ID

■ Republicans ■ Independents ■ Democrats



GALLUP POLL



A Gallup [survey report](#) released yesterday finds that a record 41% of Americans--and 66% of Republicans--now say that news reports of climate change are exaggerated. I first spotted this troubling trend in [a 2007 paper](#) analyzing twenty years of public opinion about climate change. This latest survey reinforces my fear that climate advocates have fallen into a dangerous communication trap.

-- Matthew Nesbitt, "Framing Science," March 11

http://scienceblogs.com/framing-science/2009/03/gallup_belief_in_climate_chang.php



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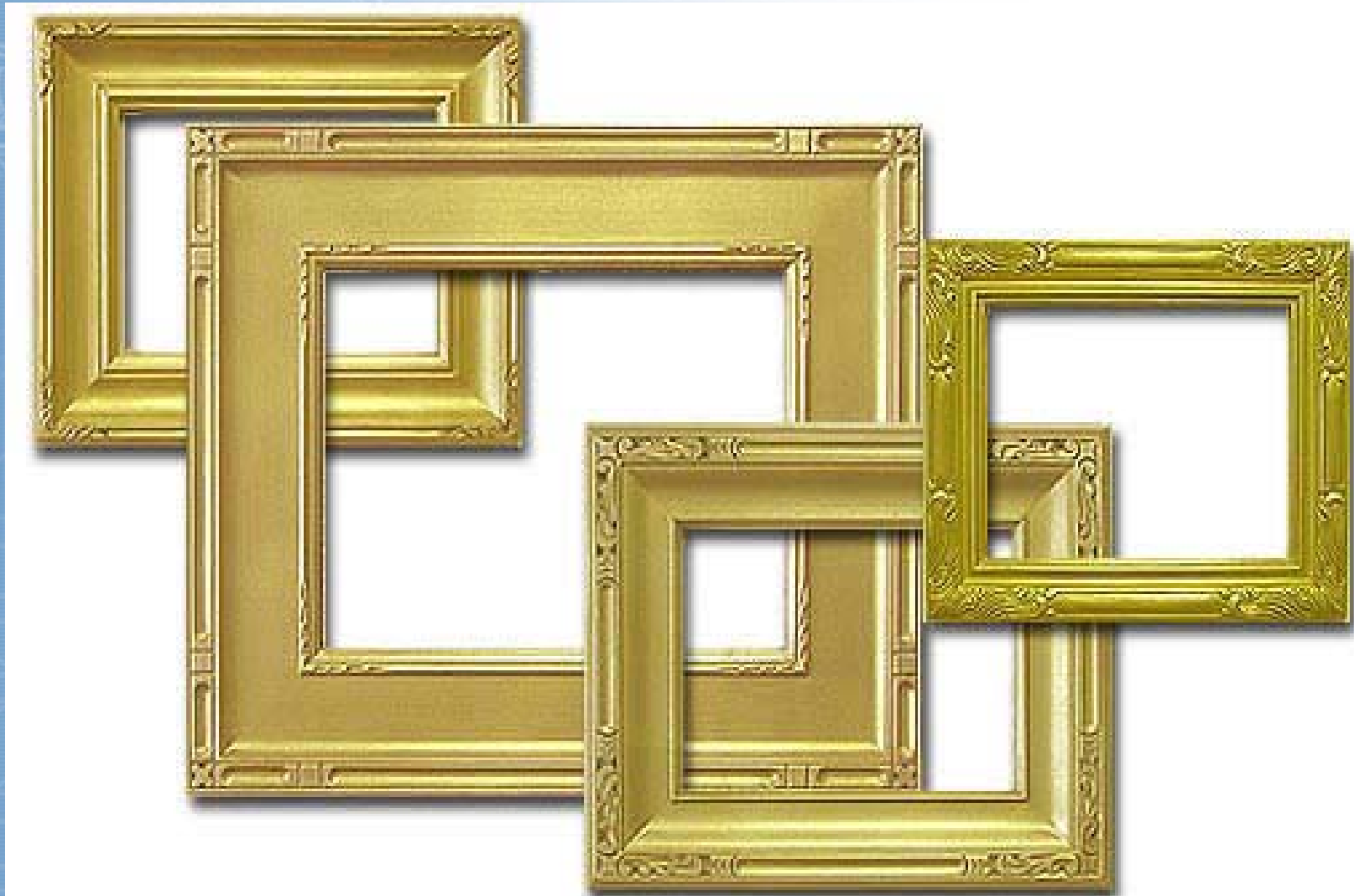
George Mason University
Center for Climate Change Communication

Table 8: Viewing of TV News Programming

Segments	Total	Alarmed	Concerned	Cautious	Unconcerned	Doubtful	Dismissive
ABC World News Tonight	42%	42%	35%	52%	47%	43%	31%
CBS Evening News	40%	51%	35%	49%	41%	41%	25%
NBC Nightly News	47%	52%	50%	58%	46%	45%	27%
NewsHour with Jim Lehrer	14%	24%	17%	19%	7%	8%	8%
Cable News Network (CNN) or CNN Headline News	49%	55%	58%	45%	55%	54%	23%
FOX News Cable Channel	53%	42%	38%	52%	52%	68%	69%
MSNBC	32%	36%	44%	29%	21%	33%	21%
CNBC	22%	24%	26%	16%	16%	29%	17%
C-SPAN	16%	27%	11%	15%	18%	11%	17%

Table 7: Newspaper Readership

Segments	Total	Alarmed	Concerned	Cautious	Unconcerned	Doubtful	Dismissive
Chicago Tribune	3%	5%	2%	1%	0%	6%	1%
Financial Times	4%	9%	6%	1%	0%	2%	4%
Investor's Business Daily	9%	9%	8%	13%	7%	10%	4%
Los Angeles Times	3%	8%	2%	3%	0%	2%	4%
The New York Times	10%	25%	13%	12%	1%	6%	0%
USA Today	17%	19%	18%	20%	4%	17%	20%
The Wall Street Journal	8%	11%	11%	4%	1%	9%	12%
The Washington Post	2%	5%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Local newspaper in your area	91%	92%	93%	92%	92%	89%	86%
Other newspapers	42%	54%	42%	41%	37%	42%	33%



It's all about the frame

Table 5: Values of Audience Segments

Segments	Percent Who Agree with Each Statement						
	Total	Alarmed	Concerned	Cautious	Unconcerned	Doubtful	Dismissive
The world would be a more peaceful place if wealth more equally divided among nations.	49%	70%	64%	52%	45%	30%	12%
We have gone too far in pushing equal rights.	40%	24%	23%	42%	39%	58%	70%
Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good.	56%	40%	41%	61%	61%	71%	83%
People are poor because they are lazy or lack will power.	29%	16%	17%	33%	37%	40%	48%

Reaching The Alarmed

- These people need no further motivation to act – what they appear to need **are clear, actionable suggestions** regarding what they can do to become part of the solution.
- Their strongly egalitarian values suggest that messages framed in terms of the dangers of climate change **for others** -- people in other nations, for future generations, and for other species -- will be well received.
- This group is easily reached through **the news media** and a wide range of **civic organizations**.

Reaching The Concerned

- The Concerned appear highly motivated already, but might benefit from **clear instruction on how to act** in ways that will make a difference, including political advocacy, and the relative efficacy of various actions.
- Emphasizing the potential for **local impacts** and those impacts that are already occurring in their area and elsewhere may be particularly important for this group as they tend to see global warming as happening elsewhere and a decade into the future.
- Various news channels – print, TV, and **especially websites** – are a good way to reach this segment. With their already high engagement in **charity and social welfare organizations**, Concerned Americans may be accessible to outreach by environmental groups, as well as through local civic organizations that promote community welfare.

Reaching The Cautious

- As frequent viewers of television news with a high trust in the medium, Cautious Americans are likely to have seen multiple reports of “both sides” of the climate change “controversy.” Outreach efforts **should emphasize strong scientific agreement** that global warming is happening, that it is primarily human caused, and will be harmful to people.
- Communicators should work to bolster this segment’s sense of both **personal efficacy** – i.e., that an individual can make a difference – and **collective efficacy** – i.e., that the United States could make a big difference in reducing global warming.
- **TV is a strong medium** to reach Cautious Americans, as are certain popular **print magazines that appeal to older audiences** such as Readers Digest and AARP Magazine.

Reaching The Unconcerned

- Communicators should emphasize the **potential for local impacts** with this group. Even more than other groups, Unconcerned Americans tend to see global warming as happening elsewhere and many decades into the future.
- Outreach efforts should continue to emphasize that there is **strong scientific agreement** that global warming is happening, is primarily human caused, and is harmful to people.
- This group is perhaps best reached through **local newspapers as well as mainstream TV news**. Many members of this segment attend church weekly, so efforts to engage non-evangelical Protestant churches may be a particularly effective way to reach this group with messages framed in terms of the **stewardship ethic**.

Reaching The Doubtful

- Communicators should stress that we often take action to protect against uncertain threats – such as fire insurance for our homes – because it is a sensible thing to do; **uncertainty by itself is not a compelling reason to avoid action.**
- Conversely, a different approach to engaging the Doubtful may be **to ignore the issue of global warming altogether** and instead focus on the economic savings that accompany conservation, on the potential for growth in new green industries, and on achieving freedom from dependence on foreign oil.
- Doubtful Americans are likely best reached through **conservative media commentators** and other conservative voices in their own communities.

Reaching The Dismissive

- This group is **extremely hard to reach** through traditional methods. They are strongly predisposed to disbelieve that global warming is happening, human caused, or a serious threat to the world.
- They are **probably best reached by the few media organizations they pay attention to**, i.e., Fox News and talk radio. This may suggest that a strategy to reach out to these news organizations and leading commentators may ultimately be the most productive with this group, albeit very difficult.
- It may not make sense to focus climate change public engagement resources on members of this segment, but **it is important not to belittle their concerns**. Rather, when addressing societal issues of enormous importance, it is important to offer groups with opposing positions face-saving ways of moving beyond their opposition.



Alternative Communication Models

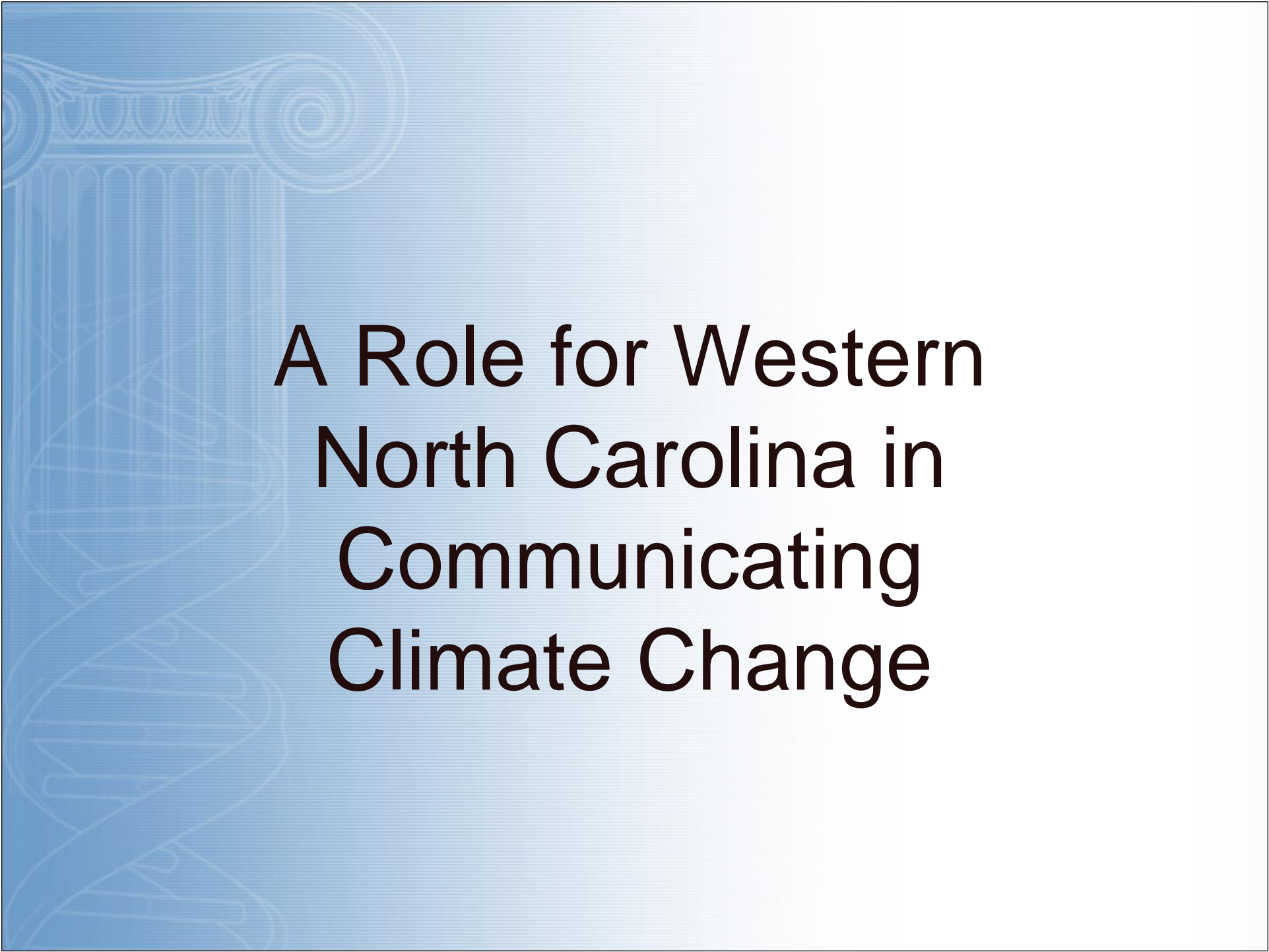
- * Public
Communication
- * Policy
Communication





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A Role for Western North Carolina in Communicating Climate Change

BOX 3.1 Roles of a Federal Climate Change Research Program

The roles of a federal climate change research program are to:

1. Coordinate federally-sponsored research on climate, human, and related environmental systems across multiple agencies to strengthen synergies and find efficiencies;
2. Develop a research program and a strategic planning process to identify critical gaps and emerging issues and to secure the necessary resources to address them;
3. Ensure the availability of climate-quality observations and computing capacity and the development of human resources and institutions needed to address key priorities;
4. Support coordinated U.S. participation in international climate science initiatives, including global observation networks and international assessments;
5. Facilitate and, where appropriate, leverage regional, state, and local research on climate change, including monitoring and understanding the effects of adaptation and mitigation;
- 6. Communicate reliable, unbiased research findings and information needed to improve public understanding of climate change and support informed decisions on adaptation and mitigation.**



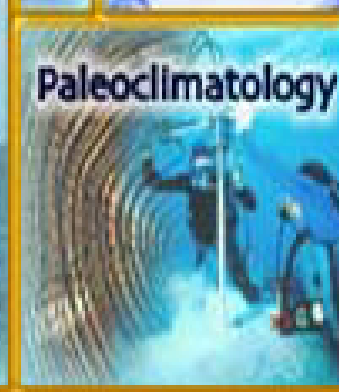
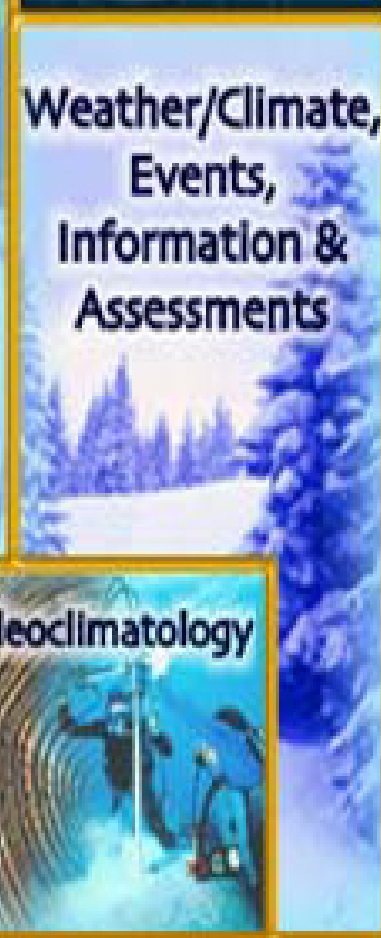
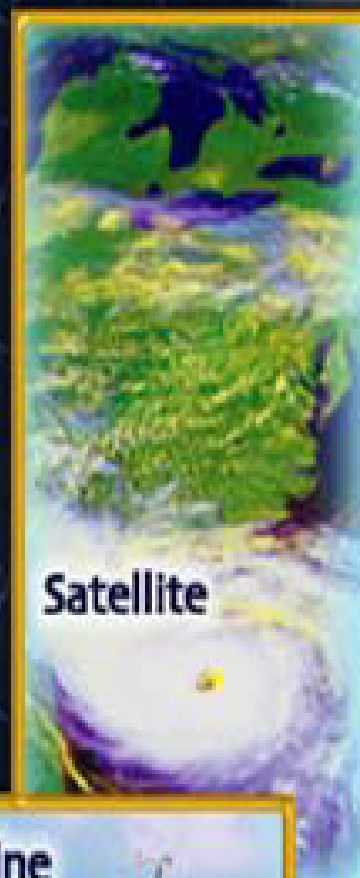
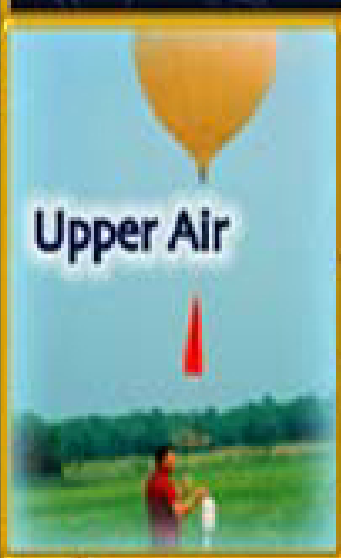
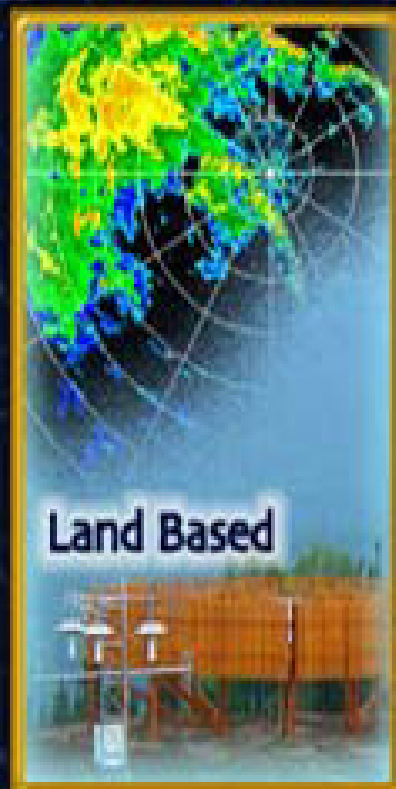
RESTRUCTURING FEDERAL CLIMATE RESEARCH TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

World's Largest Archive of Climate Data

National Climatic Data Center

Protecting the Past, Revealing the Future

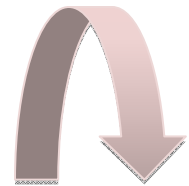
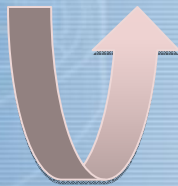


Asheville's Climate Change Trifecta

Climate Observation and Data Gathering



Climate Data Processing



Climate Data/Climate Change
Communication