



Being as disciplined in our engagement with society as we are in our scientific research

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Scientists follow well-established approaches in their research, applying the scientific process rigorously to every component. That disciplined approach tends to disappear, however, when it comes to communicating with the public and policy makers. Our communication of forecasts and warnings are often not as effective as we expect them to be in getting people to take necessary actions. Issues such as climate change are politicized, with robust scientific findings perceived as opinion and frequently not separated from the value judgements that are inherent in policy decisions. The general public and policy makers mostly fail to understand the significant return on investment provided by the observational platforms and other infrastructure that supports the weather and climate enterprise. There is good science on why much of the communication in this area fails and how to do it better. The scientific community has an opportunity to be far more effective in its engagement with society by recognizing that there is a science to that engagement.