

On the role of emotional, cognitive and behavioral mechanisms in climate change communication

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Many global indicators show that people involvement in climate change issues could be significantly increased. For instance, in May 2017, 11% of Americans considered they or their relatives were making a lot of effort to reduce global warming. This paper focuses on climate change communication in order to contribute to increase people action. The study describes several commonly used communication practices and analyses their underlying emotional, cognitive and behavioral mechanisms. It demonstrates how these mechanisms play a role in the way people assimilate and integrate the information. Cognitive dissonance, emergency reaction, emotional and rational brain functions, frustration management and optimism bias are tackled. In addition, the paper underlines the role of optimal communicator's own emotional, cognitive and behavioral state as major communication features. To reach this optimum, this paper highlights the importance of communicator's personal involvement and the coherence between his actions and his message. By these ways, the paper wishes to provide elements which will favour the complex process from individual information reception to involvement into action.