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The Making of Ynyslas: weaving hard scientific evidence into an understandable narrative

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In communicating the science behind climate change, there is no single magic bullet. This is because different people process received information in different ways. Some communication-methods have been used far less than others, one in particular being narrative. Opportunities for narrative present themselves worldwide because of the large eustatic rise in sea levels following the Last Glacial Maximum, a well-understood phenomenon in terms of timing and rate. That rise flooded over fertile lowland plains, such as the mostly <30 metres deep modern-day Cardigan Bay, off the western coast of Wales. The advance of the shoreline towards modern-day land created many well-known coastal features. One such is the shingle-spit, dune hinterland and intertidal submerged forest at Ynyslas, Ceredigion, Wales (UK). Ynyslas is a National Nature Reserve with a Visitor Centre and ca. 250,000 visitors a year. A book describing how its landscape came into being has proved popular with almost 2000 copies having been bought since publication in August 2019 (despite closure during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21). Interviews with some of those who read the book indicate that weaving climate science into an interesting narrative, explaining what actually happened, gives people important new insights into the processes involved and the threats now facing modern coastal communities.