



The IPCC AR5 SPM decrypted -> clear-text

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Why does the world proceed at the same course as before, when so many reports present such strong evidence that Earth's climate is changing and that our use of fossil fuels plays a role for the ongoing global warming? The answer to this question is both complex and difficult. One hypothesis is that the message is not sufficiently tailored for the media and the general public. To explore this idea, we look more closely at the most recent summary for policymakers (SPM) of the Intergovernmental Panel on climate Change (IPCC) assessment report 5 (AR5). Is it too technical for people in general? The climate science community, like many other academic societies, has been fond of using jargon, abbreviations, and a 'tribal' language, which potentially may hinder the message to hit home. The scientists' message may have been too 'cryptic', and the question is whether it is possible to provide the public with a good 'clear-text' translation. The importance of understanding is also important for how to deal with climate change, e.g. in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Misunderstood overly technical descriptions may be a challenge for climate services, which provide climate information to the society. Sometimes the use of different definitions for the same terms may make this challenge even harder. A 'controlled vocabulary' (glossary) may be helpful in some cases, and some initiatives have already started in trying to establish such a resource. It is also important that science communication is more than scientists' reports, press releases, leaflets, media interviews, and data. There exists a number of persistent myths and misconceptions, some of which are promoted by various interest groups. A group of climate scientists has tried to address such misunderstandings through the influential blog RealClimate.org, which will have its 10-year anniversary this year. One question now is: What can we learn from our experience in hindsight?