

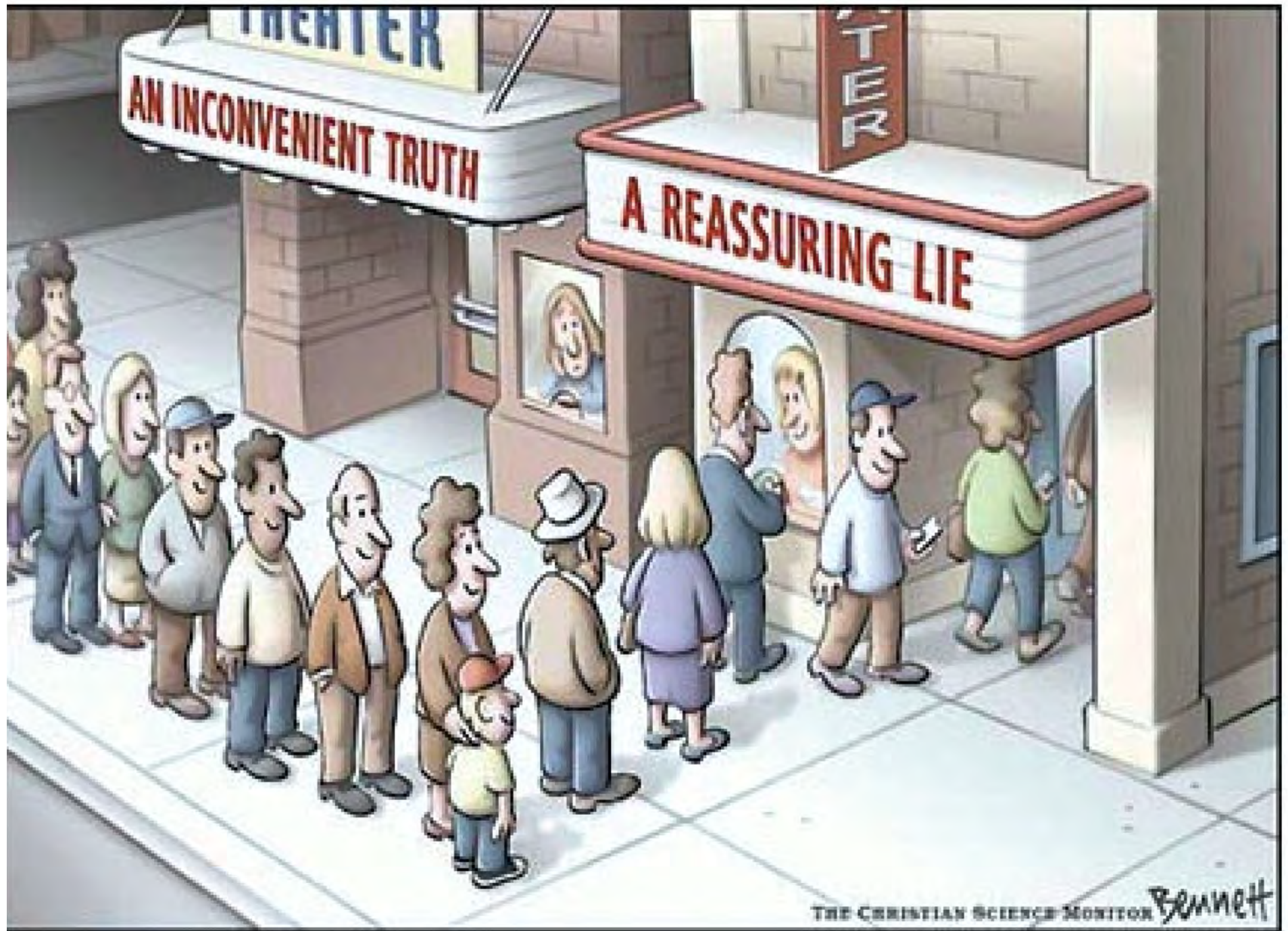


# This Time It's Personal: *Compelling Climate Communication from Reality to Solutions*

BECC • December 9, 2014

Meighen Speiser  
Chief Engagement Officer

ecoAmerica  
*start with people*



THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR *Bennett*

# Making Climate Relevant

## Top Policy Priorities: Economy, Jobs, Terrorism

*% rating each a top priority for the president and Congress each year ...*

	Jan 09 %	Jan 13 %	Jan 14 %	13-14 change
Strengthening the nation's economy	85	86	80	-6
Improving the job situation	82	79	74	-5
Defending country from terrorism	76	71	73	+2
Improving the educational system	61	70	69	-1
Making Social Security system sound	63	70	66	-4
Reducing the budget deficit	53	72	63	-9
Making Medicare system sound	60	65	61	-4
Reducing health care costs	59	63	59	-4
Reforming the nation's tax system	-	52	55	+3
Reducing crime	46	55	55	0
Dealing with problems of poor & needy	50	57	49	-8
Protecting the environment	41	52	49	-3
Dealing with nation's energy problem	60	45	45	0
Strengthening the U.S. military	44	41	43	+2
Reducing the influence of lobbyists	36	44	42	-2
Dealing with illegal immigration	41	39	41	+2
Dealing with moral breakdown	45	40	39	-1
Improving roads, bridges, public transit	-	30	39	+9
Dealing with global warming	30	28	29	+1
Dealing with global trade issues	31	31	28	-3

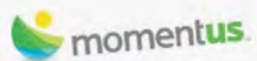




*We are not connecting with Americans!*







# COMMUNICATING ON CLIMATE

*13 Steps and Guiding Principles*

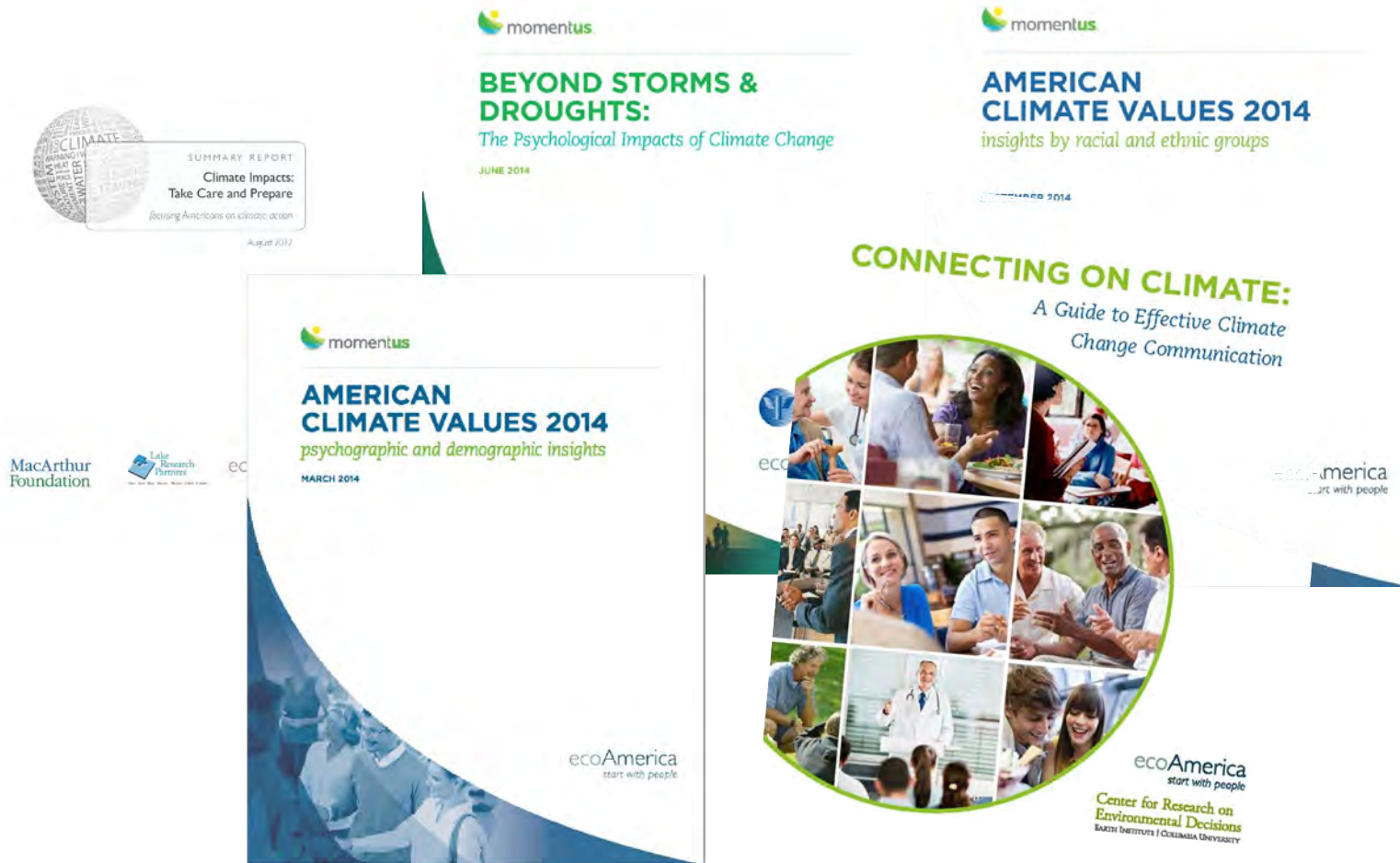
DECEMBER 2013

ecoAmerica

## THE 13 STEPS

1. *Start with people,  
stay with people*
2. *Connect on common values*
3. *Acknowledge ambivalence*
4. *Scale from personal to planet*
5. *Sequence matters*
6. *Use "facts," not science*
7. *Inspire and empower*
8. *Be solutions-focused*
9. *Describe, don't label*
10. *Have at least 1 powerful fact  
from a trusted messenger*
11. *Prepare don't adapt*
12. *Speak from the mountaintops,  
don't fight in the trenches*
13. *Message discipline is critical*

# Latest Research and Communication Practices



## THE 13 STEPS

1. *Start with people, stay with people*
2. *Connect on common values*
3. *Acknowledge ambivalence*
4. *Scale from personal to planet*
5. *Sequence matters*
6. *Use "facts," not science*
7. *Inspire and empower*
8. *Be solutions-focused*
9. *Describe, don't label*
10. *Have at least 1 powerful fact from a trusted messenger*
11. *Prepare don't adapt*
12. *Speak from the mountaintops, don't fight in the trenches*
13. *Message discipline is critical*

# Themes that Resonate Across the Aisle

## Exceptionalism, compassion

- We can all make small steps to make the world better (94%)
- People can be the solution (90%)
- Compassion for those who are suffering (86%)

## Personal rights to clean environment for all

- Clean drinking water (84%)
- Clean air (83%)
- Safe neighborhood, free of toxics (79%)
- Access to natural spaces, parks (75%)

## Responsibility to do something about climate

- Companies that pollute (81%)
- EPA (78%)
- Me (75%)



# ACV 14 Summary Recommendations

- **Focus on people vs. technology, policy, planet, bring them into the fold** (don't belittle, leave preaching to preachers)
- **Engage groups, and empower local leaders to lead**
- **Understand and incorporate everyday concerns**
- **Emphasize solutions, benefits and success**
- **Deliver and position solutions as bold and effective**
- **Emphasize relevant reality, use “science” sparingly**
- **Make pragmatic appeals, such as being prepared, regaining control, independence, and security**
- **Reinforce climate-health and climate weather**
- **Avoid connecting solutions with “new” or “change” – instead focus on personal benefit, family values**





Congressman  
**Chris Van Hollen**  
Maryland's 8th District



[About Chris](#)

[8th District](#)

[For Constituents](#)

[Media Center](#)

[Home](#) » [Media Center](#) » [Press Releases](#)

## Van Hollen Introduces the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act of 2014

Jul 30, 2014 | Washington

[Bill text \(PDF\)](#) | [Fact Sheet](#) | [Infographic](#) | [Op-Ed](#)

Today Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen introduced the Healthy Climate and Family Security Act of 2014. This legislation is a simple, fair, and effective way to combat climate change while supporting robust economic growth and a thriving middle class.



It caps carbon pollution and reduces CO2 emissions gradually but steadily, auctions carbon pollution permits to the first sellers of oil, coal, and natural gas into the U.S. market, and returns 100 percent of the auction proceeds electronically each quarter to every American with a valid Social Security

M

St

E

Er

# PRACTICAL APPLICATION

*A Sample Speech*



# Putting Method into Practice

## A Hypothetical Example Using the 13 Steps

### 1. Start with people, stay with people:

Janine begins by showing understanding of and appreciation for her audience, and connects with their values throughout her speech.

**2. Connect on common values:** Janine builds rapport by connecting with her audience's values through a community treasure.

**3. Acknowledge ambivalence:** Here, Janine carefully introduces climate change, respects the potential spectrum of audience attitudes, and allows people in the room to hold differing beliefs.

**4. Scale from personal to planet:** Janine makes climate personally relevant by pointing to the local impacts, then scales up.

**5. Sequence matters:** By this point in her speech, Janine is able to ease into talking to her audience about climate change because she has followed the first four steps to open up the conversation (and her audience's minds).

**6. Use "facts," not science:** Janine talks about the drought; the water level is down, fish are impacted, and water supplies are diminished. Here Janine points to irrefutable facts that her audience can see with their own eyes.

**7. Inspire and empower:** After discussing the impacts of climate change, Janine moves quickly to motivate her audience. She does this by conveying hope, potential, and ability.

### Janine Robert's Speech to the Rotary Club of Sioux Falls, IA

Hello, and good afternoon. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today. I am a big fan of your mentorship program here in the local high schools – it's a perfect example of the business community playing a leadership role to improve our civic life.

Today I am here to talk about one of our city's treasures, the Big Sioux River. Most of us have grown up fishing or rafting there, or just walking along its banks. I bet if I asked, each of you could recall several wonderful memories with family and friends along its shores, or wading in its waters. My husband and I have spent weeks fishing there with the kids.

Who has been to the Big Sioux River lately? For those of you who have, I think you'll agree it's not hard to see that the river isn't what it used to be.

Now I can bet we have many differing opinions in the room on what or who's to blame for these changes in our climate, and I would also wager that we can all agree we need The Big Sioux River! And, it needs us.

There is change happening right in our backyards, in the backyards of all of Iowa, and throughout the country. The water level is down, and higher water temperatures are impacting fish counts and fish health. Our main source of clean drinking water is diminishing.

We have the opportunity and ability to do something about it. We can help restore and protect not only the Big Sioux River, but also our livelihoods and our nation, for ourselves, our children, and future generations.

The good news is that there are already leaders in this community who have started to do something to help. Some of the high schools in your mentorship program are helping to plant trees near the river, the Mayor has implemented smart water use, several of our churches and church goers have taken The St. Francis Pledge to lead by example in reducing their impact, and solar power is a rapidly growing industry in the state. According to the Argus Leader, the solar power industry in Iowa grew 33 percent in just one year. These are just a few examples of the many meaningful and powerful things we can do to prepare for and help prevent further climate change.

And so I am asking you, as leaders in the business community, to be part of the solution. Solutions can be accessible, effective, meaningful, and good for business. Whether it is making your operations more efficient or planting native plants in your garden, there is something for everyone to do. In fact, there are over 100 ideas listed in the materials you have in your hands. I am happy to discuss them with you.

Finally, you have the power to set a new example, to help prepare and protect our community from the impacts of climate change, and to work to preserve our treasured natural heritage, the Big Sioux River. Join me in being part of the solution.

Individually we can make a difference; collectively we can do so much more.

Thank you. I look forward to collaborating with you.

**8. Be solutions-focused:** Janine is showing that solutions are accessible and meaningful. Notice that she avoids asking her audience to sacrifice.

**9. Describe, don't label:** Throughout this speech, Janine is using concrete and descriptive language that is familiar to her audience. She avoids technical terms or abstractions, like "mitigation."

**10. Have at least 1 powerful fact from a trusted messenger:** Janine doesn't weigh her speech down with numbers (which cause people to tune out). Instead, she inspires them with 1 powerful fact on the statewide increase in solar power.

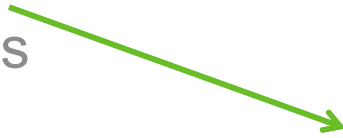
**11. Prepare, don't adapt:** Janine uses the term "preparation" instead of "adaptation" to inspire action. She knows her audience understands the term, which conjures up proactive and preventative steps that scale.

**12. Speak from the mountaintops:** Janine increases the momentum she has built up in the room. She talks big picture, and focuses on common good. In the question and answer session that follows this speech, Janine will be sure to avoid argument, specifically on details.

**13. Message discipline is critical:** Message consistency makes it easy for audiences to understand, remember, and share. Janine stays on point, and is clear and consistent.

# 1. Start with people, stay with people

Begins by showing understanding of and appreciation for the audience, and connects with their values throughout the speech



*Hello, and good afternoon.  
Thank you so much for the  
opportunity to speak today.  
I am a big fan of your  
mentorship program here  
in the local high schools –  
it's a perfect example of  
the business community  
playing a leadership role to  
improve our civic life.*

## 2. Connect on Common Values

Builds rapport by connecting with the audience's values through a community treasure.

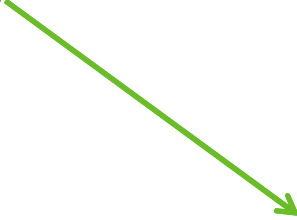


*Today I am here to talk about one of our city's treasures, the Big Sioux River. Most of us have grown up fishing or rafting there, or just walking along its banks. I bet if I asked, each of you could recall several wonderful memories with family and friends along its shores, or wading in its waters. My husband and I have spent weeks fishing there with the kids.*



### 3. Acknowledge Ambivalence

Carefully introduces climate change, respects the potential spectrum of audience attitudes, and allows people in the room to hold differing beliefs.

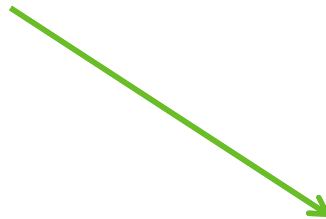


*Who has been to the Big Sioux River lately? For those of you who have, I think you'll agree it's not hard to see that the river isn't what it used to be.*

*Now I can bet we have many differing opinions in the room on what or who's to blame for these changes in our climate, and I would also wager that we can all agree we need The Big Sioux River! And, it needs us.*

## 6. Use “Facts” Not Science

Talks about the drought; the water level is down, fish are impacted, and water supplies are diminished -- irrefutable facts that the audience can see with their own eyes.



*There is change happening right in our backyards, in the backyards of all of Iowa, and throughout the country. The water level is down, and higher water temperatures are impacting fish counts and fish health. Our main source of clean drinking water is diminishing.*

## 8. Be Solutions-Focused

Janine is showing that solutions are accessible and meaningful. Notice that she avoids asking her audience to sacrifice.

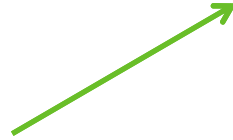


*The good news is that there are already leaders in this community who have started to do something to help. Some of the high schools in your mentorship program are helping to plant trees near the river, the Mayor has implemented smart water use, several of our churches and church goers have taken The St. Francis Pledge to lead by example in reducing their impact, and solar power is a rapidly growing industry in the state.*



## 10. Have at least 1 powerful fact from a trusted messenger

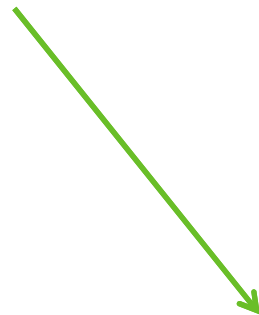
Don't weigh the speech down with numbers (which cause people to tune out). Instead, inspires them with ONE powerful fact on the statewide increase in solar power.



*According to the Argus Leader, the solar power industry in Iowa grew 33 percent in just one year. These are just a few examples of the many meaningful and powerful things we can do to prepare for and help prevent further climate change*

## 11. Prepare, Don't Adapt

Use the term “preparation” instead of “adaptation” to inspire action. The audience understands the term, which conjures up proactive and preventative steps that scale.



*According to the Argus Leader, the solar power industry in Iowa grew 33 percent in just one year. These are just a few examples of the many meaningful and powerful things we can do to prepare for and help prevent further climate*

## 13. Message Discipline is Critical

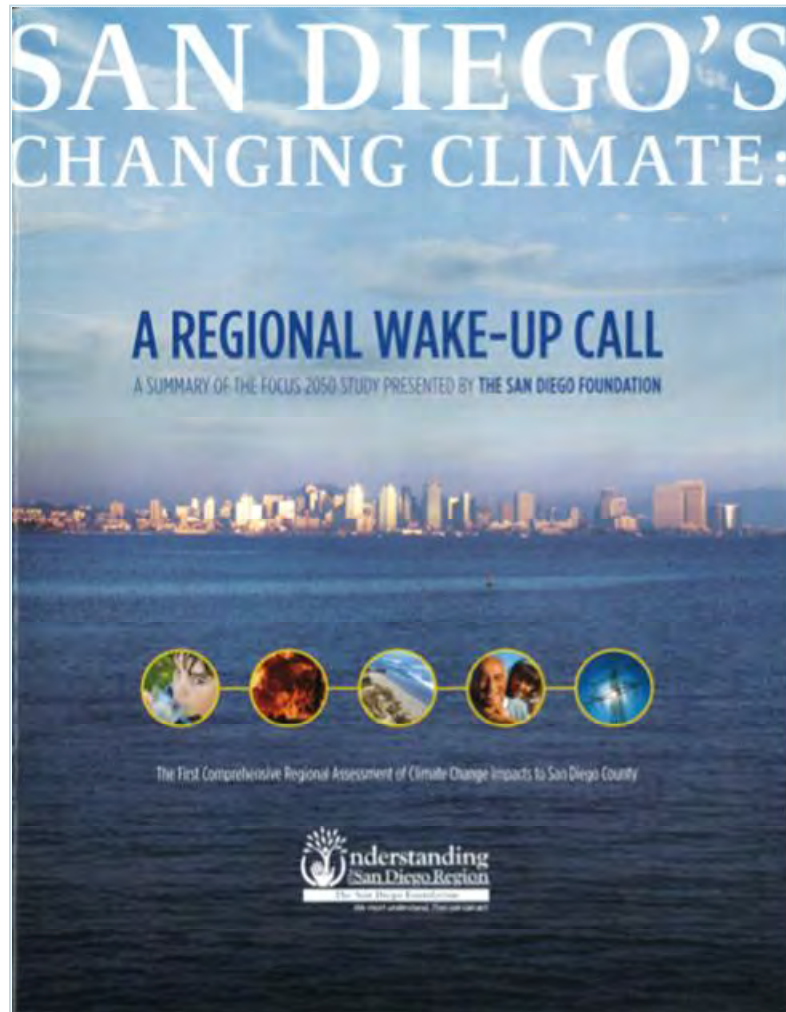
Message consistency makes it easy for audiences to understand, remember, and share. Stay on point, and be clear and consistent.



*Finally, you have the power to set a new example, to help prepare and protect our community from the impacts of climate change, and to work to preserve our treasured natural heritage, the Big Sioux River. Join me in being part of the solution. Individually we can make a difference; collectively we can do so much more. Thank you. I look forward to collaborating with you.*



# Before



# After

## San Diego, 2050 Is Calling.

### HOW WILL WE ANSWER?

## FACING THE FUTURE:

### How Science Can Help Prepare San Diego Regional Leaders for Climate Change

## People Agree: San Diego's Climate is Changing

**N**inety-seven out of 100 global climate scientists agree that climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, a leading scientific organization, states: "Human-induced climate change requires urgent action. Humanity is the major influence on the global climate change observed over the past 50 years. Rapid societal responses can significantly lessen negative outcomes."

Recent public opinion surveys have found that an overwhelming majority—84%—of San Diego County residents believe climate change is happening and almost as many expect the impacts to affect them, their families and future generations. This report is meant to provide those who live, do business, and govern in our region with up-to-date scientific understanding of how the impacts of climate change are likely to affect our region and how regional leaders are already responding to the impacts of climate change. Better understanding can help us, individually and collectively, decide which paths will define the kind of future we want to create.

### ABOUT THE SCIENCE

Information for this report was provided by a group of over 40 multi-disciplinary experts from local universities, governments, public sector agencies, nonprofits and private sector organizations throughout the San Diego region. Working together, these experts collected the most up-to-date science based on historical data, current trends, as well as a complex model that project the various impacts of climate change expected in the region related to extreme weather events, water supply, wildfires, natural resources and public health.

### 84%

OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY RESIDENTS BELIEVE CLIMATE CHANGE IS HAPPENING

### ABOUT '2050 IS CALLING'

This report is part of an effort by the Climate Education Partners (CEP) to develop and implement a climate change education plan for the San Diego region. CEP is working with local expert scientists, educators, and a wide range of community leaders, helping San Diegans learn more about, prepare for, and respond to the impacts of a changing climate. CEP operates with the understanding that together we can sustain our region's quality of life, economic vibrancy, and spectacular natural beauty, not just today, but for all future generations.

To learn more, visit [www.sandiego.edu/2050](http://www.sandiego.edu/2050)

2050 IS CALLING - REPORT 8

COMING THURSDAY...

## ***Connecting on Climate: A Guide to Effective Climate Change Communication***

- Comprehensive climate communication guide based on social science research
- Joint project between ecoAmerica and the Center for Research on Environmental Decisions at Columbia U.
- Webinar on Thurs. Dec. 11, 3:30 – 4:45 pm ET
- Visit **[connectingonclimate.org](http://connectingonclimate.org)** to sign up to be notified when guide is released (Dec. 11)



# MOMENTUS

*Empowering Individual and Institutional Leadership on Climate*



# MomentUs Leadership *(more than 150 and counting)*



DR. NORMAN ANDERSON, CEO  
American Psychological Association



REV. DR. SHARON WATKINS, General Minister  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



DR. ANTONIO FLORES, President and CEO  
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities



DR. HELENE GAYLE, President  
CARE USA



IMAM MOHAMED MAGID, President  
Islamic Society of North America



HON. GREG NICKELS, 51<sup>st</sup> Mayor  
City of Seattle



REV. GABRIEL SALGUERO, President  
National Latino Evangelical Coalition



DR. REGINA BENJAMIN, 18<sup>th</sup> U.S. Surgeon General  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



DR. WALTER BUMPHUS, President and CEO  
American Association of Community Colleges



BISHOP VASHTI MCKENZIE, Senior Bishop  
African Methodist Episcopal Church



DR. JO ANN GORA, President  
Ball State University



DR. JANE LUBCHENCO, 10<sup>th</sup> Administrator  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration



HON. GAVIN NEWSOM, Lieutenant Governor  
State of California



DR. GEORGES BENJAMIN, Executive Director  
American Public Health Association

# Brands, Research, Resources, Outreach



PATH TO  
POSITIVE



- *lead by example*
- *engage others*
- *institutional leadership*
- *collective impact*



# ***THANK YOU!***

Meighen Speiser, ecoAmerica

meighen@ecoAmerica.org

*Download reports: <http://www.ecoAmerica.org/research>*