

Climate Change Communication Self-Guided Course

An online self-guided course for anyone who wants to communicate more effectively about climate change and inspire action!

Developed by Dr. Susanne Moser for the GCCA+ Seychelles Project (2020)

Available at www.mecc.gov.sc

Background

Climate change is a frequently overwhelming, controversial and emotionally difficult issue to convey and to respond to. Yet, inaction – in terms of emission reductions, disaster preparedness or long-term adaptation – is not an option for a small island developing state like the Seychelles. It is critical that decision-makers in all sectors of Seychellois society are actively engaged to develop appropriate response strategies and that the Seychellois help shape, support and implement the necessary actions. Yet the challenge of how to raise awareness and understanding for the urgency and need for action and how to mobilize and empower people to action remain daunting challenges for all communicators. In 2018, a study undertaken by the GCCA+ project identified communication training as a top priority for climate change capacity building in Seychelles. This course was originally developed to meet specific needs identified by participants who indicated interest in the training: e.g. identifying cogent climate messages, meeting different audiences where they are at, dealing with unmotivated or sceptical audiences, linking communication effectively to motivating action, among others).

About the Course:

This course was first offered to Seychellois who wanted to improve their skills for communicating climate change and inspiring action, and was developed and facilitated by Dr. Susanne Moser, a well-known and respected climate change communication scholar and activist from the USA (www.susannemoser.com), with support from Dr. Michele Martin with the GCCA+ Seychelles project. Originally planned as a very interactive in-person week long training, the course had to be shifted to an online e-version spanning 5 weeks in response to the Covid-19 crisis. Participants in this first guided delivery of the online course offered by the GCCA+ project in April-May 2020 paired up with other participants remotely and also participated in a weekly Zoom session with the facilitators.

Current Use of the Course

This new self-guided version of the course re-uses all of the same lecture materials and exercises developed by Dr. Moser, including references to the zoom meetings, interaction with facilitators, examples from Seychelles, etc. However, the instructions for each unit have been updated to reflect self-guided use of the course materials, and the course materials are relevant and now accessible for anyone from Seychelles, other SIDS, or other countries that wants to learn more about how to be a better climate change communicator. We encourage you to dive in! We strongly recommend that course participants consider partnering up with a colleague in order to have someone else with whom to discuss the materials and plan a communication strategy.

Time to complete:

Each unit takes between 4-6 hours to complete.

The total time needed to complete the course materials is about 30 hours.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course's 5 units participants will

- 1) Have a clear understanding of the basic components of impactful climate change communication;
- 2) Know how to identify key audiences, and develop and practice audience-specific communication techniques;
- 3) Have developed a core set of key messages and practiced applying and delivering them; and
- 4) Understand the importance and role of, and practice working with, emotions, values and identity in climate change communication.

Basic instructions for completing this course

- ✓ You will need access to a computer and the internet in order to follow this course
- ✓ Course materials are all online on the website of Seychelles Ministry for Environment, Energy and Climate Change (www.mecc.gov.sc), with the exception of videos which are on YouTube.
- ✓ There are 5 units in this course. All course materials are organised under folders for each unit.
- ✓ Each unit has an INSTRUCTIONS document. This provides guidance on how to access the course materials and how to use them. It also provides links to all of the lectures and other supporting videos on YouTube. Open this document first when you are starting a unit!
- ✓ Each unit also has a SUPPORTING MATERIALS document with links to other great resources to complement your learning. In some cases these are referred to in the lectures. Be sure to check them out!
- ✓ Documents are in word or PDF formats (for documents) and can be printed or completed digitally. Videos are in MP4 format.
- ✓ The GCCA+ project has closed and at this time individuals have to follow the course independently, without interaction with the course instructors. We hope you still enjoy it and find it useful!

OVERVIEW OF COURSE CONTENTS AT A GLANCE:

LECTURES BY SUSI MOSER	EXERCISES	SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS (see each unit for PDF with links)
UNIT 1 – INTRODUCTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION		
Lecture 1 – welcome and overview Lecture 2 – Basics of climate change communication	Exercise 1: Scenarios Exercise 2: Climate change walkabout Exercise 3: Communication challenges	Video: Basics of cc science (in 3 parts) by Dr. Daniel Etongo (University of Seychelles) See Unit 1 instructions for Youtube links to all lectures and videos
UNIT 2 – WHAT, WITH WHOM, AND TO WHAT END?		
Lecture 3 – audience segmentation and identification. Lecture 4 – framing, mental models and messaging	Exercise 4: Getting to know your audience Exercise 5: Implications of framing Exercise 6: Identifying frames and key messages	Video: Interview with Journalist Patsy Athanase See Unit 2 instructions for Youtube links to lectures and videos
UNIT 3 – HOW?		
Lecture 5: the role of emotions, values, identities; motivation to change and barriers or resistance to change Lecture 6: going deeper into emotions, fostering hope, elevating motivation for action and addressing barriers	Exercise 7: Writing a letter to a loved one Exercise 8: dealing with emotional responses to climate change Exercise 9: Dealing with climate sceptics and contrarians Exercise 10: Tapping deep emotions Exercise 11: Identifying and overcoming barriers to action	Video: Interview with musician Patrick Victor See unit 3 instructions for YouTube links to all lectures and videos
UNIT 4 – WHO, VIA WHAT, TO WHAT END?		
Lecture 7: levels and forms of engagement, communication channels, platforms and messengers. Lecture 8: going deeper	Exercise 12: Exploring engagement options Exercise 13: Selecting communication channels and media Exercise 14: Identifying the right messenger Exercise 15: Drafting an integrated strategy	Video: Interview with videographer Raymond Clarisse See unit 4 instructions for YouTube links to all lectures and videos
UNIT 5 – HOW EFFECTIVE?		
Lecture 9: evaluating climate change communication for its impact Lecture 10: evaluating the effectiveness of climate change communication. This lecture concludes the course.	Exercise 16-1: Sketching theory of change Exercise 16-2: Refining theory of change communication channels and media Exercise 17: Identifying meaningful indicators and metrics Exercise 18: Reflecting on course insights and aspirations	Video: Interview with a poet: Raspyek See unit 5 instructions for YouTube links to all lectures and videos