

All for climate action!

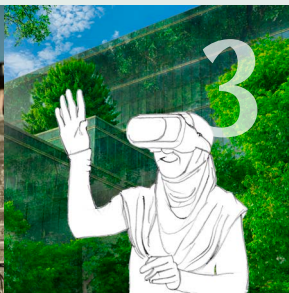
10 tips to mobilise your audience



Good examples
lead to
good deeds



Tell your story



Let people
see and feel
the future



Less CO₂?
More life!



Support
democratic
debate



It affects
everyone



Don't make it
too difficult



Choose the right
role models



Scientists, follow
your heart as well
as your head



Choose the right
moment and use
the right words
and images



Scientists agree: **CODE RED FOR HUMANITY!** Some people, in the minority now, are still denying it. Survey after survey, it is shown that climate change is becoming a bigger **concern for ordinary citizens**. So what are we doing about it in everyday life? Disasters such as the floods in the South of Belgium last year **bring the reality closer to home** for a moment, but then quickly we pick up our usual business.

Climate change is a complex issue. We are not sure whether our actions as individuals REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Disaster scenarios irritate people rather than spurring them **to action**. Nevertheless, it really is all hands on deck. Climate change is going to affect everybody, **and everybody can do something about it**. How can we encourage as many citizens, organisations and policymakers as possible to TAKE ACTION TO HELP TURN THE TIDE? To find answers to these questions, the **King Baudouin Foundation** invited EIGHT SCIENTISTS FROM SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES to talk about climate change in a series of webinars.

Are you ready to take action and encourage your audience to adopt more climate-friendly behaviours, not by being divisive, but by bringing people together? These ten effective tips will help you get started!



The King Baudouin Foundation's mission is to contribute to a better society in Belgium, in Europe and in the world. It is an actor for change and innovation, serving the public interest and increasing social cohesion. It seeks to maximise its impact by improving skills in organisations and for individuals. It also stimulates effective philanthropy by individuals and corporations. The King Baudouin Foundation was set up in 1976, on the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

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1 Good examples lead to good deeds



“Taking action together, as a group, creates added value: it motivates people more and creates social contact.”



LINDA STEG, PROFESSOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

People are **social beings**. We do what other people do. If we see our neighbours, family members and colleagues **make sustainable choices**, we are more likely to **DO SO OURSELVES**. Bottom-up initiatives in neighbourhoods or workplaces are a powerful tool to allow people to feel they can **make the difference** and help shape the new reality. **As a company, government body, organisation or citizen, you can set a good example.**

Neighbourhood power: stronger together

The City of Bruges is using “Buurtkracht” (neighbourhood power), a concept from the Netherlands, to help its residents join forces and take action on climate change. Buurtkracht supports neighbourhoods or streets that want to become fossil free. The city provides brainstorming sessions or support for tailored renovation projects and organises joint purchasing arrangements to help residents save energy, get more sustainable heating and reduce their CO₂ emissions.

2 Tell your story



“Literature can be useful to society by helping readers to put their unspoken feelings about the environment into words and help process them, ultimately encouraging readers to take action on climate change.”

“

STEF CRAPS, PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE, UGENT

We know the **FACTS AND FIGURES** about the **climate emergency**, but we feel no emotions about them. As a result, we don't take action. Storytelling, through literature, music, art, film and TV fiction, can channel **OUR FEELINGS** of *anxiety, loss, guilt or rage* over the 'climate collapse'. That can trigger an **emotional connection** that encourages us to take action.

3 Let people see and feel the future



CHANGE CREATES UNCERTAINTY. You know what you are losing, **but you don't know what you are gaining**. People need **positive images** of what a different life could look like. They need to become familiar with the contours of the change they are being asked to make. **Get them involved the story** through *pilot projects* that call for **THE GREEN REVOLUTION** in credible ways.

The future could be perfect

In the podcast series 'Un futur presque parfait' (an almost perfect future) RTBF looks at what the world could look like in 2050 if we join forces to reduce CO₂ emissions. What will everyday life look like? How will we work, live, consume, eat and travel? Get a sneak peek at [the RTBF website](#).

4 Less CO₂? More life!



THIERRY LIBAERT, COMMUNICATION EXPERT

“Find a narrative that defines CO₂ reduction not as an end in itself, but as a way of making the world a better place.”



“Hope comes through credible messages and credible actions, through the true belief that what you do is making a difference.”

ADAM CORNER, CLIMATE OUTREACH

A LOWER LEVEL OF CO₂ IN THE AIR is not a concrete vision of the future that triggers our imagination. Choose a new, *recognisable frame* for your efforts to fight climate change. **Covid-19** has driven health onto the top of people's concerns. You can build on that. A climate-neutral world is a world with **HEALTHIER FOOD**, cleaner air and a better quality of life.

5 Support democratic debate



“We have to recognise that different types of narratives are valid in the climate debate.”



THOMAS BLOCK, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, UGENT

Climate change is happening, but there is more discussion than ever on the best way to *achieve a zero-emission goal*. THAT DEBATE IS ESSENTIAL. People need to understand why change is needed. Identify those who are really listening and testing solutions, **those who do not reject people with different views as uninformed or naive**. No individual perspective (not even yours) has a monopoly on the truth; it is just one way of describing a **complex issue**. It's therefore best to start an **open, democratic debate** and to look for common values you can build on.

Britain Talks Climate

The UK NGO Climate Outreach wants to tell a story about the struggle with the climate emergency that will strike a chord among people with various values and concerns. This NGO has developed a strategic toolkit for organisations that aim at getting British people involved in the climate debate. The toolkit is based on seven population segments and addresses these groups in a targeted way.

www.climateoutreach.org

6 It affects everyone



FRED DORSIMONT, BEHAVEN

“Saying ‘we’ and addressing people as a community with a shared goal encourages them more to take action.”



*If other people don't lie awake worrying about climate, why should you? People underestimate how concerned **others** are about the CLIMATE EMERGENCY. In **PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS**, focus on things that people are already doing well. Show **how people are already taking action** and what motivates them. Address people as members of a group they belong to.*

Everyone is doing their bit

Through the Iedereen doet wat (everyone is doing their bit) campaign, the Dutch government is showing that everyone can do something about the climate in their own way. This campaign includes the appointment of climate mayor who act as examples of the fight for a better climate in their municipality and who inspire others. <https://www.iedereendoetwat.nl>

7 Don't make it too difficult



Government bodies, companies and organisations: make it as easy as possible for everyone to do something and **TO DO THE RIGHT THING**. Clear away the obstacles that make sustainable choices more difficult. Make **SUSTAINABLE CHOICES** achievable, affordable and attractive. Provide 'how to' information for SMALL AND LARGER STEPS.

8 Choose the right role models



An appropriate **role model** can be **INSPIRING**. The easy approach of choosing celebrities to become the face of the climate struggle can be counterproductive. Choose a person **whose image does not contradict** the climate-neutral lifestyle. Choose multiple individuals to personalise the message and ***tailor it for different sub-groups in society***. Work with **LOCAL HEROES** who are EASILY IDENTIFIED by the target group.

Scientists, follow your heart as well as your head



“Practitioners can help scientists translate the big picture into messages that reflect concrete experiences, resonate with people, generate motivation and stimulate dialogue.”



JULIA TERLET, BEHAVEN

Scientists communicate about CLIMATE SOLUTIONS using **statistics, analyses and a logic** that usually fail to appeal to the general public. Translate the big picture into **concrete experiences and striking images**. Alternatively, **GET CITIZENS INVOLVED in research** to encourage them to **engage in climate action**. That will help more than a *well-crafted paper that will only be read within academia*.

CurieuzenAir is a citizen science project that is mapping air quality in Brussels. More than 5,000 candidates volunteered to install a measurement pack on the street frontage of their homes. The 3,000 participants who were selected received cards and posters to inform their neighbours, and participating schools were given a communication pack for work on air quality with their pupils.

<https://curieuzenair.brussels/en/home/>

Choose the right moment and use the right words and images

“Choose your words carefully: go for language that emphasises effectiveness and urgency.”



THIERRY LIBAERT, COMMUNICATION EXPERT

Most of **OUR BEHAVIOUR** is rooted in habits, and *breaking established habits is difficult*. CHOOSE THE RIGHT MOMENT. People are **more willing** to learn new ways of behaving when they are in a new situation. Choose the right moment and opportunity to launch campaigns or activities. Choose **words that encourage action** and images that **focus on people**.

People in the spotlight

Some people in the global North still think the climate emergency is not happening now, not happening here, and not happening to us. This tendency is reinforced by the constant stream of images of hungry polar bears that are supposed to illustrate the sense of urgency. Climate change is not something that is imposed to us from outside. It is something that humanity has caused, and we have to solve it. Various, recognisable images of people should therefore be used in presentations about climate solutions.

Want to find out more?



‘Connect for Climate’ is part of the King Baudouin Foundation’s ‘Climate, the environment and biodiversity’ programme. ‘Connect for Climate’ comprises a range of initiatives to generate climate actions that are attractive, engaging and inclusive. In this context the Foundation organised a series of international webinars in 2020 and 2021 with scholars from Social Sciences and the Humanities entitled ‘How to better mobilise support for climate action?’. This publication summarises the key messages from the series.

Take another look at [the webinars](#) on the King Baudouin Foundation’s YouTube channel.

Read [the publication](#) ‘Sustainability controversies in Belgium: a narrative analysis’, that highlights the different ways in which people think and talk about these ‘hot topics’.

Meet the laureates of the [call for projects](#) “Broadening climate engagement”.

COLOPHON

All for climate action! 10 tips to mobilise your audience

Cette publication est disponible en français sous le titre:

Tous chauds pour le climat ! 10 conseils pour mobiliser votre public

Deze publicatie is beschikbaar in het Nederlands onder de titel:

Iedereen warm voor het klimaat! 10 tips om je publiek te mobiliseren

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Rue Brederodestraat 21, B-1000 Brussels

Author

Isa Van Dorsselaer

Coordination for King Baudouin Foundation

Gerrit Rauws, Dorien Baelden, Pascale Prête

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