

Communicating about our changing ocean and inspiring action

Bennett-Mintz Jennifer¹, Laura Francis² and Leslie Wickes^{1,3}

¹ National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration, Ocean Acidification Program, Hollings Marine Lab, 331 Fort Johnson, Rd., Charleston, SC, 29412, USA
E-mail: jennifer.mintz@noaa.gov

² National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, University of California Santa Barbara, Ocean Science Education Building 514, MC 6155, Santa Barbara, CA, 93106, USA

³ JHT, Inc. 2710 Discovery Dr, Suite 600, Orlando, FL 32826, USA

The changes we're seeing in our ocean provide an opportunity to engage with a variety of audiences. The relatively recent discovery of how the burning of fossil fuels is changing the chemistry of our ocean first appeared in the scientific literature in 2004. Since then, the body of scientific knowledge around ocean acidification has grown exponentially and new practices for effectively communicating about our changing ocean have been developed, assessed and implemented. Many communicators, educators and scientists are working together to effectively communicate about ocean acidification to raise awareness about its impacts and inspire actions that can be taken to mitigate and adapt to this change.

Given the difficulties inherent in presenting this complex issue and the importance of accurate and compelling messaging on this emerging topic, a number of workshops and research studies have focused on identifying how to communicate about ocean acidification effectively. Understanding gained from climate change communication efforts and the collaborations between those in the scientific and communication fields have allowed the development of effective practices for communicating about ocean acidification to incorporate psychological and sociological research, public opinion polls, and a multitude of lesson learned by practitioners.

During this workshop, we will share the community's understanding of how to communicate about ocean acidification, which can serve as a case study for communicating about ocean change more broadly. The content will be built on principles developed on the psychology of communicating about climate change, messaging by the National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation, and framing the conversation using metaphor and analogy by the Frameworks Institute. Specifically, recent ocean acidification research that can serve as case studies for communication will be shared along with a recipe for crafting effective messages with a focus on the importance of inspiring action in your audience. Additionally, participants will learn what ocean acidification communication resources and multimedia tools are available and needed for various audiences.

References

- Bales, S.N., Sweetland, J. Volmert, A. 2015. How to Talk about Climate Change and the Ocean: Prepared for the National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation with Support from the National Science Foundation. Retrieved from Frameworks Institute website: <http://frameworksinstitute.org/climate-change-and-the-ocean.html>
- Simon, A., Vomer, A., Bunten, A. Kendall-Taylor, N. 2015. The Value of Explanation: Using Values and Causal Explanations to Reframe Climate and Ocean Change. Retrieved from Frameworks Institute website: <http://frameworksinstitute.org/climate-change-and-the-ocean.html>
- Volmert, A. 2014. Getting to the Heart of the matter: Using Metaphorical and Causal Explanation to Increase Public Understanding of Climate and Ocean Change. Retrieved from Frameworks Institute website : <http://frameworksinstitute.org/climate-change-and-the-ocean.html>
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 2016. NOAA Ocean Acidification Needs Assessment Summary Report. Retrieved from NOAA Ocean Acidification Program website: oceanacidification.noaa.gov