

RAISING AWARENESS ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN SLOVENIA*

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ABSTRACT

The working paper outlines the drivers and barriers that (de)motivate people to take personal action to fight climate change. It looks at three specific aspects of motivation for climate action: (1) connection between climate action and personal reward/punishment system of people, (2) connection between climate action and being personally affected by the consequences of climate change or understanding the climate change problem, and (3) connection between climate action of people and factors such as price, availability and quality of the products or services. The working paper goes on to present some key findings of research on people's motivation for climate action, which was done in Slovenia in 2011. It explains that general awareness of the climate problem among the population in Slovenia is high, but in-depth understanding is low. People do not see the connections between their actions and climate change consequences. They also do not feel the effects of climate change yet. This leads to a situation where people believe that they cannot contribute neither to the creation nor the solution of the problem. In principle taking action to protect climate is welcome, but in practice it is welcome only if people's wellbeing or comfort is not significantly affected. The working paper shows why climate communication should be included in the discussion about a meticulous change of the global economic and political system. Without the debate about changing the economic system, it will be hard to achieve the changes needed to reduce human impact on the climate. The paper ends with opening the question whether or not recommendations for communicating the issue of climate change in Croatian society can be similar to the ones for Slovenian society.

INTRODUCTION

Addressing the climate challenge is an issue that keeps thousands of scientists, politicians and activists busy for decades and yet humanity seems to be further and further from reversing the trends in greenhouse gas emissions. One of the reasons is that we are dealing with climate change as with an environmental problem, rather than a discrepancy resulting from a dysfunctional economic system. Tackling climate change means also tackling the economic (and with it political) system that has gone astray. However, this remains Pandora's box for many people, who deal with climate protection on all levels, as they do not wish to admit that stabilizing the climate system within the current socio-economic system is an impossible endeavor.

It is also an important question whether or not the changes of behavior of individuals can make a significant enough change in the impact on the climate system. Many people implement steps to protect the climate, such as recycling, but those steps are marginal in the overall human impact on climate. However, should people in the developed world be able to make a deep behavioral change, such as exiting the consumption craze and organizing a self-sustaining lifestyle, perhaps this can make a difference when it gains the critical mass.

With these issues being open as the points of departure, a research was done in 2011 in Slovenia on how to best communicate climate challenge among Slovenian population (Živčič, 2012). The objective of the research was to provide guidance for communication about climate change in order to raise awareness of the problem among people in Slovenia. The research tried to identify the drivers and barriers that

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(de)motivate people to take personal action to fight climate change, exploring the following specific aspects:

- connection between climate action and the personal reward/punishment system,
- connection between climate action and being personally affected by the consequences of climate change or understanding the climate change problem, and
- connection between climate action and factors such as price, availability and quality of the products or services.

STATE OF AWARENESS ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN SLOVENIA

Research showed several interesting points. The most important one is that Slovenians are highly aware of the seriousness of the climate change problem, yet a closer look at the awareness shows that in spite of the high awareness of the seriousness of climate change, Slovenians are only averagely informed about climate change, whereby they are slightly better informed on consequences than on solutions. There is an established link between extreme weather events and climate change. People tend to notice the consequences of climate change.

Being aware of the seriousness of the problem, the Slovenians estimate that not enough action is being taken on all levels. The action is the most lacking at the level of Slovenian government, while the EU is the most progressive in action. People are willing to take action and are taking action to fight climate change, mainly because acting together can make an impact. Many people still need to know better what it is that they can do about the problem. Recycling remains the most popular climate protection measure. Saving energy is popular and also clean energy is an acceptable measure (for which people would be ready to pay a bit more), but using public transport is not a very acceptable measure.

KEY FINDINGS ON WHAT SHAPES COMMUNICATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN SLOVENIA

Research was done through in-depth interviews on a sample of 17 people, applying the following criteria for selecting the interviewees: age, education, region and lifestyle. Furthermore, two focus groups were organized to discover how the participants interact with each other, how they co-shape their views and the view of the group (Bryman, 2001). The criteria for selecting the participants were again age, education and lifestyle, while region criteria was the distinctive criteria for the groups: one focus group was organized around participants coming from rural areas and one on participants from urban areas.

Personal vs societal values

The first important conclusion that can be observed from the research is that people know what their values should be, but they do not live in accordance with them. As much as people still cling to the traditional values (honesty and friendliness), in reality they know that to live their lives according to another set of values (individualism and competitiveness), is making it easier for them to live successfully among other people. However, it did not seem that the interviewees or the participants of focus groups were aware to what extent the societal values prevail in the practical aspects of their life.

A parallel can be drawn between attitude towards climate change and general aspects of people's lives. People live up to social values, in spite of knowing the desired values. Similarly, people live climate-unfriendly lifestyles, in spite of knowing what the climate friendlier lifestyles should be.

With many people the personal values were in clash with the social values, yet in practical terms they adhered to social values. This means that climate communication must build a change in social values rather than the personal ones. Figure 1 shows the categorization of the values among individual and social values.

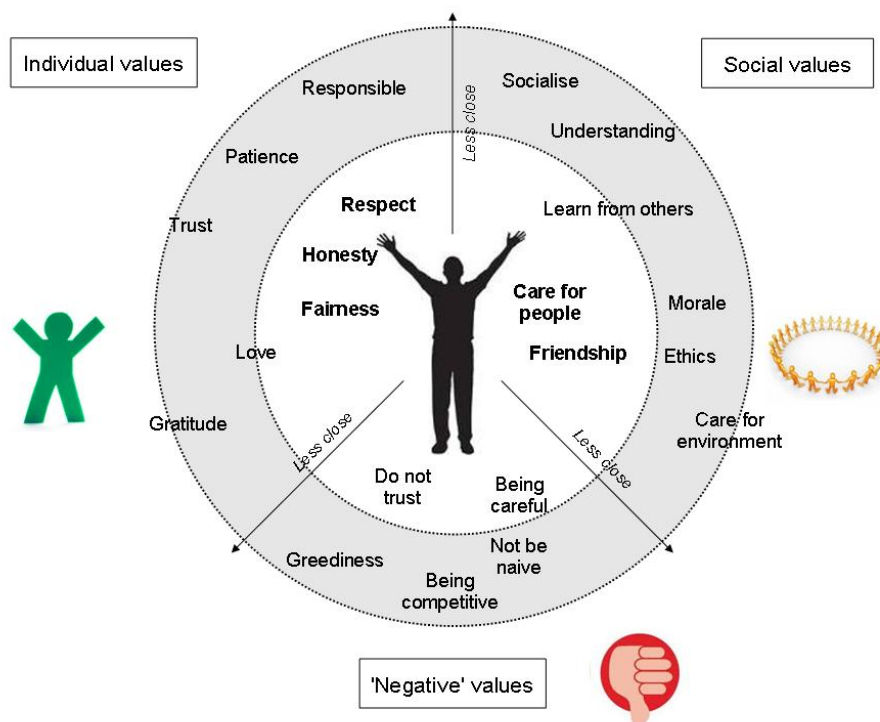


Figure 1: Categorisation of values of the interviewees

When pointing out that people departed from the important values, this has to be pointed out in a positive, supportive way. Interviews showed that people do not like to be punished, but reward and recognition are welcome. A positive approach in discussion and praising or rewarding seems to be attractive to people. If their behavior is not according to the desired behavior, people would like to have it explained and be shown tolerance, which means that climate change should be explained to people in a way that they can understand.

From time to time people realize that in order to be in line with their desired values, they need to change their habits. People mainly change habits to feel better about themselves or to do something good for themselves. Change of habit must evoke positive feelings in people, which means that for example communication campaigns must be long enough to build such feelings. If proper motivation is found, limiting oneself is not a major problem for people, and they do not tend to have really bad feelings about limiting themselves (except when they fail).

Motivations for changing habits

It is estimated that there is a discrepancy between what people say motivates them and what in reality actually does. Respondents choose motivation factors that are not really there, but would look bad in the eyes of other people if they did not choose them (e.g. helping others). As far as the most important motivation factors are concerned, having better feelings about oneself and better health are certainly believed to be the top motivations (for more details see Figure 2): basically people are motivated by personal wellbeing. What probably does have more influence than assigned, but respondents do not seem to know or admit, are praise, award, ethics and other people's behavior. Praise for example is not rated as highly important, yet when the values were discussed, the respondents explained they do not want to be punished, but they do want to be acknowledged for what they do well.



Figure 2: Factors that motivate change of habits of the interviewees according to the research

When exploring the motivations for biking or public transport use, the use of solar energy and buying same-size appliances, one important conclusion is that some of the motivations will be of a more social nature and some of a more personal nature. Both types should be used when triggering the change of habits, only they should be used in different manners. It is important how people receive the message of motivations - do you communicate the message to an individual sitting in front of a TV or to a group through a screen in a stadium? Social motivational messages should be communicated in a social way, individual motivations in an individual way. Climate messages that will be delivered to groups of people, for example school lessons, should build on socially based motivations, such as the wellbeing of society. Climate messages that will be delivered to individuals, for example advertisement or article in a newspaper, should build on individual motivations, such as better health.

People change habits if it makes them feel better, which means that protecting climate would mean a positive experience for people if they would feel good about it. This is what should be achieved through communication for changing habits. It should be pointed out to people that changes in their behavior are good for themselves (and close family or friends) and not solely by pointing out that changes are good for other people. Close people do leave an impact on us. The implication for communicating climate change should be that changing habits towards climate friendlier ones can be triggered through the influence of others, and the power of spreading the message from mouth to mouth should be harnessed.

With changing habits, some participants have pointed out that there is a sort of snowball effect, where changing one habit becomes a part of a bigger change, because one starts to look at things differently. In combination with the 'step by step' approach that was highlighted by participants, this makes a good basis for communicating the change of a lifestyle.

Influences on decision-making

Similarly to the discrepancy in motivations, there is estimated discrepancy also in the factors that influence people's decisions. Practicality and quality seem to guide people's decisions (see Figure 3 for more details on factors that influence decisions), but it can be felt that the respondents often choose factors, which in practice do not play a role in their decisions, but it would make respondents look bad if those are not chosen those (e.g. environment and awareness). It can also be estimated that there are some factors, for which respondents believe that they do not play a role in their decisions, while in reality they do (e.g. media, commercials, subsidies, technology, status and other people).

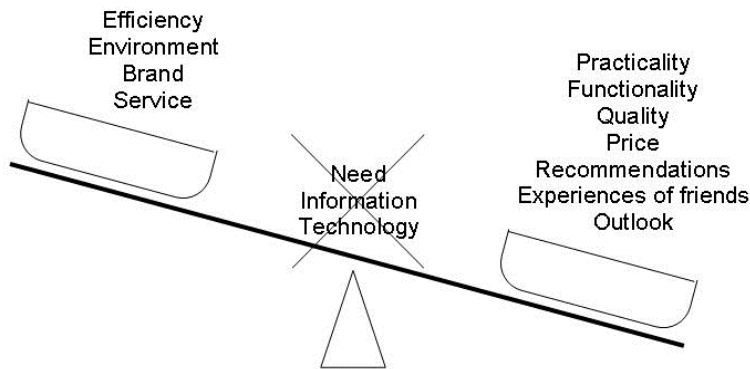


Figure 3: Factors that influence people's decisions according to the research

While studying the relevance of factors, it was clear that there are also factors that can exercise influence due to social conditions. Such factors are environment, durability and an impact on life. This means that while personal preference might be influenced mainly by practicality, price and quality, social preferences might also be shaped by the impact on environment and life or durability.

Attitudes to climate change

Associations to climate change show low knowledge of climate change. Many respondents relate climate change with weather or other consequences of climate change. The association with solutions is rather weak. Although generally low in Slovenia, there is a certain degree of climate scepticism present. However, as much as people might be sceptical about the cause of climate change, they are not sceptical about humanity's negative impacts on environment. This is a basis that should be used to direct climate communication from purely climate change communication to sustainability communication. When talking about informing about climate change, people want practical and preferably visual information on climate change.

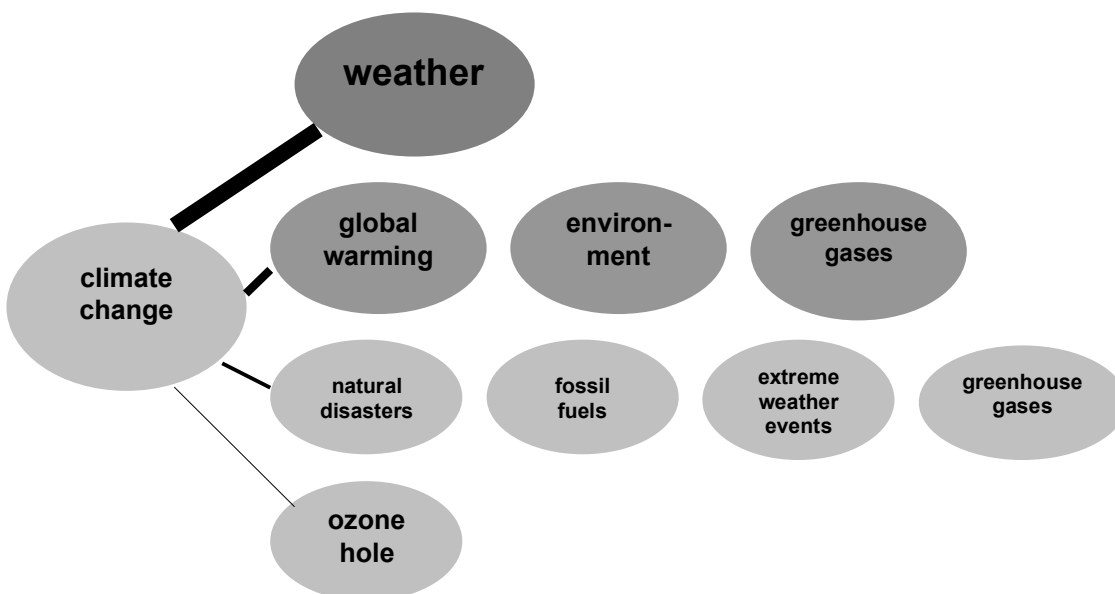


Figure 4: Associations of the interviewees to climate change, ranked according to importance (from highest – top, to lowest – bottom)

Climate change does not affect people's lives yet, or at least not sufficiently to want to worry about it. Most of the people do not really feel impacts of climate change in their lives, except for the occasional weather impacts (see Figure 5 for details on the climate consequences that the interviewees experienced and the related emotional distress). The closer that the respondents were to the nature, the more they seemed to feel the impacts. Climate change consequences are also noticed mainly with outdoor activities (holidays) and when cars are destroyed by hail. The research participants seem to feel consequences more because of media attention for the consequences. The seriousness of climate change consequences is perceived as rather strong (3,4 on the scale of 1 – 5, 5 being the strongest), whereby the fact that the problem is still being explored reduces the seriousness of it.

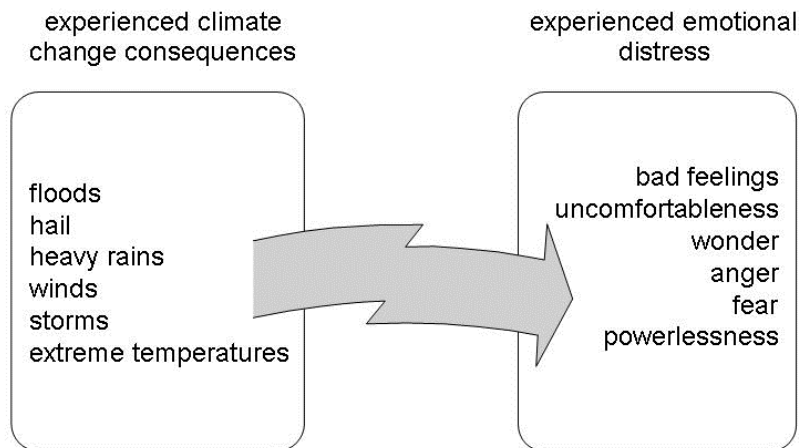


Figure 5: Experienced emotional distress of the interviewees related to climate change consequences

When talking about informing the public of climate change, the findings show that people want practicality and preferably visual information on climate change. Information about climate change must be as practical as possible: tangible consequences, practical solutions. Information must be easy to understand, and if numbers and data are provided, they need to be interpreted to the people (e.g. what does 1°C rise of temperature mean in practice?). Visual aids were also stressed, but graphs were identified as something that does not really help in understanding. An unresolved dilemma was whether to make climate communication scientific, and therefore trustful, or more commercialized and therefore prone to critique. In the case of a too-scientific approach the problem was that it would not reach out to all people, while in the case of commercialization the problem would be the quality of the communication. This remains an open question for further research.

The most useful channel for communicating climate information should be the Internet. As people do not know what to trust from the information in media, the use of the Internet is welcome because there they can filter information and find more detailed information. Also it seems that the Internet is a tool, where people can actually share and communicate information and experiences, builds more trust than one way media, where one journalist tells one story. Among media, TV is a good tool to be used, but also the importance of radio shows should not be underestimated, especially when addressing older people and men. People trust and believe in information from other people too. Usually they rely on people close to them for information.

In the problem of skepticism, the solutions offered were to ensure that climate communication is based on logical, not alarming, well-interpreted, appealing to common sense and sound data (more sources, trustful and credible sources), while aided with a visual and practical angle. A similar message as outlined above appeared here too: people might be skeptical about the cause of climate change, but they are not skeptical about the negative impacts of humans on the environment. This is a basis that should be used for communication too, orienting it from purely climate change communication to sustainability

communication. An interesting conclusion is also that no matter how much science is sound and sources credible, some people will be following their 'gut feeling' for building a picture. This, in combination with the findings of the psychology section explains why there is a place for charisma in the climate change debate (both on the science side and on the side of skepticism).

A key conclusion in regard to communicating climate change is that it may not be imposed or critical, but positive and rewarding. The communication should transfer the message that people do something good for themselves by acting to protect climate; that it can make them feel better to protect the climate; and that they will be acknowledged for doing something good. The focus groups reinforced the conclusion of the interviews that people like to be awarded and stimulated for their 'good deeds'.

For people, climate change and connections between personal behaviour and climate change effects are too vague to be on the mental map. Awareness of the climate problem is high, but awareness of the connections is poor; people see the problem, but not the connections. People hardly ever consider what impact their actions would have on others (except on their kids) and even if they do so, they do not really believe the link until it is proven. People do not feel that they contribute to the problem, so they have difficulties also in understanding that they can help solve it. Communication should be oriented into establishing clear links between personal actions and consequences of climate change and overcoming the feeling of powerlessness to make a difference. People want the government to provide a framework for addressing climate change. People feel a discrepancy between the seriousness of the problem and the lack of seriousness in responding to it, which is creating confusion among people.

Attitude to climate protection measures

The most popular measures tend to be those that do not affect people's wellbeing or comfort significantly and are linked to saving energy or water (and consequently money): switching off lights, insulating, using efficient appliances, showering instead of bathing or eliminating stand-by use. At the same time it can be observed that the most popular measures are those that are well known to the public, because of the raising of awareness and subsidies (see Table 1). The next group of measures is related to the actions that people in principle see as a good action to do, and therefore believe they are doing, but in reality still to a small extent. For example, using a bike was claimed to be a popular measure, but many respondents commented that they do it occasionally, because a car is used in many situations. The third group of measures shows a great variety, but one characteristic is that it starts to demand more effort and has more impacts in life. Another observation is that the connection of those measures to reducing greenhouse gas emissions is not widely known and/or accepted.

It can be observed that people know these are good actions to do, but in reality they are not done to a big extent. For example, avoiding consumption was not too harshly criticized, and many people thought they only buy what they need. However, they mentioned that they still bought items that are not strictly needed. The least popular group of measures is avoiding flying (be it long or short distance), eating less meat and having less children. Most of these measures go harshly against people's beliefs (travel is interesting; we are facing too slow of a population growth in Slovenia; and meat is healthy). The least favorable solution was to have less children, as people thought that this really does not make a difference, and that it is people's duty to reproduce.

Table 1: Popularity of actions for protecting the climate according to the preferences of the interviewees

	Does it	Sometimes or would consider it	does	Does not do it	Overall score
Turning off lights	16	1			49
Installing better insulation	15	2			47
Using efficient appliances	14	3			45
Showering instead of bathing	13	4			43
Eliminating stand-by use	13	3		1	42
Reusing or fixing items	12	4			40
Using bike	11	5		1	38
Buying locally produced products	11	4		2	37
Reducing temperature in their home by 1 or 2 degrees	11	2		3	35
Demanding policies and measures	11	2		4	35
Using green electricity	9	7		1	34
Not using air conditioning	9	6		2	33
Avoiding consumption	7	10			31
Reducing speed when travelling by car	8	4		5	28
Doing some things manually	6	8		3	26
Using public transport	6	7		4	25
Installing photovoltaic panels	6	7		3	25
Buying same sized or smaller appliances	6	6		5	24
Avoiding short flights	5	3		8	18
Eating less meat	4	6		6	18
Avoiding exotic holidays	1	5		11	8
Having less children	1	3		11	6

There is a need for creating a stronger link between personal actions and climate consequences, as this link is likely to also strengthen the belief that actions by all people matter also when resolving the problem. It is necessary to show that even one individual contributes, and that more individuals together do make a difference (both in positive and negative ways). Communication should be oriented into overcoming the feeling of powerlessness and inability of individuals to make a difference. It is estimated to be a good idea to stimulate the young people to demand governmental action, while older people should play as an engine in generating movements of regular people. The possibility to change the 'system' should also be communicated.

RESPONDING TO THE KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Connection between climate action and personal reward/punishment system of people

The findings show that people do not like to be punished, but reward and recognition are welcome. People like to be awarded and stimulated for their 'good deeds'. People also change habits if it makes them feel better. However, it could not be clearly established that they would take climate action if they were personally rewarded for it or not take action if they had to sacrifice their comfort (in other words: be punished). As shown below, in Figure 6, rewards seem to be either of an emotional or of a rational (monetary) character. The rational rewards might be a stimulant for some action in the everyday life of people, but not in all cases. If climate action brings no real loss in comfort and people do not have to proactively do something, then rational reward will be stimulating enough to change people's ways (e.g. using energy saving appliances, getting subsidies, and reducing temperature). However, in actions that

affect the personal happiness (having children or eating meat), or have the status of luxury comfort (exotic holidays), people will not be stimulated by the rational rewards, because they might seem like a punishment or loss of success to them. The emotional rewards, on the other hand, can be a strong motivator, but not in all cases either. In cases when people can look good in the eyes of the others or will feel better about themselves, emotional rewards will do the trick (e.g. feeling good because of doing some action for the environment or visibly showing your action). In cases when the action cannot be seen by others, emotional reward might not be the trigger for change.

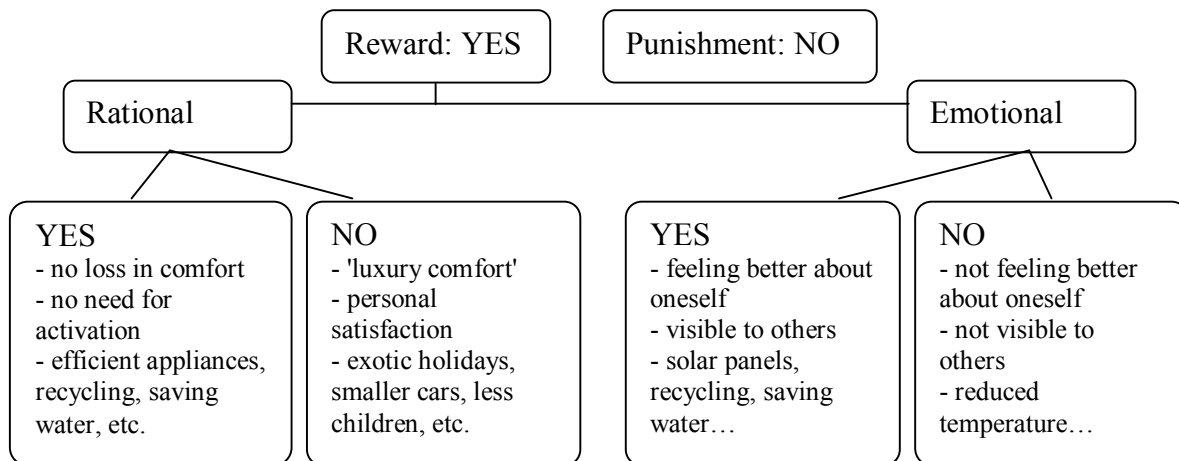


Figure 6: Scheme on motivations and demotivations for changing habits related to climate action, based on findings of the research

Connection between climate action and being personally affected by the consequences of climate change or understanding the climate change problem

The Eurobarometer studies (Europeans’ attitudes towards climate change, 2008; Europeans’ attitudes towards climate change, 2009), lead to believe that people, who understand the connection between their behavior and climate change, or have been affected by the consequences of climate change, are more likely to change their habits. Also some of the Slovenian opinion polls (RTV Slovenija, 2010) show the connection between awareness or affectedness and action. However, the research revealed a somewhat different picture. Firstly, only a few participants of the research said that they happen to question themselves about their influences on the environment, but not systematically. Secondly, the respondents mainly did not see a connection between the impacts in their lives and the climate change problem; the link is not sufficiently proven for them. Being affected by climate change consequences was a motivation for some people to act, but most felt too powerless to make a difference, because personal action is not enough and they cannot change a lot on the global level. Thirdly, not many people felt the impacts of climate change in their lives. Even though they witnessed consequences of climate change, this does not seem to make them think about the cause or connection to climate change- and even less about action (only a few observed such links, the majority not. All in all, it can be concluded that people believe that they do not contribute a lot to the environmental problems, which is also the origin of belief that they cannot do a lot to resolve the present problems. This is why the understanding of connections between people’s actions and climate change or affectedness with consequences do not seem to translate into increased motivation for changing climate damaging habits.

Connection between climate action of people and factors such as price, availability and quality of the products or services

The desk research shows that there is a link between climate action and factors, such as price, availability and quality of the service. It can be observed from Eurobarometer studies (Europeans' attitudes towards climate change, 2008; Europeans' attitudes towards climate change, 2009) and RTV Slovenija (2010) polls that from one quarter to over one third of people engage in climate action, because taking action will reduce costs and hence save money. The information obtained through the research also seems to provide a positive answer to the upper question. The most important factors to influence people's purchase decisions are practicality or functionality, quality, price and recommendations or experiences. While personal preference might be influenced mainly by practicality, price and quality, social preferences might also be shaped by the impact on environment and life or durability. It can be estimated that the primary reason for taking climate action is not environmental or climate change concerned. Action is mainly still a monetary issue, the primary reason being to save money. Saving climate is a welcome by-product, but people still mostly do not understand how their action will contribute to stabilization of the climate system.

Drivers and barriers that (de)motivate people to take personal action to fight climate change

The key drivers that motivate action are monetary improvements (saving money or receiving subsidy) or improvements in personal comfort. Another key driver can be recognition of the actions (e.g. naming the persons who installed PV panels on the roof). The key barrier is the decrease of comfort, when one might have to sacrifice an easy going lifestyle to achieve change. Another important barrier is the feeling of powerlessness, which stops people from taking action, because they believe that their contribution is either too small or that bigger actors must change first (governments and companies must act). Abundance is an important barrier, because people are able to lead satisfied lives, and do not have to care too much about the effects on the environment.

CLIMATE COMMUNICATION IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM

It is of utmost relevance to understand that climate change is deeply intertwined with the global capitalistic system. This is often not understood enough by the variety of actors that seek solutions to the climate change problem and hence the gap between awareness and action remains wide. While a large part of action focuses on informing people about climate change and promoting solutions- from renewable energy to biking, from voluntary pledges to emissions trading - there is not enough linkage with communication on the need to change the global market system. This is reflected in the research findings in several points.

The first such point is that there are some people, who are well aware that a deeper change in the system is needed. When they are faced with climate change communication without a link to the message about the need to restructure the system, they find the climate change communication 'idiocy'. The second point is the finding that some people do wish to live according to their values concerning living in line with planetary limitations, but are ridiculed by the society, or it is very hard to live according to their values (e.g. dysfunctional public transport vs. an easily available car). Some people know that they need to live differently, but the capitalist system stimulates them to stay within its limits. Those who wish to act, are trapped in the system, and do not know how to get out of it. Even when they do know how to break out of the system, it often takes too much energy and effort. Eventually it is easier to remain trapped in a circle of which one knows is wrong: this causes internal discrepancies among values of certain people. There seems to be one crucial difference in the direction of contributing to the problem vs. contributing to the solution. While when contributing to the climate problem one is fully in line with the wider capitalistic system that makes you consume (using natural resources and leaving pollution), in the case of solving the problem one is almost fully against this system (reducing

consumption, using less polluting forms of transport, and eating local food). People do try to act with small contributions, but only very few will try to change the system as such or try to fully exit the system. The third point is that without wanting it, people support the capitalist system, because they do not know all the implications of their habits or behavior. People are not aware that their actions affect the environment and other people, because the links are not visible or direct enough. Yet, if they were sure about the effects of their actions on the climate system or distant peoples, the people who participated in the research would try to rethink their behavior.

To guarantee successful climate action, it is necessary to move out of the climate change framework. Climate change should, first of all, be communicated as a part of the wider environmental agenda, and, second, as a part of even wider issue: change of the global economic system. Climate communication must involve a demand for structural changes. Communicating climate change without communicating the need to significantly transform the economic system is bound to fail.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNICATING CLIMATE CHANGE IN SLOVENIA

The key step in communicating climate change is forming the message correctly. Although the list of 'dos' and 'don'ts' is a long one, it is the most important to give practical and tangible information, but formulated in a positive and attractive manner - much like the general messaging or marketing. The first important step is to define the target group and learn about it - how do they formulate their views, what is attractive to them, etc. When trying to change beliefs, find out from where the people get their beliefs. If the group leans towards self-generated belief, give them experiences or rational arguments. If they rely more on beliefs that are generated externally, communicate through experts or authorities. The message must be adjusted to the group: if the group shares a certain worldview, form the message accordingly.

The general tone of the message should not be alarming or create a feeling of guilt, blame or fear, as people will seek refuge in denial. Also it is important to avoid scaring people, rather provide realistic and practical information that is as tangible and visual as possible. Highlight benefits for the community and for personal life. Do not communicate a decrease of comfort, but instead an improvement of the quality of life. Make climate change an issue of now and here, not of the future in Bangladesh. Do not communicate that climate change is threatening, rather say 'we need to avoid the risks of climate change'. To make the message noticed, or 'sticky', use stories and emotions along with unusual, and dramatic information. The message should be unique and distinctive. It must have relevance for people, and it must be close to people (familiarity). Spoken message and non-verbal communication should be harnessed.

As values are at people's core, those should be engaged in communication. However, today's values have no universally accepted definition, which provides space for interpretation on which consumption is based. This is why defining people's values is one key step. The next key step is bringing the fragmented values (we have one set of values as individuals and another set of values as society) back into wholeness.

As often there is a strong messenger-effect on people, the right people should be selected to act as messengers. Build on pro-social people and combine charisma with scientific message. As some people are more able to start an epidemic than others, they should be engaged: connectors - talented for connecting people; connoisseurs - talented for connecting information and spreading information; and sellers - talented for persuading people (Gladwell, 2004). It is vital that the messenger is a role model and provides an example to other people.

To trigger personal action, crucial changes are needed on a personal level. Instead of seeking 'the best', one must learn to seek what is 'good enough'. One must also learn to lower expectations, show gratitude for what he/she has, regret one's decisions less and pay less attention to what others are doing. One also

needs to question the rationality of people's habits and challenge the most basic assumptions. It is needed that one reflects on the real needs and use common sense in defining those. Personal goals need to be supported by strategy for reaching them. A change of habit must evoke positive feelings in people and contributions must be acknowledged.

On a social level, one can try to harness human herd mentality through human interaction, influence, word of mouth, building of values, beliefs and purposes along with letting other people co-create. People are happier in a herd, plus they make better decisions - group decision-making is inherent to human culture, because a group has memory or social knowledge and predictions (Earls, 2007). Decisions made by a group are better than the predictions of individuals. The involvement of people in forming solutions can yield better results

To make a social change, one needs to create a wave. When systems start to destabilise, even small events can lead into large changes: one should look for such events and connect the small, but right groups of people around them. One needs to make the path visible: the more walked a path is, the more interesting it is to others. It is important to form a large movement that motivates people to join.

Another possible action is employing the so-called 'push-pull' strategy. People generally belong into two groups: those who are willing to change their ways (but feel confined by society in doing so), and those who are not interested in introducing changes. At the same time, everybody seems to have the perception that the governmental institutions are not doing enough, which is the basis for applying the strategy. People who are willing to change, need to trigger (pull) action from the government, pressure the government to make changes and adapt new laws and rules. Based on this pressure the government pushes new legislation, which is the push, needed for the people who do not want to change their habits. Those that are willing to change will feel satisfied with new framework and will not continue to feel ridiculed by the society, while the others will be able to adapt. In this way a step by step circle to push changes forward can be created, the crucial point being to efficiently identify and engage those who are willing to change to create pressure for legislation changes.

For society to act as one, communities and relations are needed; the disintegrated, individualistic society must be re-integrated. A disintegrated society cannot act, because it is just a mass of individuals, each with his/her own vision, but no shared story. Hence one needs to rebuild trust for cooperation and re-create social safety nets.

ARE THE RESEARCH FINDINGS RELEVANT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION IN CROATIA?

A fast comparison with the results of research *Dobra klima za promjene* (2008) shows that the situation in Croatia is very similar to the situation in Slovenia. Namely, the research reveals that 72% of Croatian people believe climate change to be a very serious problem. The highest concern is in the Adriatic region, which is likely to be more affected by climate change. People perceive only direct threats of climate change, such as health threats, as being dangerous, while wider threats, such as negative effects on food production, are not perceived as dangerous.

The study also shows that in spite of high declared concern, the level of knowledge on causes and effects of climate change is rather low. Croatians are mainly informed about climate change over media and less likely through school, friends or family. Over 90% of the respondents believe that Croatia should do more to reduce greenhouse gases. They believe that government and companies are the most responsible for reducing the emissions. A large majority of respondents claims to take steps for protecting the environment and is also ready to pay more for environmentally friendlier sources of energy. Their readiness to pay more is higher than seen in general throughout the EU, hence it should be harnessed to promote efficiency and environmentally friendlier consumption.

Perhaps it is oversimplified to say that because the state of awareness on climate change is similar in Croatia and Slovenia, it can be assumed that the findings and recommendations from the research on communicating climate change in Slovenia are applicable also to Croatia. However, some of the general recommendations, stemming from the research in Slovenia, visibly overlap with recommendations from general guides on communicating climate change (see for example *The psychology of climate change communication*, 2009; *The rules of the game*, 2005; *New rules: new game. Communications tactics for climate change*, 2005; European Commission, 2010). Therefore it can be assumed that the general rules for communicating climate change would apply also to Croatia, while the details on how to approach specific target groups in Croatia should be subject to research or at least discussion among the scientists and activists in Croatia.

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