



Guidance

Title: South East Climate Change Partnership Communications Strategy							
Keywords: partnership, regional partnership, communications.							
Audience: Regional climate change partnership co-ordinators; stakeholder organisations							
Messages in the ESPACE strategy to which the guidance applies:	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
	8.	9.	10.X	11.	12.	13.	14.
<p>Sentences linking the guidance to relevant strategy messages: 10: As a partnership organisation, SECCP has a key role in communicating climate change adaptation messages to its Partners, including emerging policy and practice by Partners, and to external audiences. SECCP has adopted a three year strategy to prioritise and co-ordinate this work, establish key messages and audiences and provide a framework for Partners' own communications. This will be reviewed to take account of change management approaches developed within ESPACE.</p>							
Photo/diagram/map: N/A				Overview: The Communications Strategy provides a framework for partnership working to promote awareness of and action on key messages on climate change impacts and adaptation.			
<p>Description: The communication strategy aims to support delivery of the Partnership's work programme; it includes SECCP's communications objectives, audiences, key messages and communications components. It discusses the roles of the communications working group and of Partners. SECCP's communications are intended to be complementary to and supportive of Partners' own communications on climate change issues.</p> <p>Communication strategy objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of climate change issues among our key audiences • Position the Partnership as the authority on climate change in the South East and as a key resource for organisations • Ensure efficient and effective two-way communications within the Partnership and encourage best practice in exchange of information • Develop key messages about climate change and ensure uptake by Partners • Produce integrated and co-ordinated communications activities • Influence regional, national and European networks and stakeholders in support of the Partnership's work • Assist in recruiting new Partners. <p>SECCP's principal audiences are policy makers, decision makers and practitioners in organisations in the region or which affect the region's ability to respond positively to climate change issues. Audiences are both internal and external:</p>							

Internal

- Our Partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Our President and Patron
- Our Executive Committee and working groups
- Our Sector Groups
- Our Staff

External

- Potential Partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors - e.g. local authorities, national bodies, public agencies, businesses, social, economic and environmental non-profit organisations etc
- Government and Parliament
- Inter-regional – e.g. climate change partnerships in other parts of the UK
- Research institutes and universities
- Trade associations
- Professional bodies and networks
- International – e.g. the EU and appropriate organisations across Europe, including the South East's officers and representatives in Brussels
- Media

SECCP's key messages are:

- SECCP is an independent authority on climate change in the South East.
- SECCP is a membership organisation made up of public, private and voluntary sector organisations working together to ensure the region is prepared for the impacts of climate change.
- SECCP seeks to provide up to date information and advice to Partners and other stakeholders – and also draws on their experience and information.
- SECCP's principal focus is on climate change impacts and adaptation and on building capacity within the region to respond – while recognising the opportunities and urgent need for mitigation.
- Climate change is happening now due to the legacy of past emissions and will continue for many decades, whatever action is taken now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Some change is now unavoidable.
- Climate change is the result of both natural and human causes, and there is clear evidence that human causes are increasingly important.
- The level of global climate change we expect this century is unprecedented.
- It is essential that we increase efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, in order to reduce the scale of climate change *beyond* the next few decades and help to avoid the risk of abrupt or dangerous climate change.
- The level of short to medium-term greenhouse gas mitigation will help to determine the level of adaptation required in the longer term.
- Unavoidable climate change will have greater impacts on southern and eastern areas than other areas of the UK. These will affect our economic, social and environmental well-being.
- The impacts are likely to create some opportunities for specific sectors and areas, although overall these are likely to be outweighed by the risks.
- Every organisation in the South East needs to use the best current understanding of climate change in making decisions and plans that are likely to be affected by its impacts.
- Organisations need to work together to adapt to the likely impacts of climate change.

It is important that these points are conveyed together as an integrated message about the challenges that climate change presents to us all. It is also important that communications recognise that providing information does not always lead to greater awareness – and that increasing awareness *can* leave people with an overwhelming feeling that the problem is too large or long term for their own actions to have any effect, that it is too confusing, is already decided or is inherently intractable. Awareness therefore needs to be developed alongside meaningful responses that help people to make a positive difference – i.e. their sense of agency. The association between individuals and organisations – which is a key aspect to what the Partnership offers – is an important mechanism for building confidence in the messages that we are all conveying and for supporting that sense of agency. Awareness, agency and association are important components to communicating climate change, as is the need to reflect on actions that are being taken.

Author:

Further information

1. SECCP Communications Strategy 2006-09
2. www.climatesoutheast.org.uk