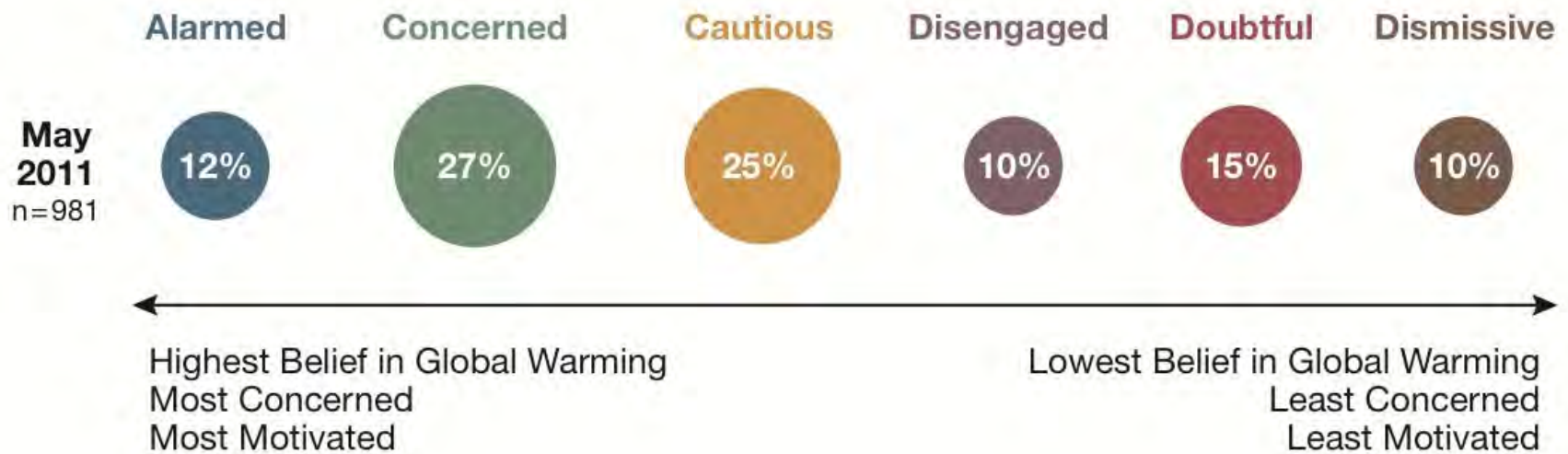


Strategic Framing for Climate Change Communication

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**Narragansett Bay
Research Reserve**



Proportion represented by area

Source: Yale / George Mason University

NNOCCI National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation

NNOCCI is a partnership between informal science educators, climate, cognitive and social scientists, and evaluators whose mission is to change the world through better communication techniques around climate change.



New England Aquarium

Protecting the blue planet



CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Lifelong Learning Group



ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS



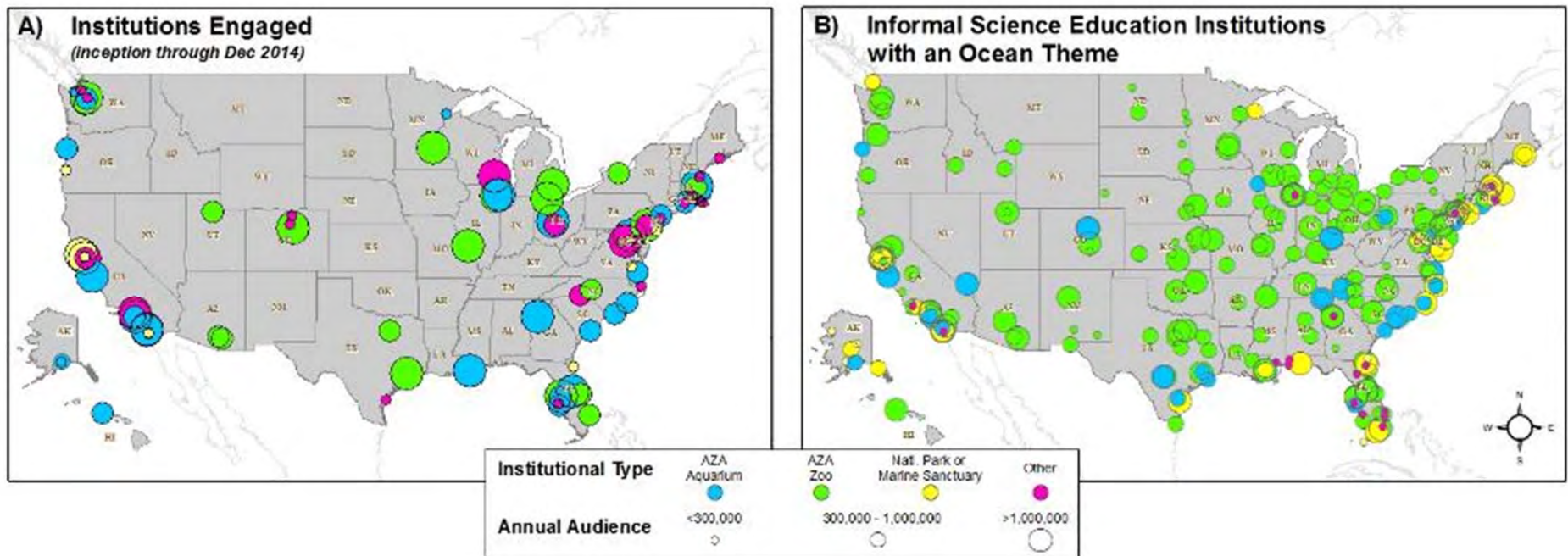
NATIONAL AQUARIUM

new knowledge.org

PENNSTATE



NNOCCI Reach: Current & Future



The Opportunity: Audience



181 million visitors per year!

The Opportunity: A Primed Audience

70% of visitors agree that the most important environmental issue confronting the world is climate change.

(NWZAA, 2009 & Ocean Project, 2009)

The Opportunity: A Primed Audience

75% of visitors believe zoos & aquariums should make recommendations for how the public can protect the environment.

(CLiZEN 2012)

Our Goal: Reframe the Conversation



From **Personal** to **Public**

Multiple Conversation Strategies for Social Change

- Inter-personal
- Intra- and Inter-organizational
- Mediated (Mass Media and Social Media)

Strategic Framing is...

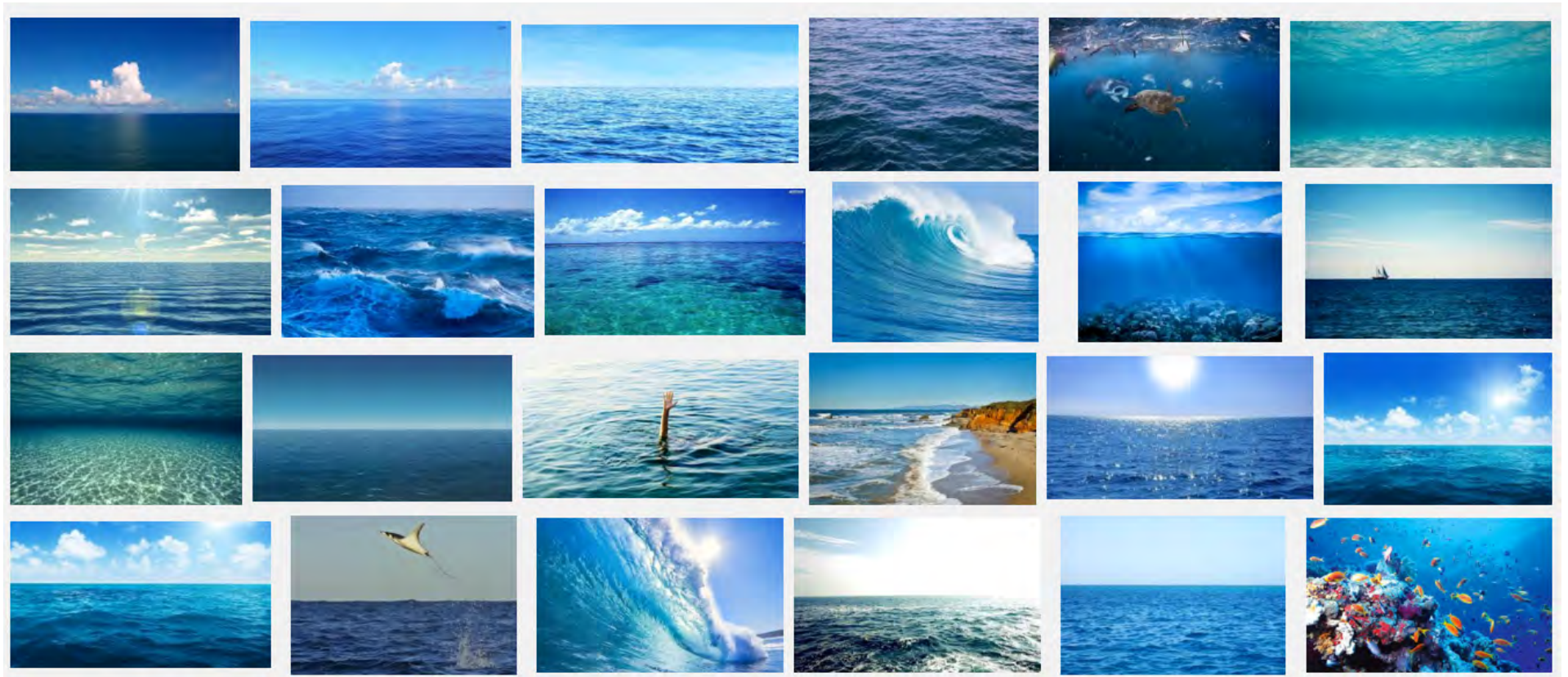
A research-based approach that is proven to:

- bridge the gap between scientist understanding and public understanding
- help the public understand the mechanisms of climate change
- give the public a sense of hope

Cultural Models Research

- in-depth one-on-one interviews
- probe into all of the different ways the person thinks about an issue
- wide range of participants
- recurring ways of thinking across interviews are identified, revealing shared cultural models

What trends do you notice in these pictures?



Our researchers have identified several shared cultural models when the topics of ocean and climate change were brought up.



The Swamp of Cultural Models

Oceans

- Ocean and land= separate worlds
- Oceans are vast; Drop in the bucket
- Heal themselves
- All on the surface
- Ocean acidification- what's that?
- Ocean is too big to be harmed
- Oceans as a resource
- Basis of life
- Oceans support humans

Nature

- Nature works in cycles
- Nature is self-correcting
- Change is natural/Fatalism
- Mother nature
- System? What system?
- CO₂ is natural, therefore it is good
- Web of life/It's all connected
- Shared fate

Science

- How do scientists know that?
- New study every week
- My observation is as good as yours
- "Scientists say..."
- Science is innovation



Consumerism

- Eat it while you can!
- Bottomless grocery store
- Jobs vs. environment
- Cost/benefit thinking
- Ecosystems are valuable resources



Pollution

- Ocean problems=material pollution
- The root of all environment problems
- Just clean it up
- Solution=Recycling
- Carbon dioxide=carbon monoxide
- Human caused



What's in the swamp of...
Ocean & Climate Change

Climate Change

- Climate=yearly weather patterns in place
- "It's about the ozone, isn't it?"
- Big, Scary depressing
- Climate change = warming
- Melting Ice
- What can I really do?
- Something needs to be done

Public Affairs

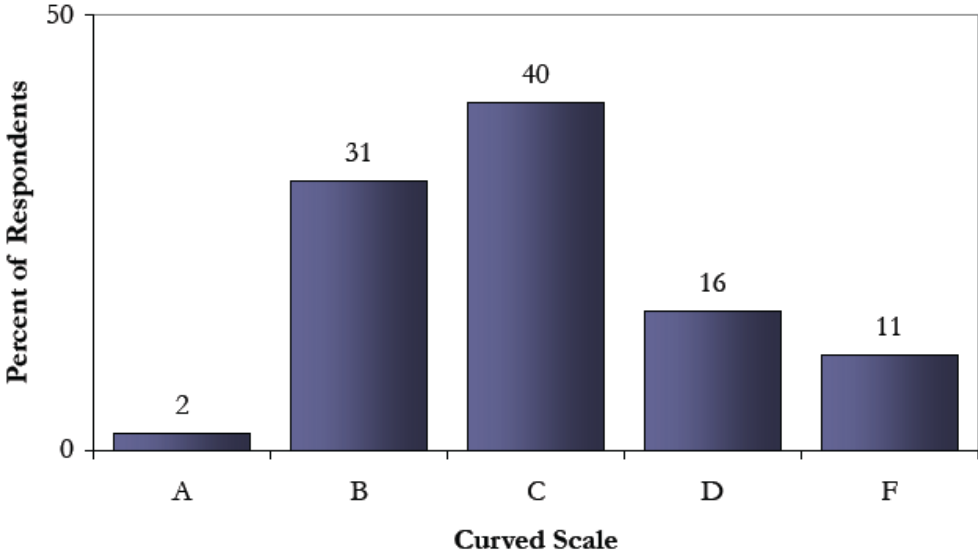
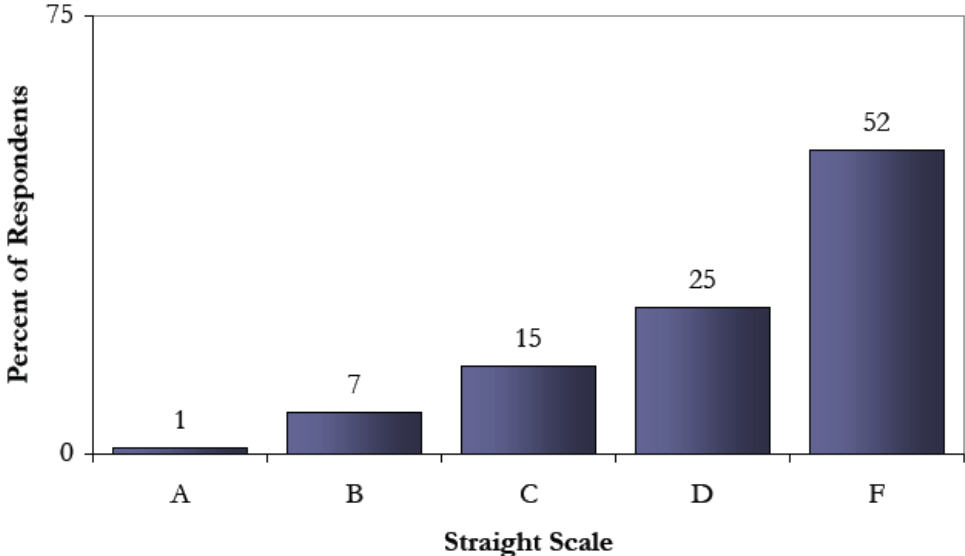
- Two sides to every story
- Even if we do our part, other countries won't
- Politics as usual
- Individualism
- Government is good at protection
- Americans are problem solvers
- Civic Responsibility

Let's see them in action...

<https://vimeo.com/user16868567/review/99846408/8d0a736525>

Is the US similar?

Grading Public Knowledge of Climate Change



Yale 2010

But there is hope!

The basic mechanism of climate change can be taught effectively in 60 seconds or less.

Conversations on the street

<https://vimeo.com/user16868567/review/99846407/ac3c3fb4be>

Composing the Story: Introduction to Strategic Framing

Why does this matter to society?

Values (Protection and Responsible Management)

How does it work?

Explanatory Metaphors (Heat Trapping Blanket, etc.)

How do we improve the situation?

Solutions

Today we'll focus on four elements of Strategic Framing:

- **TONE** should be reasonable!
- **VALUES** remind people of what's at stake
- **EXPLANATORY CHAINS AND METAPHORS** enhance people's understanding of processes and mechanisms
- **SOLUTIONS** present people with ways they can join others to bring forward systemic change

Why would we want to
avoid a **crisis** tone?

Values

Recommended Values for Framing Climate and Ocean Change



Protection



**Responsible
Management**

Protection



“X” matters because we have a duty to safeguard the wellbeing of people and places.

- We must protect and preserve the habitats and ecosystems we depend on
- Showing concern for others is the right thing to do
- Stepping in to ensure people’s safety and well being
- Let’s take measures to eliminate or reduce risks
- Let’s be vigilant in shielding people and places from harm



“We believe in protecting and preserving the world’s unique habitats, like the estuary you see here. By taking action now to ensure that this habitat will be here for the animals that live in it, we are also protecting future generations from the increased storms and floods we can expect to experience due to the changing climate...”

Responsible Management



“X” matters because taking common sense steps today is in the interests of future generations

- Let's be responsible when it comes to the environment
- Let's look ahead to handle problems before they get worse
- Responsible managers keep an open mind, look to evidence, and take a level-headed, step-by-step approach
- Future generations depend on the decisions we make today



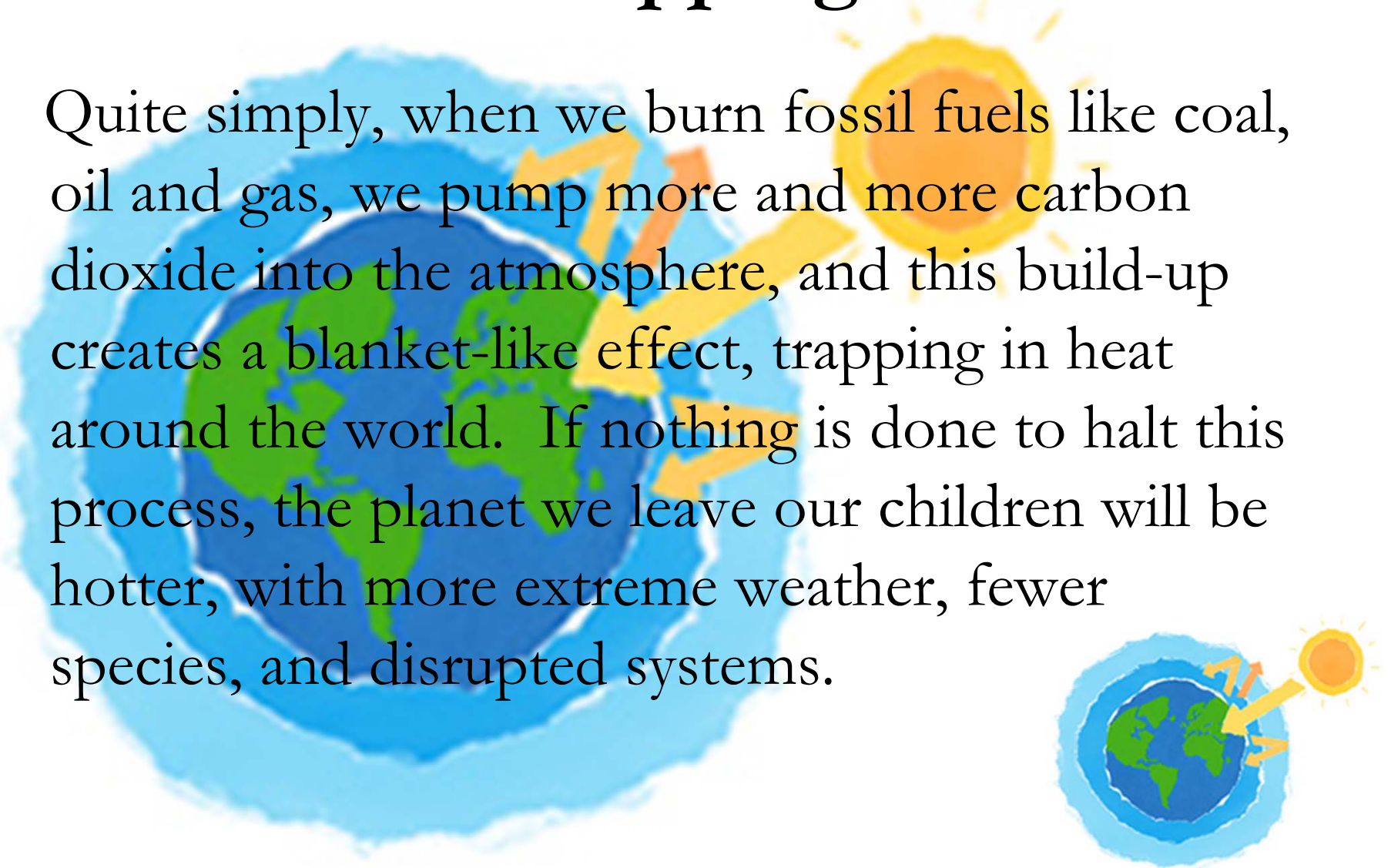
It's important that we all take responsible steps to manage the issues facing our environment, to leave our planet in good shape for future generations of otters and people! Did you know that by reducing our fossil fuel use now, we can help to slow down or even prevent the flooding and erosion that are damaging otters' river habitats?

Explanatory Metaphors

- Make an abstract idea concrete and something that sticks with people
- Help people understand the mechanisms at work
- When linked to causes and impacts they motivate consideration of solutions

The Heat Trapping Blanket

Quite simply, when we burn fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, we pump more and more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and this build-up creates a blanket-like effect, trapping in heat around the world. If nothing is done to halt this process, the planet we leave our children will be hotter, with more extreme weather, fewer species, and disrupted systems.



Almost but not quite...

Excess carbon dioxide is getting into our atmosphere, and it acts like a blanket that traps heat. Over time, our atmosphere is getting warmer.



Almost but not quite...

Humans are causing global warming by their carbon dioxide emissions. All the extra carbon dioxide is building up, creating a blanket. The blanket is trapping heat from the sun in, instead of letting it out.



Almost but not quite...

When we burn fossil fuels, we are adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. These greenhouse gases are creating a blanket that traps the Earth's heat. The ocean acts like a sponge, absorbing some of that heat. So the ocean is getting warmer, too.





Regular and Rampant CO₂

A metaphor for anthropogenic carbon dioxide



The story you're telling:
"Regular" carbon dioxide is used and created by normal life processes, but "Rampant" carbon dioxide comes from burning fossil fuels for energy. We need to reduce rampant CO₂. It's getting out of control.



Climate's Heart

A metaphor for the role of the ocean in the climate system



The story you're telling:
Just as a heart circulates blood and regulates the body's temperature, the ocean controls the circulation of heat and moisture throughout the climate system.



Osteoporosis of the Sea

A metaphor for some of the effects of ocean acidification



The story you're telling:
Ocean acidification changes the chemistry of the ocean and causes "osteoporosis of the sea," which prevents animals at the bottom of the food chain from building and maintaining the protective shells they need to survive.

Community Level Solutions



From Consumers to Citizens

<http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-change/>



Strategic Framing for Collective Action



+



+



Match the scale of the solution
to the scale of the problem.

Prime a civic mindset with a
value.

Present regional-level solutions
using a reasonable tone.

=CHANGE

Solutions Cornerstones

- evidence-based policies, programs, or initiatives that address the problem
- practical
- they are the social norm
- ongoing
- collective

Single Action Bias

By doing one thing, people conclude that they do not need to do anything else or work with anyone else to solve the problem

“Check that off my list!”



Solutions Suite

	Community <i>(institutions, public spaces, etc.)</i>	City	State/Region
Energy Generation			
Transportation			
Food			
Homes/Buildings /Landscaping			
Manufacturing, Products & Services			
Waste			

Ways to Get Involved

- www.nnocci.org or www.neaq.org/nnocci
- Join www.climateinterpreter.org and share comments and ideas with colleagues
- Online course at www.frameworksacademy.org
- Practice with values, explanatory metaphors, and community-scale solutions. And when you have good conversations, let colleagues know.

Thank you!