

**“If men define situations as real,
they are real in their consequences”
(*Thomas & Thomas*)**

Grit Martinez
Ecologic Institute

Outline

- I Climate Change: Still a persistent challenge..
- II Perceptions of climate change
- III Misinformation and influence of audiences
- IV Role of SSH, especially the Humanities in climate science communication

Climate Change: Still a persistent challenge..

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- Superficial public understanding
- Dealing with uncertainties
- Politicized & polarized environments
- Growing sense of hopelessness
- Transitioning from awareness and concern to action

Perceptions of climate change

Perceptions of CC are context specific:

Factors/ Pathdependencies:

- Intra-psychic & inter-personal
- Socio-cultural, -political & -economic

These dynamics influence the responses of people and those who govern them.

The result:

- Powerful and proactive state administration
- Pivotal role of scientific expertise
- Strong civic leagues and green movement
- High trust in the state activities

German CC Adaptation Strategy

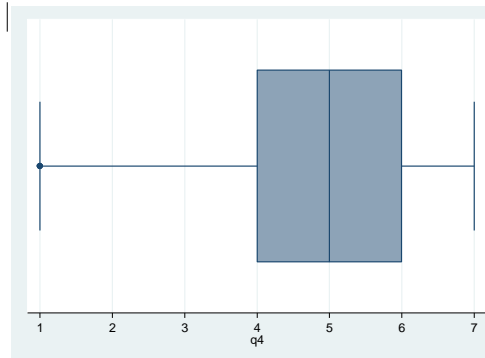
2008 the Federal Cabinet adopted the German Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change (DAS): step-by-step process undertaken in cooperation with the Laender and civil groups

2011 Action Plan for Adaptation of the German Strategy for Adapting to Climate Change:

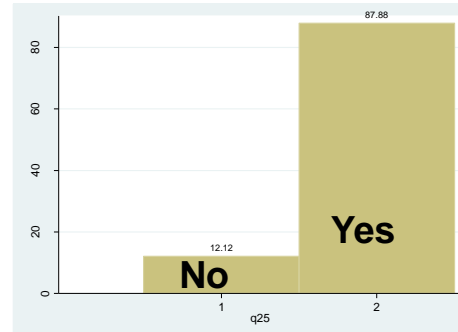
“Municipalities are among the central actors of adaptation to climate change. Many consequences of climate change manifest themselves locally, and many adaptation measures need to be developed and implemented together with local communities.” (2011:27)

Mayors CC perceptions

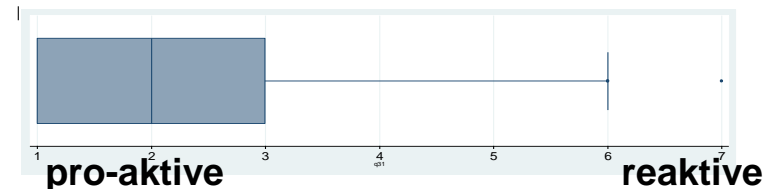
In your opinion and for the area in which you live, *climate change* is something a person should be *not worried about at all or be very worried about?* (Scale 1-7)



Are adaptation measures required?



Assuming adaptation strategies are required: What focus should they have?



A survey of the perceptions
of regional political decision makers
concerning climate change and adaptation
in the German Baltic Sea region

By
Dennis Bray
and
Grit Martinez

International BALTEX Secretariat
ISSN 1681-6471
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Download: www.ecologic.eu/4290

How do they see the utility of direct contact with science?

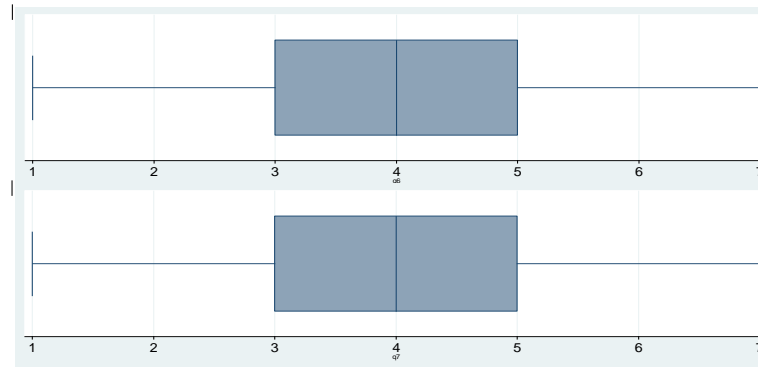
The results of science that you refer to in order to make decisions are often

Not understandable

Very understandable

Of little use

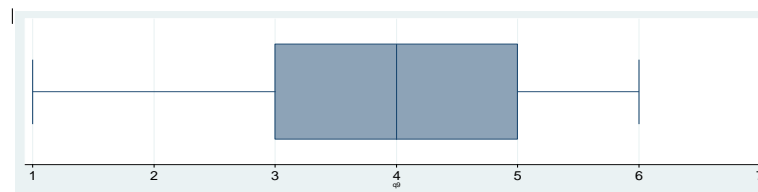
Of great use



Scientists know what information you need to design effective policy and take appropriate action

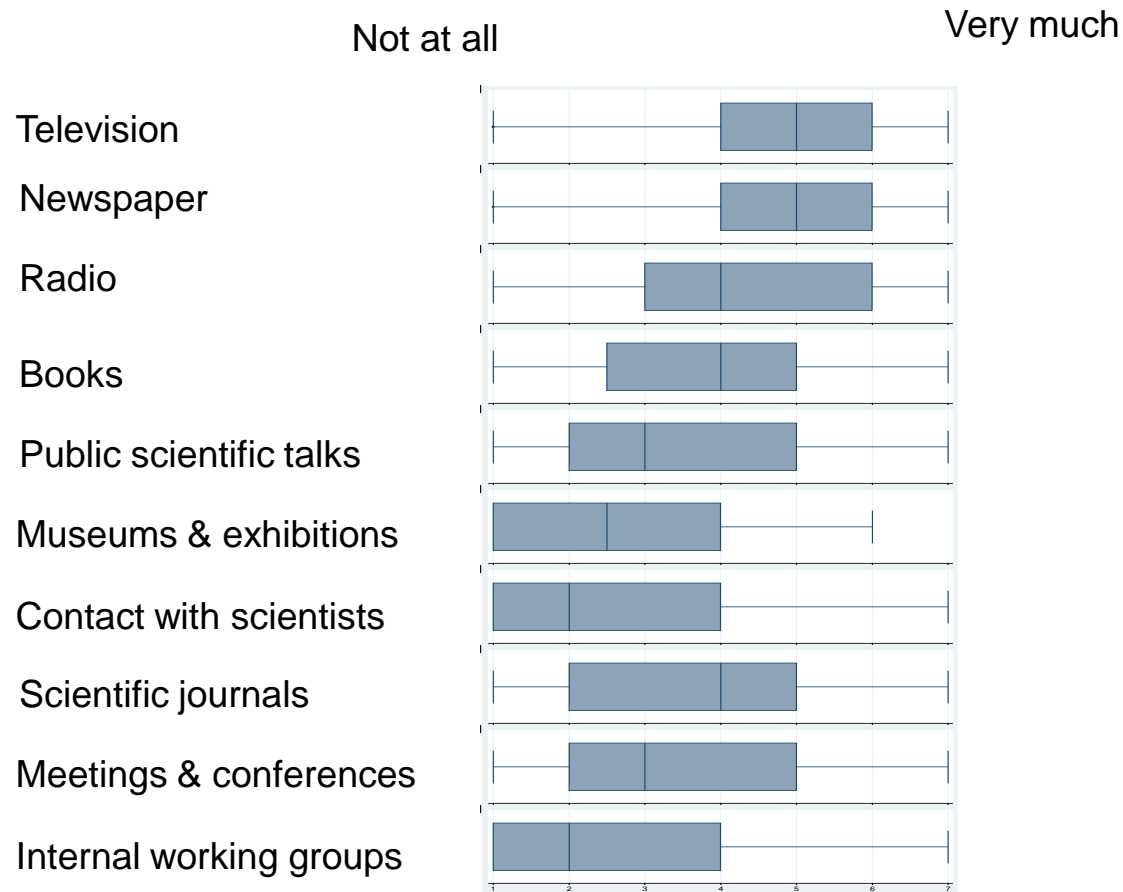
Never

Always



Decision makers' sources of information

How much do you use the following sources of information?



Policies and Civic Activism in the U.S.

- ‘Roughed individualism’ (antithesis to ‘cradle to grave’ system): Risks are rather individual problems
- Notion of “wilderness” (i.e. self-regulating nature/ independence of human intervention) coupled with conception of environment and climate change question (e.g. Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind 2001)
- More radical arguments, greater unanimity about basic facts and their interpretation than in Europe
- ‘Rightist’ movement like Tea Party and ‘leftist’ movements like ‘Occupy Wall Street’ using CC as part of their general arguments
- No green movement in its own rights

Misinformation and influence of audiences

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III G.S. 113A-104(d).

SECTION 2.(a) Article 7 of Chapter 113A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 113A-107.1. Sea-level policy.

(a) The General Assembly does not intend to mandate the development of sea-level policy or the definition of rates of sea-level change for regulatory purposes.

(b) No rule, policy, or planning guideline that defines a rate of sea-level change for regulatory purposes shall be adopted except as provided by this section.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a county, municipality, or other local government entity from defining rates of sea-level change for regulatory purposes.

(d) All policies, rules, regulations, or any other product of the Commission or the Division related to rates of sea-level change shall be subject to the requirements of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

(e) The Commission shall be the only State agency authorized to define rates of sea-level change for regulatory purposes. If the Commission defines rates of sea-level change for regulatory purposes, it shall do so in conjunction with the Division of Coastal Management of the Department. The Commission and Division may collaborate with other State agencies, boards, and commissions; other public entities; and other institutions when defining rates of sea-level change."

SECTION 2.(b) The Coastal Resources Commission and the Division of Coastal Management of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall not define rates of sea-level change for regulatory purposes prior to July 1, 2016.

August 2012, North Carolina passed HB819

National & Intern



Source: <http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbe>

“Which is exactly like saying, do not predict tomorrow’s weather based on radar images or a hurricane swirling offshore....Predict the weather based on the last two weeks of fair weather with gentle breezes towards the east. Don’t use radar and barometers; use the farmer’s Almanac and what grandpa remembers”. (Colbert, Sink or Swim 2012)

Role of SSH and especially Humanities in climate science communication

Characterization of the Climate Science Communication Field

- Highly distributed across sectors/disciplines (more than 400 journals just dealing with climate change communication)
- Highly interdisciplinary - the role of values, beliefs, worldviews, identity and meaning has become a prominent occupation of climate change researchers

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- Humanities ask the ‘Why Question’.
 - When we are able to answer the ‘Why’ we are able to elaborate the ‘How To’.

THANKS! ANY MORE QUESTIONS?

Dr. Grit Martinez
grit.martinez@ecologic.eu

Ecologic Institute

**Pfalzburger Str. 43/44
10717 Berlin
Germany**

**Tel. +49 (30) 86880-0
ecologic.eu**