Building Capacity for Productive Climate Engagement & Action

William Spitzer
Vice President – Programs, Exhibits and Planning
New England Aquarium

CLEAN Network 10.30.18
Climate Change and the Ocean

Change in temperature since 2004 (°F per year)

Global sea surface temperature trends from 2004 to 2013

Climate.gov, adapted from Pershing, et al.
Data: OISST
NOAA Climate.gov

Protecting the blue planet
We need engaged citizens, communities, and leaders.

- Effective climate action requires productive public discourse and civic engagement.

- Yet, 64% of Americans discuss climate change only occasionally or never.
The Opportunity: A Primed Audience

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

• 75% of visitors believe zoos & aquariums should make recommendations for how the public can protect the environment.
Roles for Informal Science Centers

• Translate science for the public
• Motivate civic engagement and action
• Convene stakeholders and engage the public
• Build relationships with community organizations
• Organize toward common purpose
Building a Network to Change Public Discourse

NNOCICI National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation

We can train enough voices in proven communication techniques to shift the national conversation about climate change to be more productive, creative and focused on solutions.
A Growing Social Movement
The NNOCCI Story

Link to video:

https://vimeo.com/220672114
NNOCCI has shown that informal science learning centers can be effective at applying, modeling, and scaling productive discourse.
Strategic Framing

• **Tone** – reasonable and hopeful

• **Values** – what is at stake for all of us

• **Explanation** – what is happening and how it works

• **Solutions** – what we can do to mitigate and adapt at a community level
Promoting Effective Public Discourse

**Advance**
- Conversational tone
- We all depend on ecosystems
- CO2 as heat trapping blanket
- Community solutions

**Avoid**
- Crisis framing
- Jobs vs. environment
- Greenhouse effect
- Individual consumer actions
Visitor Engagement

Climate Change and the Oceans

We talk about climate change...

You'll hear our staff talking about climate change because protecting the blue planet means protecting the climate system. Knowing this will take everyone, we've researched the most effective ways to talk to and teach others about climate change.

and here's how you can too!

1. **Share why this matters**
   We all have a responsibility to protect people and places from being harmed by issues facing our environment. Taking practical, common-sense steps to address problems here or elsewhere today is in the best interest of future generations.

2. **Share what is happening**
   When we burn fossil fuels for energy, we add more and more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This drives what is called a "greenhouse effect", leading to worldwide changes in climate. Reducing excess carbon dioxide is key to getting our climate system back under control. For example, in our area, people are coming together to support climate-resilient electricity systems.

3. **Share activities**
   Look for solutions already in place in your community—talk to your neighborhood, town, or city about taking steps to move away from fossil fuels and increase energy efficiency. Working together, people can design new systems to replace and reduce their reliance on fossil fuels and slow climate change.

4. **Talk about it**
   Real solutions come from real conversations with family, friends, and community leaders. A majority of Americans share our concerns about climate change, but rarely talk about it. Let's change that!

Protecting our oceans is key to protecting our blue planet.
Community Engagement

“The outcomes that New England Aquarium sets out to achieve are directly in line with MAPC’s strategic goal of helping the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the physical, environmental, and social impacts of climate change and natural hazards through community education and an informed public. This work also supports our mission of promoting smart growth, regional collaboration, inclusive community engagement and advancing equity in the region.”

Emily Torres-Cullinane,
Community Engagement Manager,
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
## Communities Advancing Science Literacy

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Community Partners for Resilience (NOAA ELG)
Overview: Learning Goals

- Support development of systems thinking about Earth processes and critical thinking about solutions
- Student-led projects to engage families, peers, and other community members
- Support for in-school and out-of-school-time educators to implement curricula
- Youth Climate Resilience Toolkits
Expected Outcomes/Impacts

- **Community Action Projects**
  - Youth increase their own understanding of climate challenges and solutions
  - Youth engage adults and peers
  - Overall increase in community understanding and commitment to resiliency projects
Regional Context and Dissemination
Building Youth Climate Leadership (IMLS)

- **ClimaTeens**
  - 65% from low-income communities
  - 94% increased leadership skills and confidence

- **CYCLIST**
  - New England Aquarium
  - Alliance for Climate Education
  - WILD Center
  - Audubon Nature Institute, Mote Marine Lab, Saint Louis Zoo
  - Woodland Park Zoo
Climate Change Education Resources

- Climateinterpreter.org
- NNOCCI.org
- Vischange.org
- CCEPalliance.org