

The power of trusted health voices to deliver simple, clear, effective messages about climate change and health

Edward Maibach, MPH, PhD
On X & BlueSky: @MaibachEd

PAHO Building Climate Resilient Health Systems Workshop
October 2023

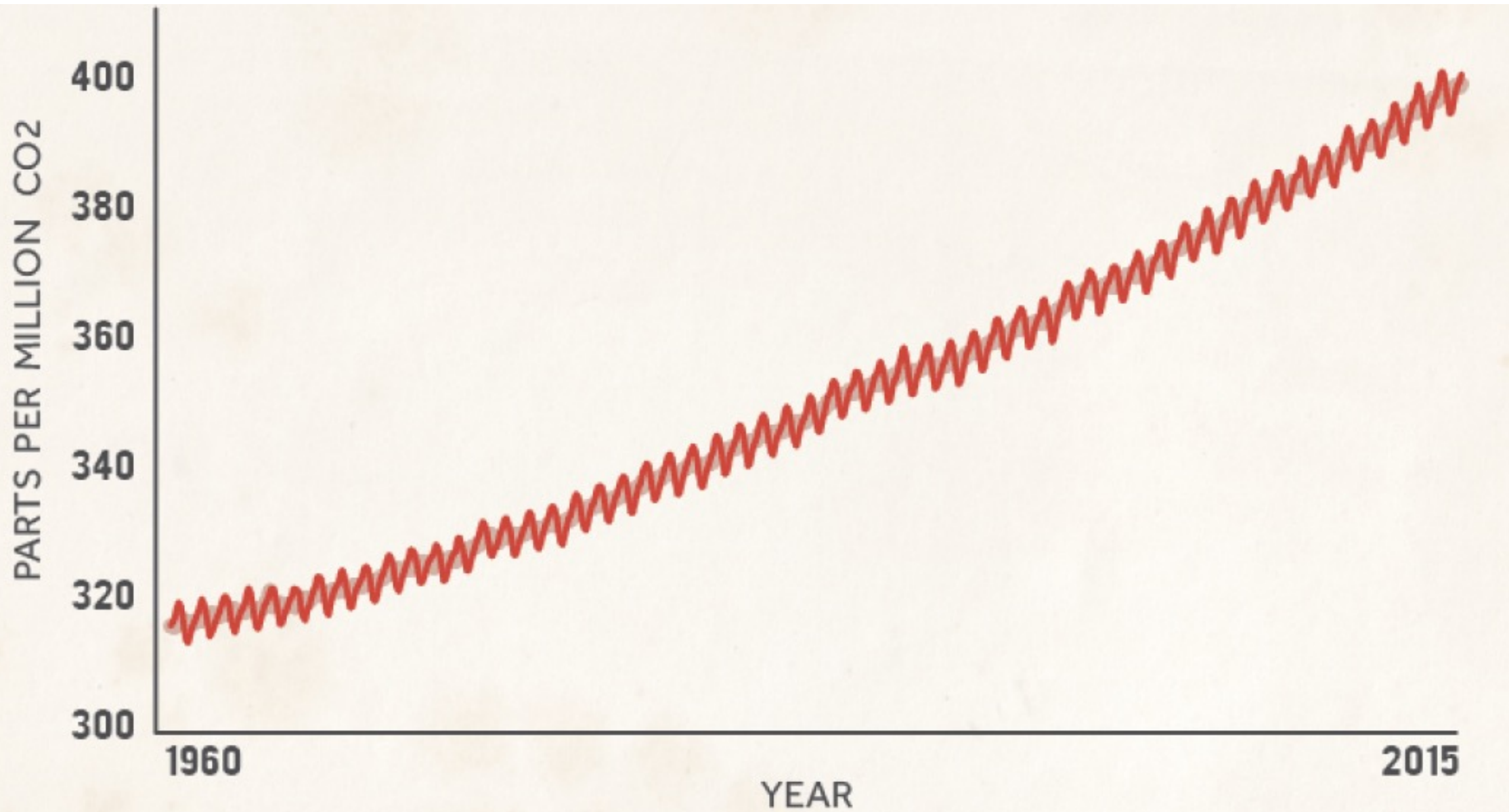


GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
CENTER *for* CLIMATE CHANGE
COMMUNICATION

**What is the first thing
that comes to mind when you hear
global warming?**

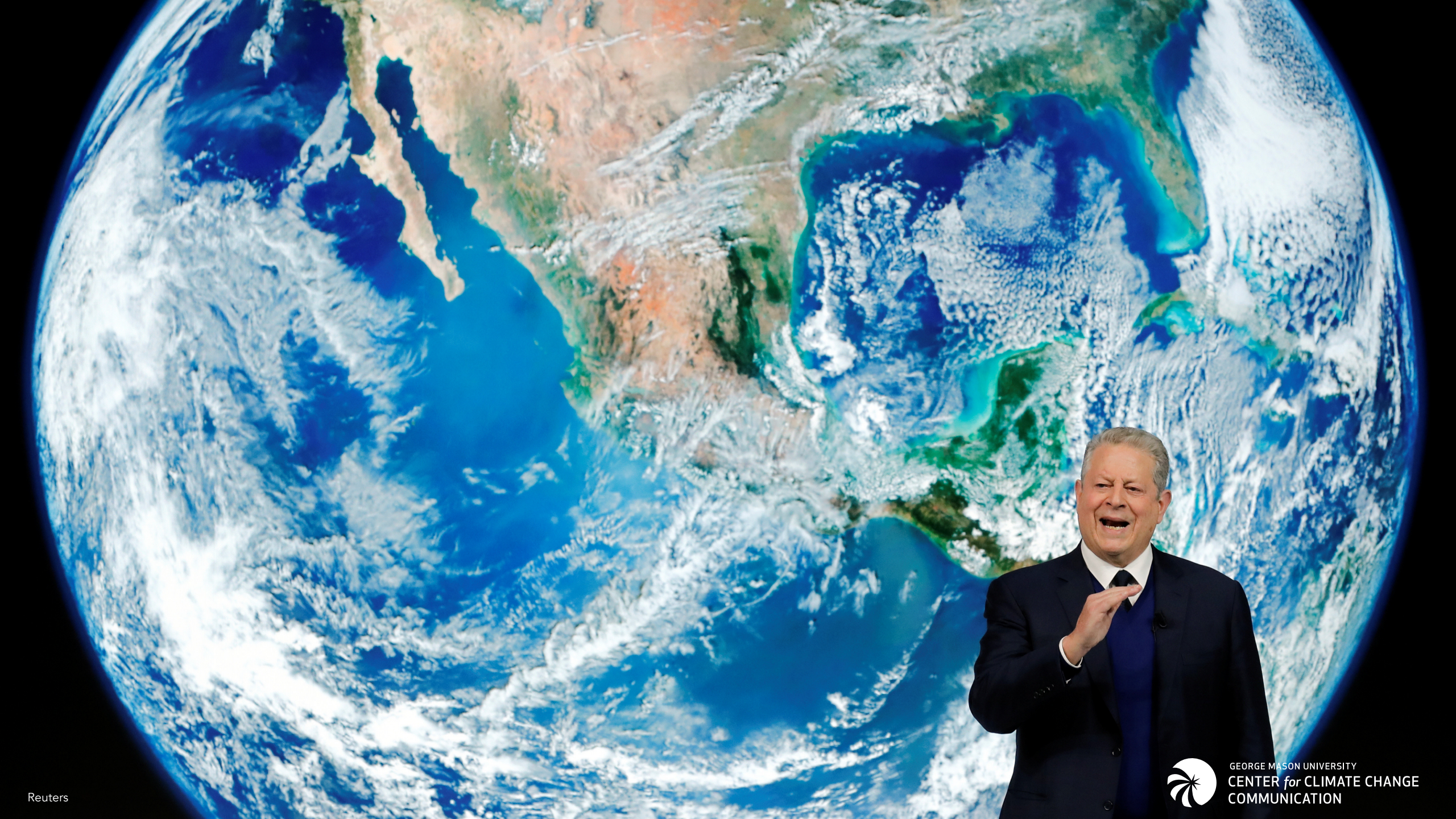


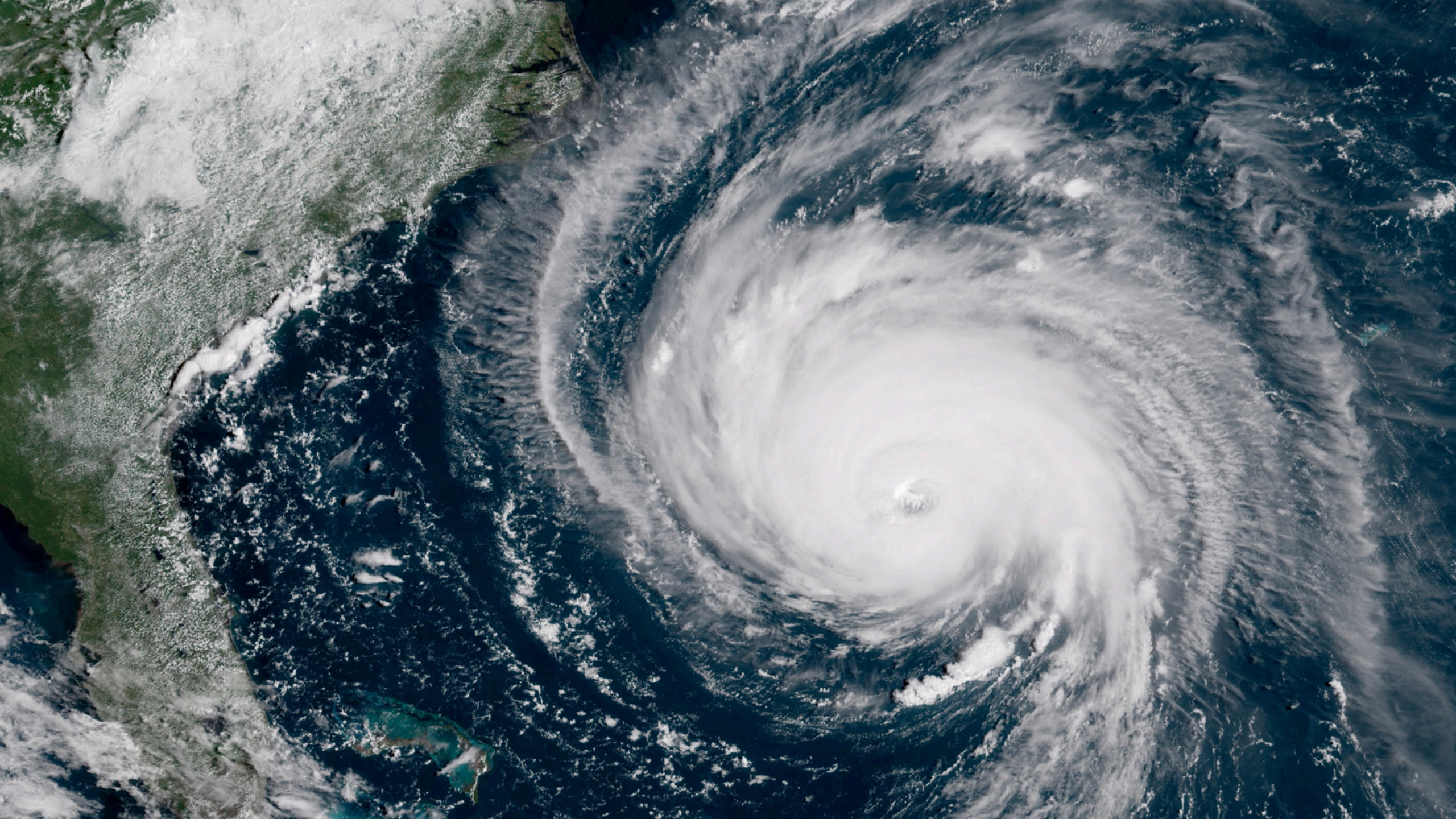




Data: Scripps Institute of Oceanography

CLIMATE  CENTRAL







Evidence-based guidance for
effective communication campaigns:

**Simple clear messages,
repeated often,
by a variety of trusted and caring voices.**

Six key facts about global warming (in 12 words)

IT'S REAL

Global warming is happening.

IT'S US

Human activity is the main cause.

EXPERTS AGREE

More than 97% of the world's climate experts are convinced, based on the data, that human activity is warming the planet.

IT'S BAD

The impacts are serious, and they affect people, especially our children and grandchildren.

THERE'S HOPE

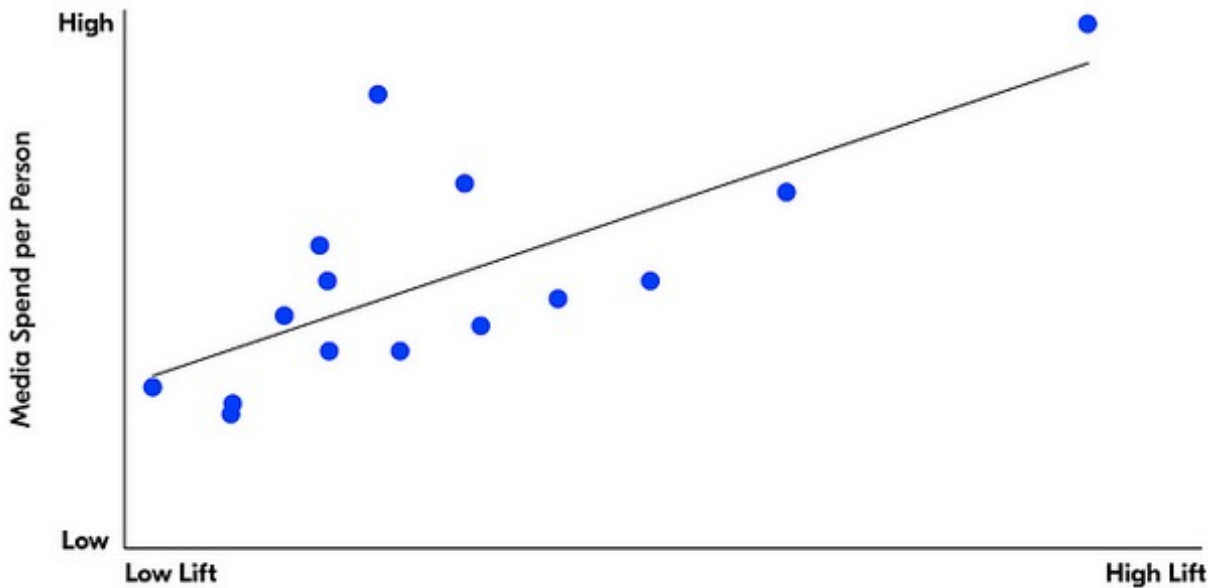
There are actions we can take that will make a big difference.

OTHERS CARE

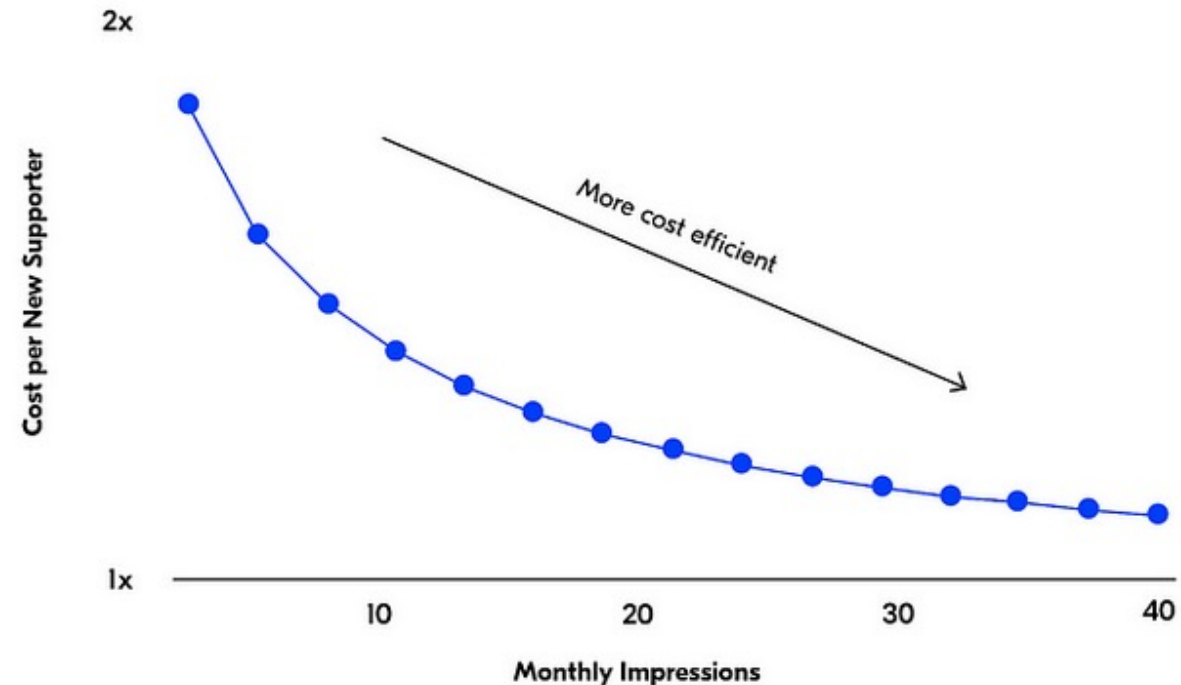
**You're not alone.
Most people are worried about global warming, and they support climate action.**

“Based on the data, our best guess is that the average person needs to see and hear about climate *at least 80 times a month* — potentially even more — to become an active supporter of significant climate action.”

Correlation Between Higher Lift and Higher Spend



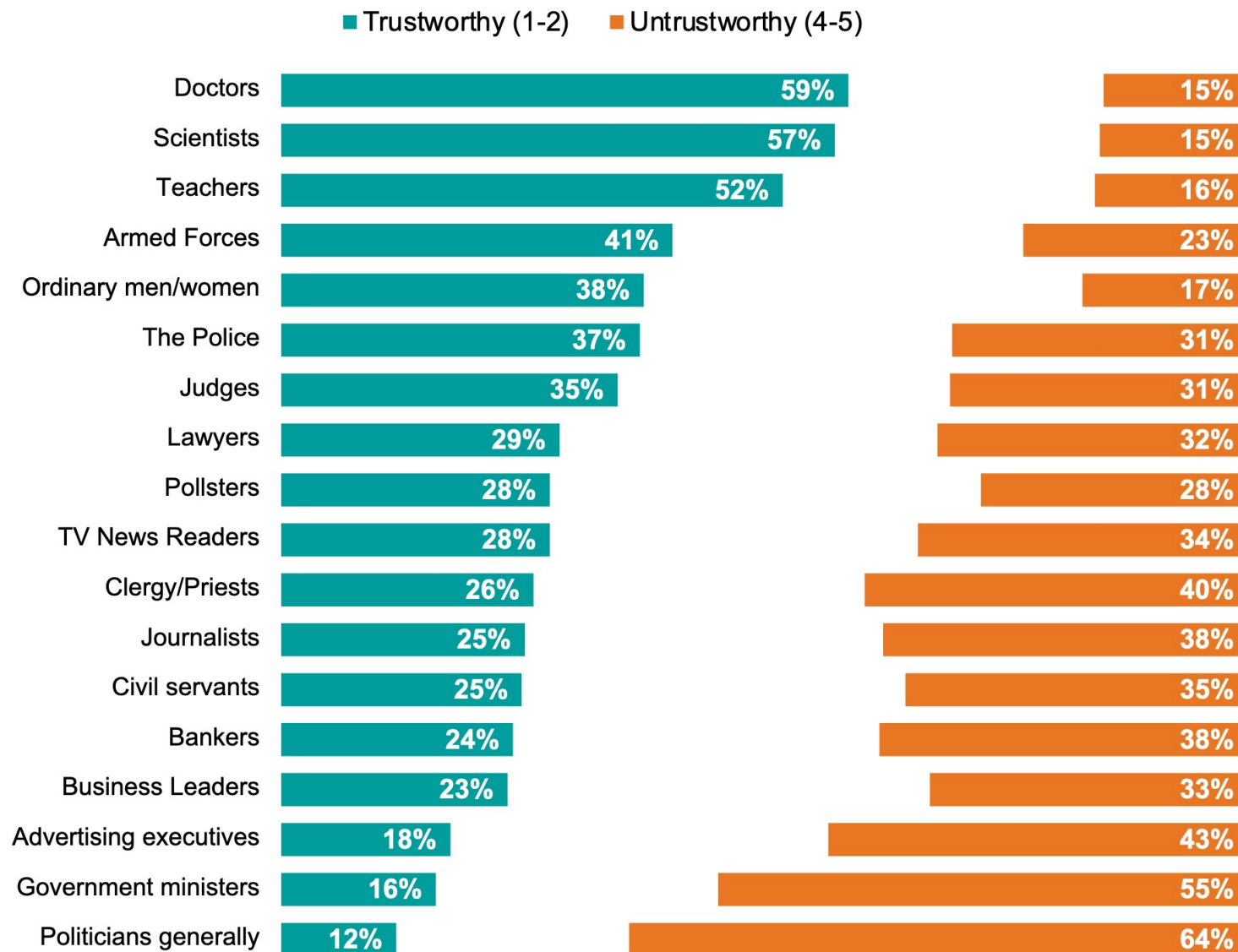
Higher Spend Per Person Increases Cost Efficacy



GLOBAL TRUSTWORTHINESS RANKING 2022

Please look at this list of different types of people. In general, do you think each is trustworthy or untrustworthy in your country?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very trustworthy and 5 is very untrustworthy



Ipsos Global Trustworthiness Index 2022 – 21,515 participants across 28 countries, interviewed online 27 May – 10 June 2022

Online samples in Brazil, Chile, mainland China, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Turkey tend to be more urban, educated, and/or affluent than the general population

This "Global Country Average" reflects the average result for all the countries where the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result.

Climate change harms health through eight distinct pathways

- Air pollution
- Extreme heat
- Extreme weather
- Vector-borne illness
- Water-borne illness
- Food-borne illness
- Hunger and malnutrition
- Mental health harms

Reading brief statements about the eight health-harming pathways of climate change...

- Air pollution
- Extreme heat
- Extreme weather
- Vector-borne illness
- Water-borne illness
- Food-borne illness
- Hunger and malnutrition
- Mental health harms

...and who is most likely to be harmed...

- Babies, children, pregnant women
- Seniors, people with certain chronic illnesses
- People in low-income & communities of color
- Outdoor workers

...increases people's cognitive and affective engagement with the issue, especially moderates and moderate conservatives.



MEDICAL ALERT!
Climate Change
Is Harming
Our Health

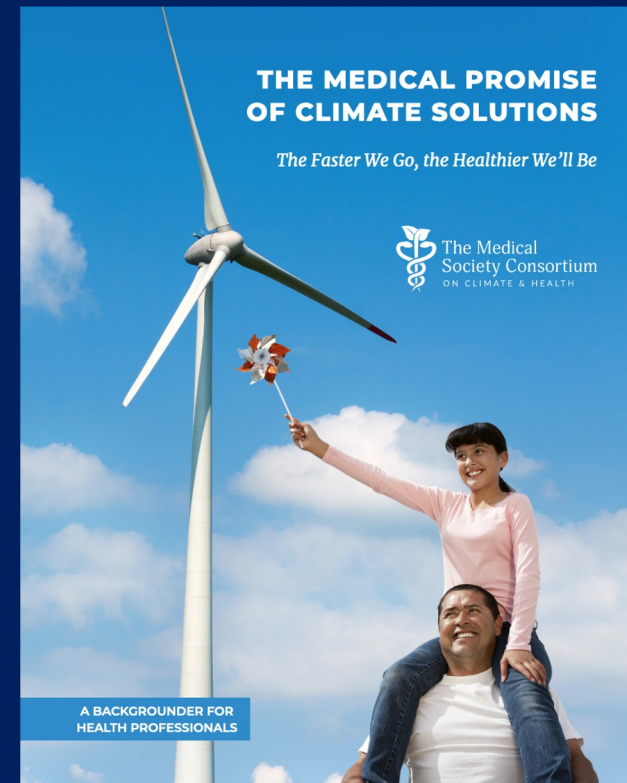
 The Medical
Society Consortium
ON CLIMATE & HEALTH

Five policy solution pathways to improve our climate and our health:

- #1: Use clean, **renewable energy** and reduce energy waste
- #2: Favor **climate-smart foods**, farms, and food systems
- #3: Support clean and **active transportation** options
- #4: Improve our **buildings** and homes
- #5: Improve our **community environments**

The **climate benefits** of these policies **take years to accrue**, in small measures **worldwide**.

But the **health benefits accrue almost immediately** and primarily **locally** in the communities that take the actions.



The most effective climate/health messages:

1. Show health impacts

Top three: air pollution; food-borne diseases; extreme weather

2. Identify policy solutions

Top two: clean energy; and improved community design

3. Affirm helpful social norms

"Most Americans agree that we want healthy communities and a healthy climate, [and many of us/but not enough of us] are taking action"

All three types of information increase engagement, but **solutions** information has the most impact.

This is equally true for **conservatives** as for liberals.

Our role is unique because the climate/health narrative:

Makes the problem personal.

Brings the benefits of solutions into the present,
and into our communities.

Depolarizes the issue.



To learn about opportunities to use your trusted voice
to advocate for stronger climate and health policies



THE GLOBAL
CLIMATE & HEALTH
ALLIANCE