

Advancing “Strategic Communication” in Environmental Decision Making

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Overview

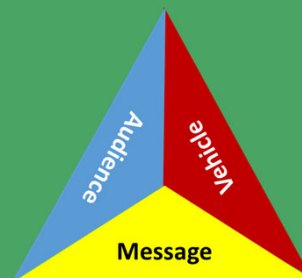
A significant amount of science communication falls into the category of “data rich, but information poor”, with science often produced without sufficient consideration of its use and/or decision context. As such, science is often not communicated in the right way to the right people (and/or at the right time). Strategies are needed to translate information for specific environmental decision making, or adaptive governance and management decisions.

The field of **Strategic Communication** involves a focused effort to identify, develop, and present multiple types of communication media on a given subject. A Strategic Science Communication program recognizes the limitations of the most common communication models (primarily “one size fits all” and “presenting everything and letting the audience decide what is important”) and specifically focuses on **building a communication framework** that is composed of **three interlinked pillars**:

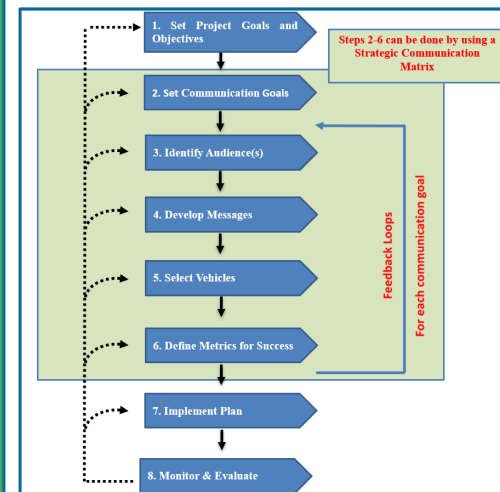
- **Message** Identifying the right content for a given audience and a vehicle
- **Audience** Identify the right target group for a given message and vehicle
- **Vehicle** Identifying the right types of media for a given message and audience



A generalizable framework for Strategic Science Communication organizes your impactful science in a manner to best inform environmental decision making.



Framework & Steps



Example Communication Matrix

Project Goal	Insert Project Goal 1 here. This template can be adjusted to fit your project needs based on the identified Project Goal.			
Project Sub-Goals	Insert Project Sub-Goal 1 here. This is the first sub-goal necessary in aiding and accomplishing Project Goal 1.			
Communication Goals	Insert Communication Goal 1 here. This is the first communication goal necessary in aiding and accomplishing Sub-Goal 1. Ask: “what are you trying to achieve?”		Insert Communication Goal 2 here. This is the second communication goal necessary in aiding and accomplishing Sub-Goal 1. Ask: “what are you trying to achieve?”	
Audiences	Insert Audience 1 here. This is the first group targeted to achieve Communication Goal 1.	Insert Audience 2 here. This is the second group targeted to achieve Communication Goal 1.	Insert Audience 1 here. This is the first group targeted to achieve Communication Goal 2.	Insert Audience 2 here. This is the second group targeted to achieve Communication Goal 2.
Messages	Insert list of messages here. These messages are appropriate in aiding and accomplishing Communication Goal 1 and are specific to the targeted group identified as Audience 1.		Insert list of messages here. These messages are appropriate in aiding and accomplishing Communication Goal 2 for both Audience 1 and Audience 2 and are specific to the targeted groups identified as Audience 1 & 2.	
Vehicles	Insert a list of vehicles here that is specific to Audience 1 and their messages.		Insert a list of vehicles here that is specific to Audience 1 & 2 and their messages.	
Metrics	Insert a list of metrics for success. These metrics aid in monitoring and evaluating the success of communicating Communication Goal 1 with Audience 1.		Insert a list of metrics for success. These metrics aid in monitoring and evaluating the success of communicating Communication Goal 2 with Audience 1 & 2.	

Harwell MC, Mollada JL, Jackson CA, Sharpe L (2020) Establishing a common framework for strategic communications in the natural sciences. In: O’Higgins T, Lago M, and DeWitt T (eds) Ecosystem Based Management and Ecosystem Services: Theory, Tools, and Practice, Springer, Amsterdam.

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