



Corporate Climate Communication

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1. Background

The infosheet “**Climate Communication**” aims to support companies and organisations in effectively communicating their commitment to climate protection to the outside world. So-called climate communication is based on the respective climate protection strategy and the resulting climate protection measures pursued by the company or organisation. Authentic and transparent climate communication is of interest to both the company and the public, showing consumers how the company is committed to the 1.5-degree target and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the 2030 Agenda.



1.1 Corporate Action Required

The synthesis report “Climate Change 2023” of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), published in March 2023, clearly demonstrated once again that the climate crisis can only be stopped through massive reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions.

Consequently, pressure on the economy is also increasing. Laws at national and European levels are intended to regulate compliance with the 1.5-degree target and the reduction of GHG emissions. For example, in 2025, the EU decided that GHG emissions must be reduced by 90 per cent by 2040 compared to 1990 levels. (Further information can be found in our infosheet [Corporate Climate Protection Strategies](#).)

We recommend that companies account for their emissions within ambitious, holistic climate protection strategies and communicate their progress and milestones openly and proactively. In cases of non-transparent or incomplete climate communication, there is a risk of greenwashing accusations, which can entail reputational risks. Active climate communication can serve as a preventive measure against this.

1.2 Why Communicate Climate Action?

Proper communication also ensures that your company's or organisation's measures to avoid, reduce, and compensate for greenhouse gases are recognised by your customers, partners, members, and employees. The following overview outlines why you should communicate climate protection measures, the challenges involved, and how to successfully communicate your contributions.

The topic of climate protection is supported by a majority of society. The public continues to demand climate action not only from policymakers but also from the business community and individual companies. When making purchasing decisions, customers are increasingly concerned with the origin and production of products as well as their impact on the climate.

The Foundation Development and Climate Alliance offers its supporters an independently verified seal. The [SDGold seal](#) honours organisations that advocate for sustainable development and actively support [development and climate](#) in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With this seal, measured across five steps, organisations can communicate their commitment credibly and transparently.

By openly communicating your climate protection strategy, you strengthen your brand and demonstrate lived responsibility through your commitment to sustainable transformation in a climate-just world. The earlier you communicate your company's contribution to climate protection, the sooner you can position yourself as a proactive leader. Climate protection is also gaining importance among investors and for securing financing sources. Ultimately, your commitment inspires the market and competitors to join the global task of protecting the climate while simultaneously promoting development.

2. Climate Communication

2.1 Challenges in Climate Communication

In climate communication, several hurdles must be overcome. The communication environment is challenging because the abstract topic of climate protection is broad and encompasses many different technical and thematic fields. For example, in the area of compensation, corporate communication can educate about standards for high-quality offset projects. Consequently, the company should carry out its emissions compensation using highly qualified offset projects and report transparently on it, avoiding green hushing — i.e., concealing its own sustainability efforts.

Certification Standards according to the Foundation Development and Climate Alliance (as of December 2024):



Clean Development Mechanism + Gold Standard (CDM CER + GS)

Gold Standard bzw. Gold Standard for the Global Goals (GS VER)

Fairtrade Climate Standard (GS VER + Fairtrade)

Verified Carbon Standard + Social Carbon Standard (VCS + SCS)

Verified Carbon Standard + Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standard (VCS + CCBS)

Plan Vivo (PVC)

2.2 What Should You Pay Attention to in Communication?

In practice, it is essential that your climate protection measures are communicated transparently, memorably, understandably, and convincingly. Only in this way can you generate interest in an environment where many actors compete for the audience's short attention span. The tips and recommendations in this infosheet provide guidance and help you structure your climate communication effectively and transparently.

The way climate protection is communicated also influences how climate protection is thought about. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to proper framing — embedding the topic within an appropriate interpretative context.

Through your choice of imagery and language, you influence how your audience perceives the topic. Avoid negative interpretive frames. Pay attention to your choice of words, as you are always sending a message. Explain concepts or principles that may not be familiar to everyone (e.g., “climate protection certificates”, “Sustainable Development Goals”) and avoid overly complex jargon.

In addition to transparently publishing your own efforts, your company can also communicate about climate protection in general. This reinforces the overall topic of climate protection and reduces potential barriers to understanding. At the same time, climate protection measures should be based on scientific evidence so that their legitimacy and meaningfulness can be communicated comprehensibly.



Practical Tips for Preparation

Fundamentals: Familiarise yourself with your climate protection strategy and the resulting measures on a scientific basis, and use scientific findings as the foundation for your climate engagement.

Goals: Communicate specifically how you plan to achieve these goals.

Network: Cooperate with companies, organisations, and think tanks with expertise in climate protection, and have your efforts confirmed by independent bodies so that your climate communication and underlying strategy are continuously reviewed and refined. Partnering with experts enhances quality and transparency, gaining public credibility. Engage with the Development and Climate Alliance to realise international climate action through voluntary compensation.

Good Practice: Draw inspiration from others who are further along in climate communication. The principle here: observe, draw inspiration, and then do it better.

Continuity: Continuous communication and visualisation of your progress show that you view climate protection as an ongoing process of improvement and ambition. Regular communication emphasises the importance of the topic to you and offers opportunities to highlight different facets of your motives, demonstrating that you act out of conviction rather than following a short-term trend.

Reach: Climate communication is successful when messages reach their addressees. Utilise all available channels tailored to specific target groups, using your website for in-depth information.

Strategy: Ensure your climate protection strategy is embedded in an overall strategy for avoiding, reducing, and compensating GHG emissions. Emphasise information accessibility, traceability (e.g., explanatory infographics, calculations for climate neutrality), and product-related details (e.g., emissions caused, offset measures, project standards).

2.3 Recommendations for Effective Climate Communication

Corporate climate protection strategies and measures must not only be effectively implemented but also communicated transparently and openly. Climate communication regarding climate action is convincing when it is credible and honest. The following principles for internal and external corporate communication are helpful:

Authenticity: Remain authentic in presenting your commitment and goals. If you have just started dealing with climate protection, do not claim on your website that the topic has always been important to your company. Instead, honestly explain your motives and the initial steps you are taking.

Transparency: Clearly indicate which goals you are pursuing by when, which goals you have already achieved, and where action is still needed. Explaining both your ambition and your activities along the way prevents misunderstandings. Admitting areas where you are not yet a leader enhances credibility, as nobody is an expert in every area from the outset.

Regularity: Not only what you communicate matters, but also how regularly. Climate protection is a long-term task. Document your steps and developments on the path to becoming a more climate-friendly company.

Visualisation: Climate protection efforts and GHG compensation are complex topics. Provide easily understandable explanations of key components using visualisations, ensuring intercultural sensitivity.

Utilise All Communication Channels: Ensure you consider all target groups and utilise all available channels to achieve the greatest effect. Internally communicating your goals and activities is essential. What is known to your workforce should also be communicated externally via your website, social media, newsletters, or partner platforms.

Willingness to Engage in Dialogue: Show your target audiences that climate communication is not a one-way street and that you are open to questions and feedback. Signal dialogue readiness by introducing contact persons and communication options for visitors.

Resources: Climate communication requires adequate resources. Adjust your resource planning accordingly. Whether you are a large corporation with a dedicated department or a small business — designate a responsible contact person with time and budget, ensuring climate action receives a fixed, respected place in your company.

For your climate communication and PR work, you are welcome to draw upon our [video series](#) “Weltretterwissen” (World Saver Knowledge), that is currently available in German only. Sustainability expert Janine Steeger and science journalist Dirk Steffens concisely explain terms surrounding development and climate. The first video focuses on “Climate Responsibility”.

