

# COMMUNICATIONS AS A CATALYST FOR CLIMATE

IABC World Conference 2022 NYC  
Choices, conversation & capture  
Prepared by Aurecon on behalf of IABC



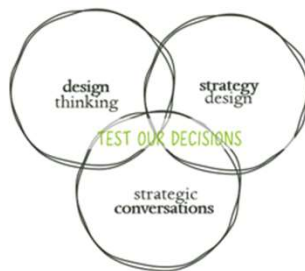
# Communications as a catalyst for climate change from within

## Comms convenes for climate change

Climate change is complicated, converging and complex. It's why we need to think & act differently, with diversity and divergency, and that is what this fast-paced session was all about.

Over three hours, three teams co-developed how might communication professionals catalyse climate change from within? Bringing together the worlds of strategic conversations, strategy design and design thinking – we explored the dichotomy ahead from the perspective of where business communicators have control and therefore impact.

New York was the start of comms co-developing for climate change. We will continue to convene the conversation, test our decisions, and accelerate connectivity. We invite you to bring in others so we can scale our impact, and therefore change.



**Suneiah Cullen**  
Principal Transformation,  
Energy & Sustainability  
Aurecon

## Advocacy & agility for climate change

IABC believes in the power of communication to deepen understanding, inspire action and transform our worlds. At this year's World Conference in New York, we explored how communication can help address the urgency of the climate crisis. We tapped into an international community of strategic business communicators to do just that. We crafted a charter, identified skills and capabilities our profession must hone and thought about how we can build followership amongst professional communicators to advance the agenda.

### Immediate – make it happen

Charter - Convene the community  
Capabilities - Climate Comms Kit

### Midterm – impact at scale

Capacity - Educate the profession  
Convene - Credible by association

### Longitudinal - curation not creation

Change - Language standardisation  
Champion - Knowledge sharing

The opportunity is ours to grasp. We know that communication makes a difference. This is an open invitation for you to join the conversation to be catalysts for change.



**Danielle Bond SCMP**  
Group Director,  
Brand, Marketing & Communications, Aurecon  
Immediate Past Chair IABC

#WELEADCOMMS #IABC22



## With thanks to....

### Sponsors & organisers

- Danielle Bond, SCMP Immediate Past Chair, IABC and Aurecon
  - Mike Klein, SCMP #WeLeadComms
  - Zora Artis, GAICD SCMP IABC Fellow, Artis Advisory
  - Suneiah Cullen, Aurecon, IABC Member
- 

## Overview

The choices. The decisions.

## Appendix

The conversation. The capture.

### Climate Care - working interest group

- |                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ▪ Karen Traboulay, Canada       | ▪ Katherine Loftus, (VIC) Australia |
| ▪ Kendra Klump, USA             | ▪ Zora Artis, (VIC) Australia       |
| ▪ Padraig McKeon, Ireland       | ▪ Sue Stewart, (SA) Australia       |
| ▪ Camilla Osborne, South Africa | ▪ Danielle Bond, (VIC) Australia    |
| ▪ Priya Maharaj, South Africa   | ▪ Suneiah Cullen, (QLD) Australia   |

A global team of communication experts founded in NYC; who care and are committed to communications catalyzing for climate change.



## Overview

The choices. The decisions.

## Over three hours

Three teams co-discovered and co-designed how might communication professionals catalyze climate change from within, and around three core pillars:

- Capabilities – what do we need both now and in the future to make this happen?
- Capacity – what does success look like at an individual, profession, and organizational level?
- Charter – what does collective action mean to communications professionals – and why does it matter?

*If we've missed people who were in the room on the day, please let us know.*



### Team Bryant Park

- Peter Finn
- Camilla Osborne
- Padraig McKeon, SCMP
- Danielle Bond, SCMP
- Karen Traboulay, ABC
- Katherine Loftus, SCMP



### Team Washington Park

- Priya Maharaj
- Bonnie Caver
- Zora Artis, IABC Fellow  
SCMP GAICD
- Sagarika Srivatsan
- Peter Ternes
- Maureen Thurston
- Kendra Klump



### Team Little Island

- Megan Thomas
- Audra Hession
- Mike Klein, SCMP
- Sue Stewart
- Rob Drasin

## The conversation

### INDIVIDUAL

- Climate change is the defining issue.
- Communication professionals need to be intentional and purposeful with a sense of urgency.
- Walk the talk and create a coalition for acting within your chapter, network and organization.

### ORGANIZATION

- We need to create connections with and work alongside business (leaders, risk, legal, governance, HR, procurement).
- Integrated business communicators that understand the current state and can design & deliver a roadmap to future state.

- We need to have sufficient subject matter expertise to be able to translate. Yes, we call in the experts, but we must know enough to ask good questions.
- You need to have understanding, curate knowledge that is out there & then do, say, do in your organization.

### PROFESSION

- We need to de-science the language, so we don't polarize. We need to meld, we need to have representation in the room, and around the table from Indigenous, to investors, to the community.
- Educate the profession - communications master class.
- Champion knowledge sharing, and best practice.

#### Design criteria

Do say do  
Close the wisdom gap  
Advocate and inform  
Convene & connect  
Leadership & followership

#### Design criteria

Alignment in action  
Systematic approach and information  
Persuasion & translation  
Explain, not just understand  
Rewire & embrace

#### Design criteria

Visible & vocal  
Actionable & credible  
Impactful yet inspiring  
Inclusive & immutable  
Followership & allyship

## The actions

### CAPABILITIES

- To drive the climate change agenda, communication professionals need to play in the space between what is said and what is done.
- To drive the climate change agenda, communications professionals need to do, say, do – creating a coalition of action.

### CAPACITY

- Evolve & expand core knowledge & skills.
- Co-create by complementing core knowledge & skills.
- Big picture integration.
- Credible by association.

### CHARTER

#### Convene the community, create advocacy

- Create possibilities and opportunities in the climate conversation.
- Uplift our professional impact for future generations.
- Amplify voices that speak with integrity and clarity using data and diversity of thought.
- Influence the climate change narrative and contribute to advocacy.



"We believe in out of the box thinking that will allow us to re-imagine how we communicate on climate change. We believe that we must act with urgency and share and build on lessons learned globally".

"a Charter is one source of truth – professionals held to their own ethical accountability"

"There is a sense of urgency to look after the future – the whole is bigger than the sum of the parts. We can't just look at the individual components anymore".

"Think differently. Be courageous. But not drive fear. We need to be uplifting about the opportunity to reimagine it – but also be capable to manage the status quo while having the courage to challenge it".

"We need to paint a picture of a better future. We need to close the wisdom gap. Drive the agenda. Inform so people can understand to have freedom of choice".

## Charter



 Aspire

 Align

 Act

## Charter

What does collective action mean to comms professionals and why does it matter?



### Charter: Convene the community, create advocacy

Climate change is the biggest challenge facing the world today. The transition to a low carbon future presents both risks and opportunities including impact to business and transformation across our communities. We have a shared responsibility as communication professionals to enable a better future for people, business and planet:

- We believe in creating possibilities and opportunities in the climate conversation, to make it accessible and relevant, accelerating common action.
- We promise to act with courage and open-mindedness to uplift our professional impact for future generations.
- We pledge to bring together different voices and experiences to co-create a shared language to inspire real change. To amplify voices that speak with integrity and clarity using data and diversity of thought.
- We commit to influencing the climate change narrative and contribute to policy development and advocacy. We have an urgent opportunity to close the climate wisdom gap and will do this through climate education, amplifying best practice and creating a common language.





"We need to understand how to scale impact.  
We need to convene the conversation".

"Could we educate the policy makers who are writing  
the policies in some of this. So they have actionable  
policies because people understand it."

"need to have some subject matter  
expertise. Be in a position to  
translate, yes you call in the  
experts, but you can't have not  
read this stuff".

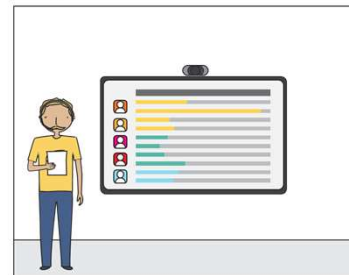
"We need to be able to do business case  
development because the work that  
needs to be done needs investing".

"We need to meld, we need to have  
representation in the room, and around  
the table from indigenous, to investors, to  
community".

"Change management, a spectrum  
of urgency and accountability. We  
need to bring optimism back to the  
debate"

"Focusing on brevity, specificity and the  
actionability of language".

### Capabilities



-  Mindset
-  Methods
-  Meld / mix in
-  Missing

## Communication climate capabilities

What capabilities do we need both now and in the future to make this happen?



### Mindsets

To convene the climate change agenda, communication professionals need to play in the gap to close the gap. They need to bring:

- Visibility – convene the conversation and scale impact.
- Systems thinking – a longitudinal mindset, alongside strategic thinking and design.
- Advocacy – and resilience in elevating the climate conversation.
- Convene – the people & narrative creating space and place for conversation, debate and co-design.
- Simplify – to reach an audience, not to just understand but explain to others.
- Representation – courageous and fearless in convening and amplifying voices to drive connectivity and collective change.
- Re-invent – communicators need to re-wire to embrace being an integrated business communication professional.



### Methods

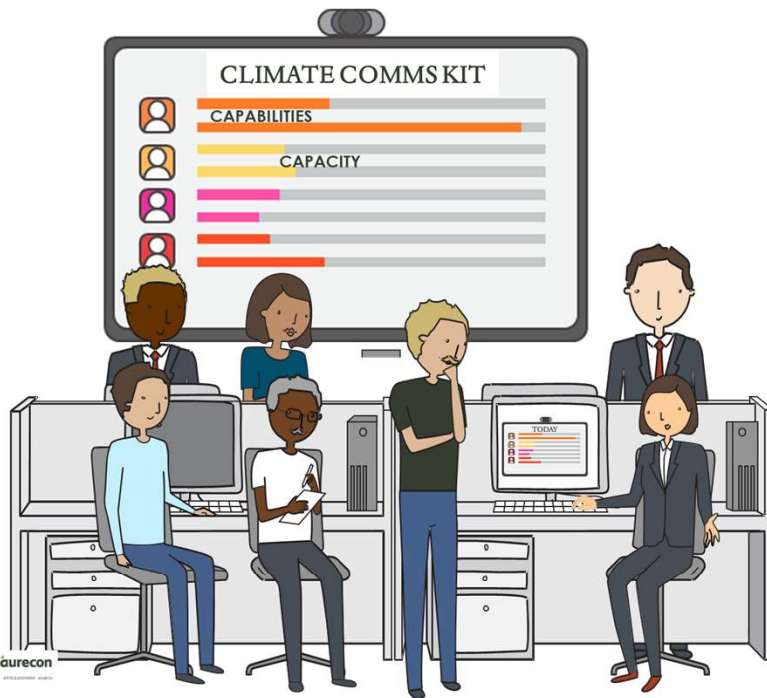
To convene the climate change agenda, communications professionals need to do say do – creating a coalition of action. They need to:

- Create – a common literacy and change engagement.
- Care – understand to inform and connect the dots.
- Convene – the stage, the actors, the conversation.
- Influence – ability to inspire, inform and instigate action
- De-codify – the science, the language, the complexity
- De-escalate – the emotion without polarising or porosity
- Elevate – uplift our professional impact for future generations.
- Amplify – leadership accessibility and accessibility of initiatives.
- Resilience – how do we address resilience of climate change as a topic?
- Connectivity – create connections and work alongside business to understand the current state and design a roadmap to future state.



## Communication climate capabilities continued

What capabilities do we need both now and in the future to make this happen?



### Climate Comms Kit

- Paint the picture of the future.
- Reframe risk, connect opportunity.
- Convene, the ecosystem, connect knowledge, curate the conversation.
- Make it tangible and digestible, and therefore actionable.
- Story-farm and story-do.
- Bring in and blend diversity of skills and diversity of dialogue.
- Connect the data to connect the dots using persuasion, translation and influence.
- Transparency & credibility data analysis, with an investigative mindset.

*Things business communicators can have in their 'kit' to start closing the say do gap now.*



"We need to look at redesigning from multiple angles rather than just cut back"

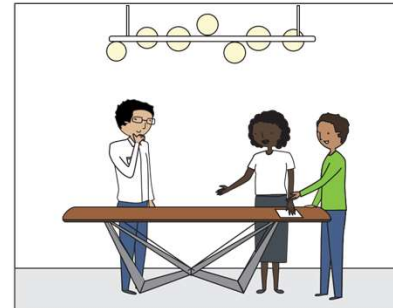
"We need a systematic approach to information, we need governance and recognizing mal/mis and dis information - greenwash detection – giving people tangible tools to detect the language and the methodology in terms of credibility."

"How do we address the resilience of climate change as a topic? Not just an individual level".

"How do we combat complacency and accountability? Can we as a profession provide moral accountability?"

"Are we uplifting our brands for sales, or compliance. Are comms professionals at risk of greenwashing themselves".

### Capacity



-  Skills
-  Knowledge
-  Systems
-  Unknowns

## Capacity – knowledge & skills

What does success look like at an individual and organisational level? What skills, knowledge and systems might we need?

### Communications need to evolve to understand

- Business case development.
- Listening skills and listening systems.
- Persuasion and translation.
- Audience engagement & reach.
- Understand the why of UNGC, UNSDGs, Paris Accord and translate it for your organization.
- Negotiation, creativity, influencing, sense making, conflict resolution.
- Advocacy, diplomacy and alignment.
- Resilience – understanding resistance and competing issues to create topic longevity.



### Focus on big picture visualisation and integration

- Communication can influence a broader agenda, but it's not always ours to lead – convene, connect and make happen.
- Advocate for transparency in the mis/mal/dis-information and best practice.
- Create social connectivity – convene the right people in the room to accelerate conversation and action.
- Followership through accountability – before you say something, make sure you are something, then only talk about it, and keep on evolving the conversation



### Co-design by convening

- Data fluency, data science, longitudinal studies, analytics.
- Place matters – understand the regulatory, legal and governance frameworks at play in your region.
- Business connectivity – leaders, risk, legal, finance, HR, procurement.
- Science, policy, social engineering and connectivity, instructional design.
- Experience – understand pain points to reimagine the communication of products, processes and perceptions.



### Credible by association

- Can IABC and #WeLeadComms convene a community of comms associations to work together?
- How can we convene, educate, inform, access and share best practice?
- Could we co-create a climate communications masterclass for IABC23 World Conference?
- What can individuals, organizations and associations do? We each have a personal and professional role to play in catalyzing for climate change



## For more information



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Group Director,  
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Immediate Past Chair IABC



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