

Editor Response: **The role of climate scientists in the post-factual society (gc-2018-16)**

Thank you to the authors for thoughtfully working to incorporate the extensive feedback from the two reviewers. The revised manuscript has evolved to be stronger in content and includes literature and context to support some of the key arguments the authors are trying to make. This paper offers an excellent case study in climate scientist-led engagement efforts and creative ways that the scientific community can engage in public discourse about climate change and climate policy. While the authors have clearly worked to incorporate some the reviewer suggestions, there is still work to do to address some of the structural and data transparency issues noted by both reviewers.

Specifically, both reviewers pointed to the need for more context and discussion of the authors' experiences and a clearer outline of the methods and assumptions used in the data analysis. Based on the responses, the manuscript still requires more structure and clarity in regards to the analysis used, as well as more structure to make it clear to the reader how they arrived at some of the specific recommendations made at the end of the manuscript. More initiative-specific information is required to help the reader understand a) how specifically their messages differed from the climate change messages they critique, and b) how specifically they structured their engagements to support dialogue. The effort to build dialogue is a central thesis of the paper, but how this was done in the initiative is not entirely clear. How specifically were the public talks set-up to support dialogue, rather than a deficit-based interaction? Or, was the dialogue developed through those who joined in the cycling and running part of the engagement? If so, can the authors describe who it was that joined in the physical components of the efforts? How many people does that roughly represent from your efforts and how did they learn about the opportunity to participate?

Some more specific suggestions, echoing those already made by the reviewers, include:

- 1) The paper will still benefit from clearer methods and goals sections. For example, Section 2, still needs a clear statement of the intended target audience of the initiative. These goals can then be positioned against the data collected to reflect on the extent to which the stated goals were achieved.
- 2) As noted by the reviewers, the paper needs to include “discussion reflecting more on the experience” of the Pole to Paris effort. Specifically, one reviewer noted “The authors could strengthen this paper by spending more time reflecting on and discussing the content of their climate messages and exploring where those messages sit on a spectrum from objective to advocate.” There are several areas where this can still be explicitly included in the manuscript to respond to both reviewers' concerns and suggestions:
  - a. In section 2, the authors lead with the goal of the project being to share climate knowledge with people on the ground and to “...collect their stories of experienced changes and share them through our platforms”. This aspect of the project is not addressed in the manuscript. What were those stories? Are these some of the videos discussed in the analytics? How did the stories and message differ or resonate with the audiences vs. the videos featuring the scientists at the heart of the effort?

- b. The authors refer in several instances to “dialogue” and “two-way conversation”, but don’t provide any specifics about how they took a traditional ‘deficit’ approach of giving talks in “schools and universities” and made them dialogical in nature and how they reached non-academic audiences in these engagements. Given this is a central argument of the paper, as a reviewer noted, more attention needs to be paid to this, as it seems these are the key fora in which the authors undertook ‘dialogue’ and is the supporting evidence for their call that other climate scientists should do more of this work. As noted by a reviewer, the authors still need to consider the addition of Public Engagement with Science literature around dialogue and two-way interaction, given the numerous references to this approach.
  - c. More context is needed to make it clear how specific parts of the Pole to Paris messaging was made ‘relevant’, as this is a key suggestion at the end of the article. What specific messages were relevant to your broad audience and do the analytics show this? What were the climate messages you tried and how did you modify messages for the different audiences you described engaged with across international borders, values, and languages? Additionally, the descriptions of the videos don’t make it clear how the authors “highlighted the opportunities and inspiration of acting on climate now rather than later”. Specifics about how they themselves deployed specific messages and developed their best practices are still needed in order to clearly demonstrate exactly what messaging was used, so that readers can see how their suggestions at the end of the article fit into the context of the work the authors carried out.
- 3) One reviewer noted that the “the descriptions of the audiences reached through the effort must be more precise” in the analytics section. This still needs to be addressed. Perhaps these numbers are better suited to a table? Further, the analysis of the social media analytics does not appear statistical in nature. If statistical analyses were used, how specifically were the data treated? Also, more information about the post-project evaluation, and some of the approaches used, including who and how their social media campaigns were paid for, and on what platforms, would create more transparency and help readers to understand the nature of the analytics and their approach to data collection. All of this methodological information could be more explicitly stated at the top of the “Direct successes” section. The authors also conducted a post-project online survey and might consider sharing the survey questions in an appendix.
- 4) In several places the authors argue this type of engagement work “helps to further develop scientific questions”, but the authors do not elaborate on that element of their own work in this manuscript or make it clear that was an intended goal or approach of the initiative. If this is true for the authors, please elaborate and reference a greater breadth of literature (e.g. from the field of knowledge co-production/actionable science). If not, these references might be removed as they appear tangential to the central arguments/experiences of the authors and this work.

- 5) The reference to Witte 1992, as suggested by needs to be elaborated on. As currently incorporated, it is unclear how the authors see this theory as part of their approach or work.
- 6) The abstract still needs to be adapted to support the main arguments of the paper. Both reviewers suggested a reframing of the abstract, but no edits have been made. Given the significant changes to the manuscript, changes to the abstract are warranted.
- 7) Both reviewers suggested a new title. The framing around the ‘post-factual’ society, while more thorough in this version of the manuscript, still does not seem to be the central thesis of the paper. The last section of the paper “an adapted scientist” might be something the authors consider incorporating into the title.
- 8) Along those lines, the suggestions for the adapted scientist seem out of context at the end of the paper. These suggestions, and more explicit examples of how the Pole to Paris effort carried out these suggestions could be better integrated into the manuscript so it is clear how what was done in the initiative led to, or modeled, these suggestions. Further, the authors note in passing that the analysis of the social media analytics occurred well-after the experience, when some data from their social platforms were no longer available. Do the authors have any insights for others regarding data collection, audience segmentation, or documentation that they think would help ‘the adapted scientist’? This is noted on page 8 and might be worthwhile incorporating more thoughtfully in their recommendations at the end of the manuscript.
- 9) As noted by the reviewers, a detailed proof-read is required to tighten up the manuscript.

While these suggestions warrant further work, I am confident this manuscript will provide an important published case study from a unique effort that provides evidence for the important role that climate scientists can play in more deeply, effectively engaging a broad set of audiences in climate change science and climate action.