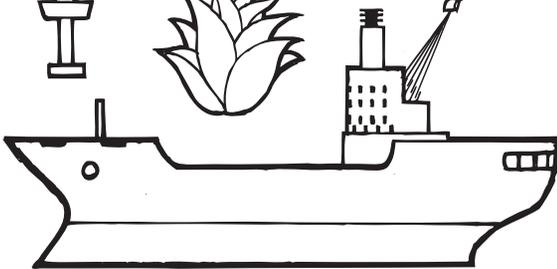
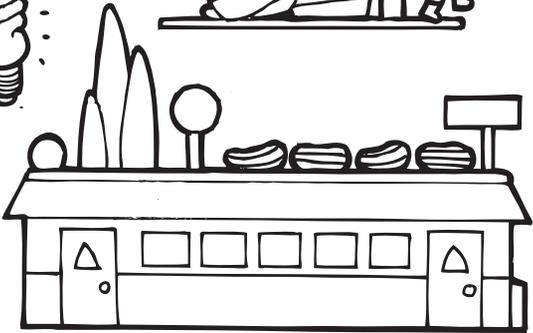
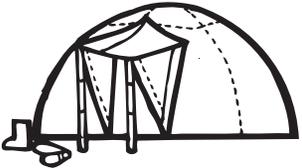
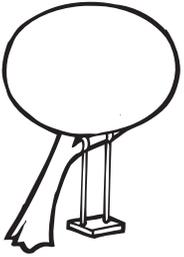
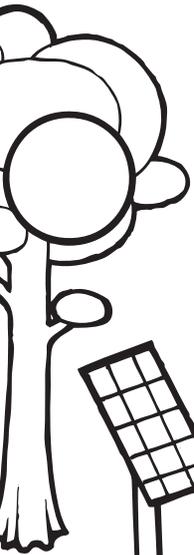




# SIZZLE

the new climate message





# CONTENTS

THE FIVE MINUTE VERSION	2
MEET THE SIZZLE...	6
FIND YOUR SIZZLE	10
BREAK IT DOWN	12
VISION BUILDER	14
THE BATTLE LINES	16
THE BIG QUESTIONS	22
WHAT NEXT?	24

# THE FIVE MINUTE VERSION

We have two main metaphors in this guide. One about sausages and the other about hell. Although that might make us sound like fiendish barbecue obsessives, both make important points:

## **Sell the sizzle not the sausage**

In the 1940s a supersalesman named Elmer Wheeler made what *TIME* magazine called ‘a handsome living’ advising U.S. businesses: “Don’t sell the sausage – sell the sizzle!” Elmer knew that the big secret to successful selling is that you don’t advertise

**For years we've  
tried to 'sell'  
climate change,  
but a lot of people  
aren't buying.**

the sausage itself – because it’s the desirable sounds and smells which get the juices flowing and the people hungry. For years we’ve tried to ‘sell’ climate change, but a lot of people aren’t buying.

Despite a strange recent resurgence in denial, the science is unequivocal. So climate change is no longer a scientist’s problem - it’s now a salesman’s problem, and we can all learn a thing or two about selling from Elmer. For all of us desperately promoting action, finding ingenious ways to communicate climate change or just banging our heads against the hard brick wall of climate denial – we need to find the sizzle.

## **Climate change sounds like hell, so where is heaven?**

Climate change itself isn’t the sizzle, it’s the sausage. That’s where our second metaphor comes in. The most common message on climate change is that we’re all going to hell. That’s what climate change looks like when you get right down to it; rising seas, scorched earth, failing food supplies, billions of starving refugees tormented by wild weather.

But contrary to every expectation, hell doesn’t actually sizzle. Hell doesn’t sell. Although these Armageddon climate scenarios might be accurate and eye-catching, they haven’t changed attitudes or behaviours nearly enough. Threats of climate hell haven’t seemed to hold us back from running headlong towards it.

## **Heaven sizzles**

But there is one message that almost every audience responds to. A narrative that changes hearts, minds and even behaviours. An approach needed now more than ever before. And it’s the opposite of climate hell. We must build a visual and compelling vision of low carbon heaven.

This guide outlines how to communicate that new positive vision. We’ve built this approach on global market research including specific studies in China, the USA, the UK, over ten years psychological wrangling about climate messages and Futerra’s own experience communicating climate change everywhere from stadiums in Moscow, schoolrooms in Chongqing and (in one notable case) on Ipanema beach in Brazil.

You’re still reading after two minutes, so for the next three we’ll outline how to do it.

**THREATS OF  
CLIMATE HELL  
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FROM RUNNING  
HEADLONG  
TOWARDS IT.**

# VISION CHOICE

## Cynics versus Activists

If you think the climate argument is won, then think again. Myriad climate battles continue to rage.

On the science, or the policy response to the science, on the responsibilities of business, government and people, on the right moment to act, on who gets the blame, on who pays, on who benefits...

**So we need to talk to people, and probably in this world of mass communication we need to talk to all of them.**

.....

but only recently in living rooms.

However, these battles have largely taken place beneath the public's radar. Played out between Climate Cynics and Climate Activists in boardrooms or staterooms

The picture of the 21st Century depends on the outcome of these arguments. And it will be the people, not the leaders, who decide that outcome. Without changes to our daily lives, and enthusiasm for macro-change, the fight against climate change doesn't have a chance.

So we need to talk to people. And in this world of mass communication we probably need to talk to all of them. Without public support the Cynics win by default. All they need is inaction, whereas we need something to actually happen.

## A new climate message

People have been asking for a new message on climate change. Around the world, wherever we ask, the answer is repeated again and again. We've tested how far to 'turn up the dial' on the problem, showing the threat of climate change to our children, our lifestyles and our lives. Doesn't make any difference. We've appealed to both logic and ethics. It doesn't

shift a thing. We've tried to change values. That just makes people angry and justifiably so.

But one simple narrative actually makes a climate change focus group a nice place to be. It cuts straight through apathy and into enthusiasm. And it's pretty simple:

vision  $\Rightarrow$  choice  $\Rightarrow$  plan  $\Rightarrow$  action

This is a four-step narrative. First, we open all and every communication with the promise of heaven. In just one sentence you can describe a desirable and descriptive mental picture of a low carbon future. This captures the imagination and taps into those starved and withered emotions: hope, a sense of progress and excitement about tomorrow. The vision also wins us the right to hold people's attention long enough to get to the call for action. A major problem with most climate messages isn't that people disagree with or misunderstand them, it's that they don't even listen to them. Many climate messages are dull or depressing and audiences have an inbuilt veto: the veto of their attention.

But we all listen to sizzle, and your vision can sizzle. Later in this guide you'll find a host of tactics and tools, but these four are a good (and often neglected) start;

### Make it visual

Create pictures in 'the mind's eye'. What will a low carbon economy look like? Here's a useful trick – could someone easily draw a picture of what you said? Or take a short cut, and actually use pictures!

### Make it national or local

The vision must be as local as possible. Don't describe a vision of a sustainable Delhi when you're in Durban – or vice versa. Refer to places and spaces where you are.

# ⇒ PLAN ⇒ ACTION

## Make it desirable

Spice it up. If the vision isn't more desirable than what we've got now then why bother reaching for it? Think about what your audience wants (not what you want them to want) and then show how the vision will make that happen.

## Cut the dates and figures

Dates, percentages and figures come in action plans, not visions. A 20% cut by 2020 isn't a vision, it's a target. Put all the targets together and imagine what the world would be like if we met and exceeded them: that's a vision.

The second step in our narrative is 'choice', because now we've got heaven we've got to show hell. Today we have a choice between that positive picture and the alternative of unmitigated climate change.

**A low carbon future looks pretty good, and climate change looks decidedly unattractive.** .....

It's extremely important to hammer home that this moment is the moment of choice between the two paths. You don't pull your punches here – lay out the climate chaos we're trying to avoid. People can actually listen to this now, because they are sitting in the life raft of a positive vision watching the Titanic of climate chaos.

Most people's reaction at this point in the story is a forthright 'so buddy, what are we doing about it?' A low carbon future looks pretty good, and climate change looks decidedly unattractive. So then we offer a strong and simple five year plan. The public stays with you if you offer a few memorable yet significant achievements. They've got to be big, they've got to be meaningful, and you'd better live up to them. This five year focus is opposed to the usual twenty to thirty year targets (often even generational targets)

which breed mistrust and simple dismissal. Do you know what you'll be doing in 2030? Nor do most of us. Stick to five years, or even less if something meaningful can be achieved that fast.

Finally, the narrative sets forth specific personal actions so everyone can help steer us away from danger and towards progress, freedom and a 21st Century that looks better than the 20th. This is your 'ask'. Make it specific, make it clear how it will help

**Use the new narrative with good communications tactics and research shows the response can be excitingly powerful.**

reach the vision, and build in an immediate payback if you can.

.....

All the other general rules of communication still apply of course<sup>1</sup>. Language should fit the target audience, people must have agency to act and messages should be maintained over time. Use the new narrative with good communications tactics and research shows the response can be excitingly powerful. Pitch it right and the heart lifts, the loins are girded and suddenly actions that would have been dismissed are embraced.

That's it. That's the sizzle, the plan, the checklist.

So go out there and use it. Or read on for a bit more polemic and a lot more tactics, tools and guidance.



<sup>1</sup>See *Rules of the Game and New Rules New Game* at [www.futerra.co.uk](http://www.futerra.co.uk)

# MEET THE SIZZLE...

Imagine striking up a conversation about climate change; with someone on the street, someone in government, with your family or with your friends. Imagine them eager and opinionated about what needs to be done. Imagine their enthusiasm for change, and pride in their own actions. Imagine promoting big policy changes and big lifestyle changes to an audience excited to hear it.

## That reaction is possible.

We believe that climate action is no longer a scientist's job; it's now a salesman's job. You must get out there and sell the solutions we already have. And if you've ever worked in sales, then you know how hard that is.

That's where the idea for this guide came from.

As the ultimate salesman Elmer Wheeler taught in the 1950's the big secret to selling is that you don't sell the sausage – you sell the sizzle. And no, we don't mean the sizzle of climate-induced heat stress; we mean the desirable, tempting and enticing sounds and aroma that convince you to eat what is basically a dead pig. That's the heart of the salesman's art. If we must all become superb climate salesmen, then we must find that sizzle. At the moment most climate behaviours and policies are as appetizing to our audiences as a particularly suspect tube of gristle. Only sizzle could sell it.

After a lot of research, experimentation and blind alleys, Futerra believe we've found that sizzle. The sizzle that will sell widespread climate action.

We've been lucky in this quest. Our clients have commissioned climate surveys across the world - from detailed focus groups in Europe and the USA to 20,000 people surveyed in China.<sup>2</sup> We've also had the privilege to participate in the United Nations

Sustainable Lifestyles Taskforce<sup>3</sup> and visit South American, Eastern European and African initiatives which are changing hearts, minds and behaviours. From Climate Cool in China to PowerShift across the USA, the 10:10 campaign in the UK to 20:20 in Brazil; there is a lot of sizzle out there.

The people we met sizzled. The passion, wit, warmth and sparkle of climate activists worldwide constantly uplift us. If you are a climate activist then you're in good company. Hundreds of thousands, and probably millions of people are standing shoulder to shoulder with you. Individually each of you is a powerhouse of sizzle.

But we must be honest; climate campaigns can also generate the opposite of sizzle.

The only antonym we could find for sizzle was 'freeze'. And we've seen some seriously frosty communications too. Frosty messages range from 'Climate Pornography' (messages so doom-laden and righteous the audience could be forgiven for suspecting the messenger is actually enjoying climate change) to 'Death by Data' (where abstract science and dry information take the place of passion and humanity).

We're not going to list the frosty campaigns. After reading this guide you'll spot them for yourself.

<sup>2</sup>British Council China (2009) *The Climate Cool Research Report*

<sup>3</sup><http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/tfsuslifestyles.shtml>



**IF YOU ARE  
A CLIMATE  
ACTIVIST  
THEN YOU'RE  
IN GOOD  
COMPANY.**



### Climate or message fatigue?

Frosty messages try and sell policy and behavior changes ‘uphill’ to audiences who dismiss or downright reject what needs to be done. Slowly losing hope in governments, businesses and even your fellow human beings. Shouting into the darkness. The matter is undecided right now, but don’t underestimate how

**Frosty messages try and sell policy and behavior changes ‘uphill’ to audiences who dismiss or downright reject what needs to be done**

..... awful it will be if opinion goes the wrong way. Democratic governments will have their hands tied, the business case for action will dry up and the green shoots of energy efficiency will die down. With furore and resignations over the University of East Anglia ‘Climategate’<sup>4</sup> and market research showing a cut in Americans’ belief in man-made climate change<sup>5</sup> are signs which don’t bode well.

Remember the worst days of striving to act on climate change within the straightjacket of disinterest and denial? This would be worse. The only logical option for the activists; pack up and move to high ground.

To avoid that fate climate messages have been getting louder, but they must now also get smarter. Shouting louder and louder about the problem isn’t going to solve it. Today you have a choice. We will either continue fighting against the tide or we’ll turn it. And the authors of this paper believe that powerful and persuasive messages can change the world.

We’ve searched for a simple way of explaining our new approach. Put bluntly; we’re sick of selling hell.

WE ARE  
ABOUT  
DISTRIBUTION  
OF HELL





# ARGUE EQUAL BUTION HELL.

## Heaven or hell?

Hell is what climate change looks like when you get right down to it; rising seas, scorched earth, failing food supplies, ravaged refugees fleeing from tormented weather. National borders either fiercely blocked or crumbling, freedoms curtailed, and progress stalled. Survival the only need and not guaranteed. Hell on Earth.<sup>6</sup>

Extend this comparison and you see how bizarre our current climate messages are. One moment we are threatening climate Armageddon, the next asking people to change their light bulbs. We have 'hell mitigation' and 'hell adaptation' strategies. We argue about equal distribution of hell. Campaigns abound on how to adapt your garden or home to hell. You can even buy hell insurance.

Futerra doesn't want to sell nightmares anymore. We don't want to use 'be good or you're going to hell' messages. The words are more often 'be energy efficient or you're going to climate change hell' but it's hell that we're selling. We're missing something; we're missing the crucial part of the message.



<sup>4</sup><http://www.futerra.co.uk/blog>

<sup>5</sup>The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. (2009). *Fewer Americans see solid evidence of global warming.*

<sup>6</sup>Talking about hell and heaven is highly charged and culturally specific, but the best metaphor we could think of.

# FIND YOUR SIZZLE

Heaven is what's missing. We know what the world looks like right now. With all its glories and problems, we live here. Increasingly, we also know what climate change looks like: it looks like hell on earth. These two pictures are important, but there's a vital piece missing.

We need to build a new picture in people's heads: a self-fulfilling, low carbon prophesy. If we get our act together, we can transform energy supplies, replacing the old and dirty with the new and green. We can switch high consumption, high stress, and high heart disease lifestyles for something more desirable. What will it look like, feel like, and be like if we manage to pull it off?

That is the picture we need to create. That is the dream that will become our reality. At almost every turning point in human history, when things have looked the bleakest, **That is the dream that will become our reality.** extraordinary people have seen a different way forward. Compelling visions of 'better' have inspired us to overcome massive odds before. It's a remarkable and brave thing to do.

Imagine just for a moment you're standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC. It's a hot August day, fuelled by the largest crowd ever gathered in that capital city. Every one of those thousands of faces are watching and waiting for you to speak. What will you say? Angry words would be fair. You've been fighting a long fight, sometimes a long defeat. Your home has been bombed and your family persecuted. Every phone call is tapped and jail is a familiar step away. The anger and frustration of your supporters is tangible. Blood has spilled... including your own. Even the righteous now suspect that civil war is the only answer. Terror may be the only way out. What will you say?

"I have a dream today"

That's how it works. When you're faced with hell – you sell heaven.



## Be careful what you wish for

Our brains have a nifty little switch called the ‘availability heuristic’, which makes us more inclined to believe those things we can imagine most vividly. So if the ‘hell on earth’ picture of climate change is the most vivid and most common one we see, our mental ‘rule of thumb’ makes it the most believable outcome. Yes, you might say, and that’s good – people should be scared of the climate change picture, it will make them change it. The problem is, the switch doesn’t work like that. Instead, it means that humans make real that which we can imagine most tangibly (hence the popular ‘will to power’ adage). To put it bluntly: sell hell and that’s exactly what you’ll get.

The heuristics switch is a favourite subject for psychologists. They know that if you focus on a positive and tangible mental picture of your goal then you’re more likely to achieve it. As Dr. Wayne Dyer, author of *The Power of Intention*, puts it: “It is a truly scientific phenomenon that when you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

The flip side of being able to make your dreams come true is that you can make your nightmares come true, too. If we only carry the negative picture of the future in our minds, then the switch can subconsciously encourage us to fulfil it. For decades, climate communications have built mental pictures of climate chaos, even when created with the best intentions (Futerra has done its share too). For example, by highlighting (through criticism) the very wasteful actions that cause climate change, we risk inadvertently painting them into the mental picture. All of the problem, danger and threat messages may be unintentionally building a self-fulfilling prophecy of climate chaos. We all assumed that picture would compel people to avoid it, not program them to create it.

Damn. We wish it weren’t so, but the switch is hard to beat. It’s not impossible to overcome (especially if you’re very rational), just really, really difficult.

But imagine if we could flick that powerful switch in a different direction. It’s time to start building a new ‘availability heuristic’; a positive switch.



# BREAK IT DOWN

This new heaven narrative can be a few short sentences, a long speech, or the basis for a fully integrated campaign. It will work whether you're enjoying a five-minute chat waiting for a train, or making an address to the United Nations. Here is the simple blueprint:

## VISION → CHOICE →

### VISION

**Vision always first** Order matters. Open with the positive vision and you win the right to people's attention. Close with the vision and you'll lose them before you reach it.

**Make it visual** Create pictures in 'the mind's eye'. What will a low carbon economy look like? A useful trick – could someone easily draw a picture of what you said? Or take a short cut – actually use pictures.

**Make it national or local** The vision must be as local as possible. Don't describe a vision of a sustainable Delhi when you're in Durban – or vice versa. Refer to places and spaces where you are.

**Make it sizzle** Spice it up. If the vision isn't more desirable than what we've got now, then why bother reaching for it? Think about what your audience wants (not what you want them to want) and then show how the vision will make that happen.

**Cut the dates and figures** Dates, percentages and figures come in the plan, not the vision. A 20% cut by 2020 isn't a vision – it's a target. Put all the targets together and imagine what the world would be like if we met and exceeded them: that's a vision.

**Share the dream** Although you might develop the vision, it doesn't belong to you. Show how it reflects common values and needs.



### CHOICE

**Introduce hell** You've sold the sizzle so now show the alternative. If you lead with a positive vision, you don't then have to pull your punches on climate chaos.

**The choice is now** Make clear that change won't wait, and that the decision moment is now.

**Link the problem and solution** This might sound obvious, but be clear about the linkage between problem and solution. Carbon is the problem, and cutting carbon is the solution.

**Personal hell** Climate change doesn't just affect weather patterns and polar bears. Lay out the impacts on hospitals, schools, and the local environment. Hit lifestyles and aspirations. The more powerful and compelling your vision, the more hard-hitting you can make the threat of climate chaos.



SLOW

# → PLAN → ACTION

## PLAN

**Short list of big actions** Plans to combat climate change can be extraordinarily complex – and rightly so. But what are the three biggest headlines that someone might remember ten minutes after being told? Try it out. If no one can remember your plan, then its odds of succeeding are pretty faint.

**Complete in five years** What will you be doing in 2030? No, we don't know either. Put the plan in a human timescale of five years (that also happens to be a political and business one). You can always outline the full plan for the experts.

**Show me the money** How are you going to pay for it? This is the reality check. If you don't cover the cost of change in the narrative, then the audience might suspect they are being hoodwinked.

**Climate cheats** Equity only works one way in climate narratives. We all assume we are the good guys who deserve to be protected. Showing how your plan is fair means showing how freeloaders and climate cheats won't get away with it.

## ACTION

**Direct link to heaven** Give everyone something to do. But make sure there is a direct link to the vision. Show how every positive step brings us closer to the goal.

**Use numbers here** Numbers might kill a vision, but they sizzle in a specific programme. If you're promoting specific policies, initiatives or schemes then don't be afraid of detail. How many homes will be insulated? How much will the energy meter cost? Exactly when will the community turbine start paying back? Embrace the numbers.

**Personal payback** Always, always, always answer 'what's in it for me?'

**The very next action** If you've done it right, with a bit of sizzle, then make the sale. Give your audience something to do right now. Not tomorrow. Not when they are next in a hardware store. Right now.



# VISION BUILDER

You know how to communicate it, but what does your vision actually look like? Some people find this hard to answer. We've all spent so long fighting off climate change that we don't take enough time imagining what the world would look like if we succeeded.

The building blocks of your vision should be valuable, irrespective of climate change. Upgrading our energy sector, protecting our big green spaces (like the Amazon) and little green spaces (like our parks), living healthier lifestyles and cutting pollution; we'd want these whatever the circumstances.

These desirable outcomes are at the heart of a sizzling vision. Although the transition to a low carbon economy might be a bumpy ride, the destination is worth it. You need to see beyond the fight, and beyond the threat, in order to find a sizzling vision. There are plenty of resources, research and examples to help:

## **Economic visions**

Many of the major campaigning NGOs and some of the big research organisations (like McKinsey) have weighty tomes on the macro-economic world in 2050ish. Lots of heavy data to underpin sizzling visions.

## **Product and technology visions**

We are impressed every year by the winners of the various green-tech awards. Several newspapers and online blogs also run product awards and recommendations. Even if this stuff isn't on the market yet, it makes for good vision-fodder.

## **Lifestyle visions**

Look out for people already living the visionary lifestyles. From transition townfolk to innovative entrepreneurs, to committed individuals, there are millions globally already living up to the infamous William Gibson comment "The future is here, it's just not equally distributed yet".





For a vision that sizzles, you need to think creatively. A simple quadrant in which you write or draw up your ideas can help:



**How will we travel?**

List all the funky and exciting new kit and travel options, from bicycles to the Tesla sports car.

**How will we eat?**

Farmers markets, or fair-trade? Eco-supermarkets or grow-your own?

**Where will we live?**

New ideas about about how we'll build our homes, and what we'll put in them.

**Where will we work?**

What does a green job look like? Get excited about the green economy.



# THE BATTLE LINES

The final hurdle before any communication, however sizzling, is to know your audience.



No government in the world can implement a climate agreement alone. When it comes to climate change, every single one of our 6 billion fellow citizens - every

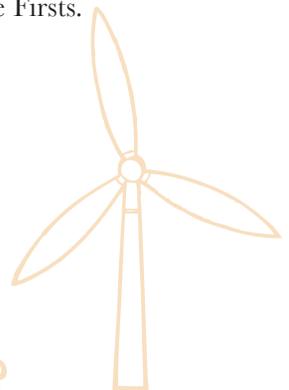
**A public veto on climate action is possible and it wouldn't happen by accident.**

..... family, every small and large business and every community - will need to act in response. And all those people may not choose to accept the changes. As John Stuart Mill once wrote, "In politics it is almost a triviality to say that public opinion now rules the world."

A public veto on climate action is possible and it wouldn't happen by accident. As we will see, those

who oppose strong action to prevent climate change never question the need to take the public with them. They start with directing public opinion and then work their way up from there. But the messages for change aren't touching enough people. If we want to change the majority, we need to change our message.

The battle lines are drawn between the Global Activists and the Global Cynics, both fighting for the hearts and minds of the Home Firsts.



## Meet the Global Activists

The entrance criteria to be a Global Activist is that you've heard about climate change, have at least a passing knowledge (or detailed expertise) of what that means, and are eager for immediate international, national and personal action to combat it. Futerra considers ourselves to be part of this group. But we'll try not to be too partisan.

### Climate Fighters

Often of a campaigning or ideological bent, the climate fighters are ready for change. Having spent years in the policy and public wilderness, they feel global climate policy can and must make a difference. Can swing easily into becoming lighter versions of the Angry Antis if they feel disappointed about the speed of change.

### Carbon Realists

Often found at senior levels in government and business this group accepts the climate science and the need for action. But remember - the realists don't like taking climate action, they just know they have to eventually. Often terribly conflicted between their climate realism and their other obligations or vested interests.

### Carbon Opportunists

There's money in climate action. From the renewable energy entrepreneurs to the carbon market traders, the Opportunists want consistent targets and a thriving international carbon market or more subsidies.

Again, not all of these voices always sit together comfortably. The Climate Fighters are ideologically driven, and find the Realists questionable and the Opportunists downright worrying. The feeling is often mutual.



## Meet the Global Cynics

The entrance criteria for the Global Cynics would be the same as the Cynics, except that they hold a totally negative opinion about an international climate agreement and about climate action in general.

The Cynics are less coherent than the Activists, splitting into six groups.

### Climate Change Deniers

Unfortunately, these guys are back (if they ever went away). The edge of this group are the conspiracy theorists who are sure that climate science is an excuse for either (a) the environmentalists to curtail consumption or undermine our way of life, or (b) for the developed world to hold back the developing world.

### Carbon Protectionists

Protectionists argue against making compromises either to the developing or to the developed world (depending on their own perspective). They often call on the rest of the world to take action, but have a good line on why their country shouldn't do more, or has already done enough.

### Industry Avoiders

With major vested interests, Avoiders are looking to make sure the carbon tax hammer doesn't fall on their industry. The worst offenders previously ran campaigns sowing doubt and denial. Now they often use the argument of job losses and unbalanced impacts.

### Economic Worriers

Recently, this group has stopped always questioning the costs of action, but now are sowing doubts about taking action during a global economic downturn. They often threaten rises in fuel prices, personal costs for individuals, and wider economic burdens.



It would be tempting to either get a bit angry or laugh about these arguments. But remember that there isn't some evil James Bond villain somewhere wringing his hands with glee at the unfolding climate drama. Some of these arguments are put forward by good-natured people, honestly sure of their standpoint. If you want to be an effective communicator, remember that.

There are two final groups within the Global Cynics. These groups wouldn't make friendly bedfellows with the others. But in terms of communications and public support for change, their impact is the same:

### Climate Quitters

Quitters believe it's all too late anyway, because the climate is irrevocably damaged and there's nothing we can do about it. As James Lovelock puts it, "Our situation is similar to that of a boat that suddenly loses engine power shortly before reaching Niagara Falls. What's the point of trying to repair the engine?"

### Angry Antis

Radical environmentalists (and a few anarchists) convinced that the system that got us into this mess can't get us out. Often disrupt even good-faith meetings and climate summits.

The terrible irony, of course, is that all these Cynics probably wouldn't get along if you put them in a room. They probably wouldn't get along in a pointedly physical way in fact. Yet they feed each other's agendas and collectively undermine public acceptance of change.

The Climate Deniers fuel the Angry Antis' wrath, and the Quitters prove the Protectionists' arguments. For Average Joe, it all looks confusing, volatile and unclear. At best, the Cynics provide an excuse for delay, denial and apathy.



### Meet the Home Firsts

Now we'd like to introduce you to the most important group. If you're an Activist of any hue, you might not spend much time in this massive company. You travel with them, eat with them, share the planet with them and might be related to a few. But because they don't have much of an opinion on climate change, you probably don't know how important they are.



The Home Firsts are both more cohesive and more diverse than either of the global groups. Diverse in that they are a far larger group and include a wide range of demographics; cohesive in that they hold pretty similar views on climate change.

**You travel with them, eat with them, share the planet with them and might be related to a few**

This group could become interested in climate change, they could choose to take action, and they could raise their expectations of governments. For example, our survey in China found that a significant proportion of young professionals (79%) believe they have a responsibility to change their behaviour to help reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Similarly, over two-thirds



(70%) claim they have a responsibility to encourage others to change their behaviour.

The defining characteristic of a Home First is that they are somewhat interested in the world beyond their borders and what things ‘out there’ might mean for their country. They are not consistently interested or informed about global issues, but;

**Home Firsts' latent interest is sparked by clear opportunities or threats to their personal or national interest.**

Either the Cynics will touch their fear of change, or the Activists will fire their imagination with opportunities. The potential and the dangers are immediately obvious. The Home Firsts make up the vast majority of every population dwarfing

**The Home Firsts are important**

both the Global Cynics and Activists. They are strongly influenced by the media and by ‘commonly held’ views. The politicians, media and business take much more interest in them than in you (well, you’re reading this guide – that kind of suggests you’re either a cynic or an activist).

The Home Firsts are important.

All of our media analysis and market research shows we’re on a knife edge of opinion. The Home Firsts are receiving both Global Cynic and Global Activist messages – and they could fall either way. A sizzling vision is what this group wants to hear. Make sure it’s yours.



# THE BIG QUESTIONS

This might have all made perfect sense to you. Or you might be thinking, "ok, but..." We might not have found all the 'buts', however, here are a few answers to some of them.



## Q. Yes but, will this really work because it all sounds a bit 'rose tinted glasses' to me?

Being positive can be hard. The authors of this guide also sometimes have the urge to grab people by the shoulders, give them a good shake and cry, "pull your finger out or we're all going to fry!" The problem is that climate change is too important. You've got to do what works, and our research suggests this works. Try it.

## Q. Yes but, what exactly is the vision of a low carbon future?

Really good question. Some work has been done on this, but we're missing a Stern Review equivalent detailing a properly low carbon future. You can still use the approach but it will be supercharged once we have more detail. There's also going

to be more than one vision. Governments will develop nice ones, NGOs will demand scary ones and business will sell beautifully branded ones. Get yours out there and let's have the battle of the visions. Then there's much more of a chance that every audience will find one that motivates them.

## Q. Yes but, although this might help sell big plans like Copenhagen what about making big changes to people's behaviour?

We'd love to see more research on this. Behaviour change is enthrallingly complex, but one thing we do know is that many low carbon and green behaviours have a 'status' problem. Most climate friendly behaviours, especially the big hard ones (travel, diet etc.) are not aspirational or desirable. One factor that tars them is their

association with a problem. You're asked to make a sacrifice for the greater good, which has rarely in human history been a high status pastime. By associating the actions with a positive and desirable goal, these actions could gain a few popularity points. Let's test that.

## Q. Yes but, in developing countries some indulgent 'downshifting' picture of the future isn't going to cut it?

We're convinced that the most compelling, most radical and most sizzling visions are going to come from the developing world. When presenting this approach in South America, Brazil and China audiences have started pitching visions almost immediately. The future belongs to progress - focused, determined populations prepared to build new and low carbon economies (rather than retrofitting old ones). Sound like anywhere you know?





**Q. Yes but, what about energy security or money saving narratives, etc?**

Adapt it. The principles apply to whatever your main message is.

**Q. Yes but, not every audience buys this do they?**

You're right. If you're reading this then you're probably not our target audience! The Cynics and the Activists already have their own beliefs, motivations, myths and heroes. We're not trying to reach the already decided. Try this approach with an audience you haven't been able to reach yet.

**Q. Yes but, what about climate literacy and education?**

Climate literacy and education are the right options, but perhaps are not the most effective ones. We wish that understanding climate change would automatically lead to lifestyles changes. But it doesn't.

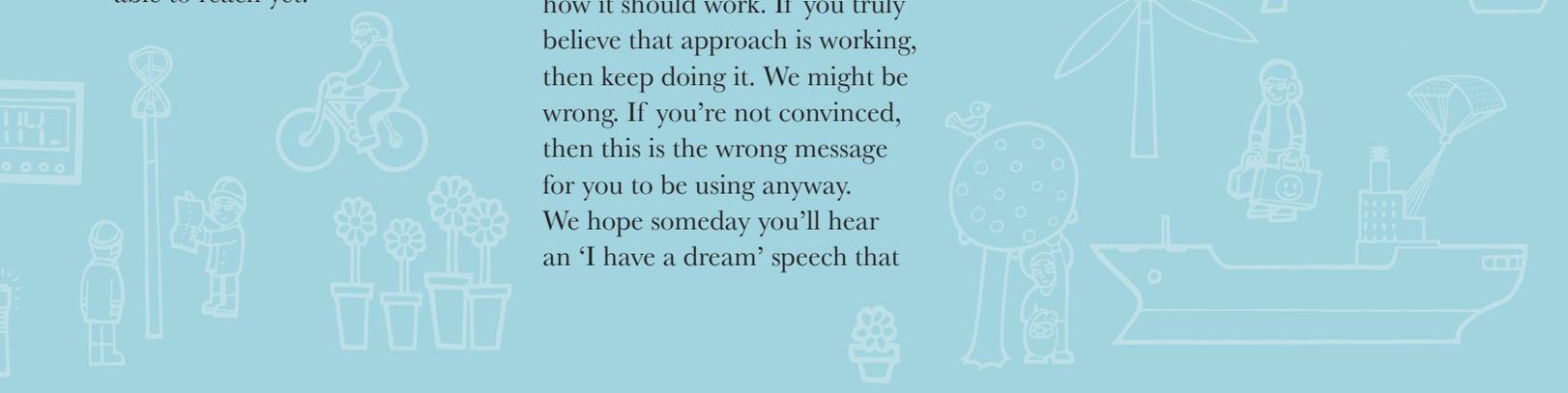
**Q. Yes but, I hate all of this! I believe people should understand the impact of their actions and face up to the realities of climate change?**

That's the hardest part. That is how it should work. If you truly believe that approach is working, then keep doing it. We might be wrong. If you're not convinced, then this is the wrong message for you to be using anyway. We hope someday you'll hear an 'I have a dream' speech that

will grab you. But until then, remember this: no matter the message, it's your passion and dedication that sizzles.

**Q. Yes but, so what?**

Are messages that important? We believe that policies without public opinion aren't worth the carbon they're written on. No sizzle = dead pig.



# WHAT NEXT?

## Try it.

Flick back through this guide and try out the narrative. What would you say? How would you phrase the vision, put forth the choice, outline the plan and call for action?

What's your 'I have a dream' speech?

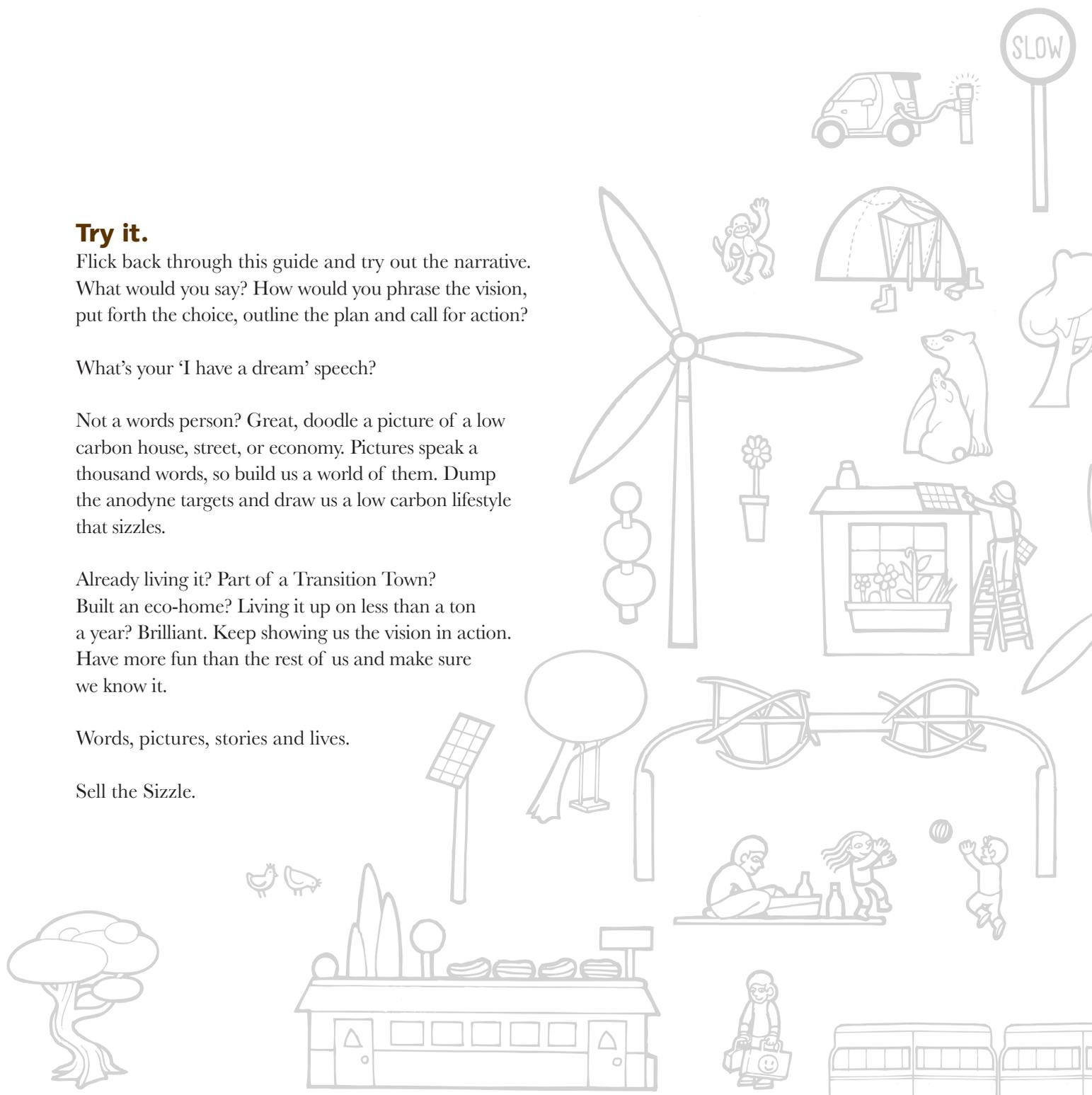
Not a words person? Great, doodle a picture of a low carbon house, street, or economy. Pictures speak a thousand words, so build us a world of them. Dump the anodyne targets and draw us a low carbon lifestyle that sizzles.

Already living it? Part of a Transition Town?

Built an eco-home? Living it up on less than a ton a year? Brilliant. Keep showing us the vision in action. Have more fun than the rest of us and make sure we know it.

Words, pictures, stories and lives.

Sell the Sizzle.









# ABOUT FUTERRA

Futerra is a communications agency. We do the things great agencies do; have bright ideas, captivate consumers, build energetic websites one day and grab opinion formers' attention the next. We're very good at it. But the real difference is that since our foundation in 2001, we've only ever worked on green issues, corporate responsibility and sustainability.



For more information on our services, or to see if we could help you, visit [www.futerra.co.uk](http://www.futerra.co.uk) or call +44(0) 207 549 4700

For further copies of this guide please email [info@futerra.co.uk](mailto:info@futerra.co.uk)

## **A word from the authors**

We are deeply passionate about our business and our message. We believe that fighting climate change will preserve our freedoms and open the door to a better future. A sustainable and secure energy supply is infinitely more attractive than reliance on sources that fluctuate wildly in price and originate in unstable or unsavoury regimes. The financial benefits of energy efficiency are enormous, regardless of where that energy comes from. Climate change must be mitigated, but the opportunities must also be maximised.

Why are communications, psychology and clever messages needed to bring that about?

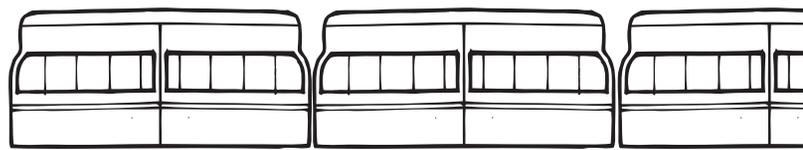
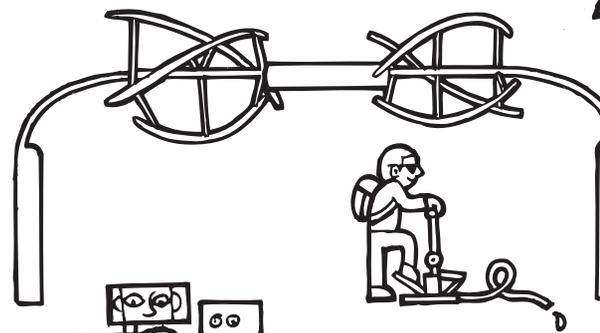
The brutal truth is that rational arguments alone don't change behaviour, even when people want to change. Health campaigners have known this for some time. Most of us know the risks of smoking, over-eating and drinking alcohol to excess, yet millions of us still do these behaviours – despite rationally knowing they are bad for us.

Herein lies the rub. Without being incentivised, excited or inspired by an aspirational ideal of where we might go as a society, few of us will act. We need to enthuse people about the potential benefits of a better way of living and overcome the vocal voices of delay and denial.

Progress has always required the creation of powerful visions in the public mind, such as the images of heroic workers in the New Deal as America emerged from the dustbowl depression. We need these powerful visions to help us move towards a better tomorrow. In the words of Victor Hugo "There is nothing like a dream to create the future."

Best wishes from  
**The Futerra team**





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