ClimateVisuals

a Climate Outreach project

The power of images and how to work with photography in climate change communications

5th December 2023

Alastair Johnstone
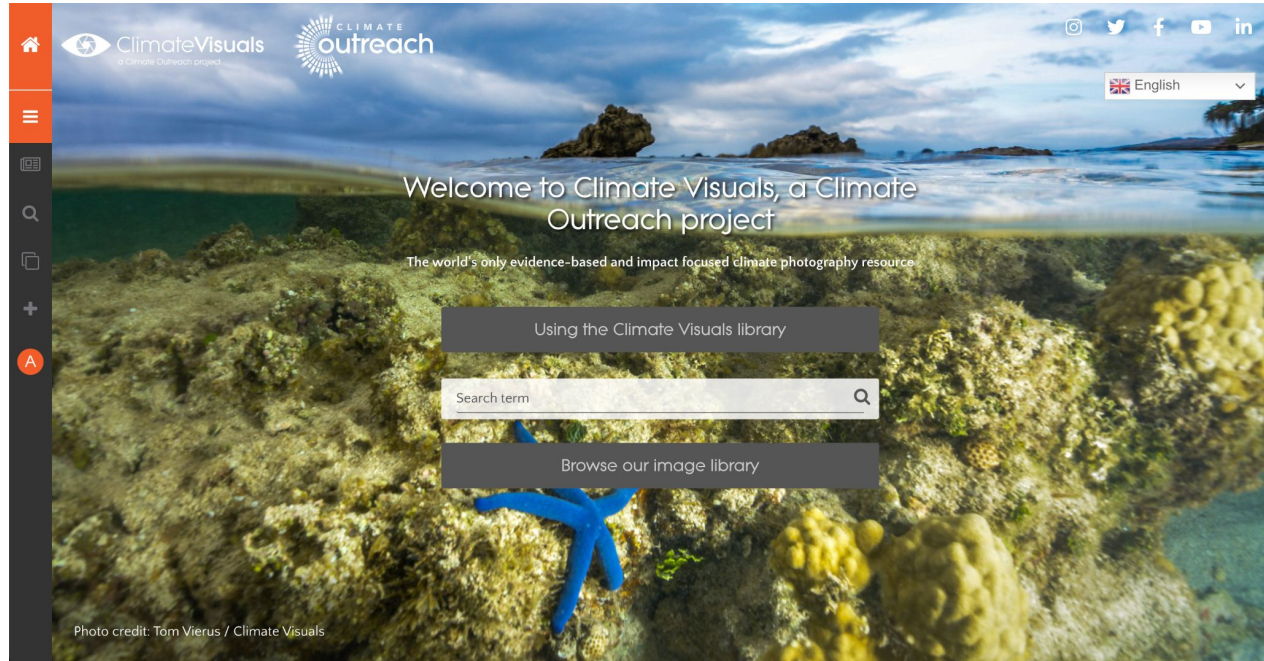
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What makes an effective climate change photograph?

Jamboard

Climate Visuals

Seven principles for visual climate change communication (based on international social research)

Chapman, DA.; Corner, A; Markowitz, E; Webster, R. (2016).

Climate visuals: A mixed methods investigation of public perceptions of climate images in three countries

Global Environmental Change 41, 172–182.

CLIMATE outreach
formerly COIN

The Minor Foundation
for Major Challenges

10:10

gcca
Global Call for Climate Action

UMassAmherst

The seven Climate Visuals principles

climateVISUALS

7 core principles for climate change communication

Show real people

Tell new stories

Show climate change causes at scale

Show emotionally powerful impacts

Understand your audience

Show local (but serious) impacts

Be careful with protest imagery

Raphael Pouget / Climate Visuals Countdown

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Simone Tramonte / Climate Visuals Countdown

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Anna Liminowicz / Climate Visuals

Raunaq Chopra / Climate Visuals Countdown

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Debarshi Mukherjee / Climate Visuals Countdown

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👥 Understand your audience

📍 Show local (but serious) impacts

🪧 Be careful with protest imagery

Karen Toro / Climate Visuals Countdown

Ocean Visuals photography brief

An overhead view of a group of fisherman standing in shallow water holding and pulling their fanned-out nets to catch fish.

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 6. Adaptation

Shibasish Saha / Climate Visuals

A group of people carry a large idol of the Lord Ganesh into the sea, a traditional religious custom. ...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 4. Justice, 6. Adaptation

Dipayan Bose / Climate Visuals

Three children sitting on the ground studying, and a boat loaded with people and goods passes by on high tidal waters. ...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 4. Justice, 6. Adaptation, 5. Resilience

Moniruzzaman Sazal / Climate Visuals

A man and girl try to catch fish, with a large blue net, standing waist deep in tidal sea water.

2. Impacts, 4. Justice

Moniruzzaman Sazal / Climate Visuals

A group of people by a wooden house on the coast as a tidal wave breaks on the land. ...

2. Impacts. 4. Justice

Supratim Bhattacharjee / Climate Visuals

An aerial view of a mechanic... the sea just off a sandy beach...

1. Causes

Shane Gross / Climate Visuals

A group of people on a beach adding large lumps of clay to an embankment in the foreground. The clay is being dug from the sea ...
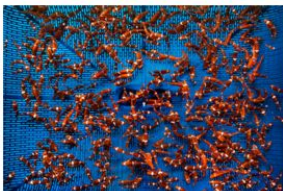
3. Solutions, 5. Resilience

Arnab Naskar / Climate Visuals

A group of people, including a man carrying a child, walking through a forest of trees with sandy ground. ...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 5. Resilience

Abir Abdullah / Climate Visuals

A large number of orange clown fish (Amphiprion ocellaris) on a blue background.

3. Solutions

Giacomo d'Orlando / Climate Visuals

A group of divers inspect an area of coral enclosed by a protective cage, at the bottom of the sea.

3. Solutions. 5. Resilience

Giacomo d'Orlando / Climate Visuals

A man irrigates a field with a solar-powered irrigation pack on his back, with an array of solar-panels in the background. ...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 5. Resilience

Abir Abdullah / Climate Visuals

A queue of women holding p...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 4. Justice,...

Abir Abdullah / Climate Visuals

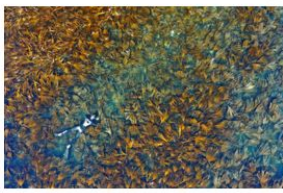The skyline of San Francisco with an orange sky ...

2. Impacts

Alexander Filardo / Climate Visuals

An aerial view of a research vessel sailing at night lit by a spotlight. ...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 4. Justice, 6. Adaptation, 5. Resilience

Michael Snyder / Climate Visuals

An aerial view of a diver wearing a wet suit swimming through kelp growing in water.

2. Impacts, 3. Solutions, 6. Adaptation, 5. Resilience

Nuno Rodrigues / Climate Visuals

The body of a dead deer lying on muddy ground in a mangrove forest.

2. Impacts

Zabed Hasnain Chowdhury / Climate Visuals

Two men standing on the bank of a river holding a sein net while a man on a boat near the opposite bank pulls it across the river. ...

2. Impacts, 1. Causes, 3. Solutions, 4. Justice, 6. Adaptation, 5. Resilience

Michael Snyder / Climate Visuals

An overhead view of salt mi... with salt.

1. Causes

Matjaz Krivic / Climate Visuals

Show people in ocean and coastal regions with authenticity

○ Always choose real images and people – never staged or manipulated photos

○ Authentic images have more impact, especially with an identifiable emotion, familiar scene, geography or concept

○ **Depict a variety of ocean and coastal regions with novel activities**

○ **Share stories promoting the work of specific people and communities**

○ **Foster a real sense of place – avoid just showing a location**

Michael Snyder / Climate Visuals Countdown

Visualise the diversity of people–and–ocean connections

- Create diverse representation of people – not tokenism

- Avoid abstract photographs of marine life without people, their activities or relationships

- Avoid generic, distant, ocean imagery

- Show the multitude of ways that people connect with or rely on the ocean

- Showcase how people, their values, beliefs and identity are tied to the ocean

Raunaq Singh Chopra / Climate Visuals

Tell new stories

- Less familiar, more thought–provoking images and narratives can remake and improve the visual representation of the environment
- Familiar, 'classic' images – such as polar bears, melting ice or plastic pollution can cause cynicism and fatigue as they are overused and stereotyped
- **Focus on stories of urgency and potency with a depth of feeling and vision**

Find ocean and climate causes, impacts and solutions at scale

- Individual 'causes' of climate change or harm – such as eating fish – may provoke defensive reactions

- People can't always see the links between the ocean, climate change and their daily lives

- When showing 'problematic' behaviours, show subjects at scale e.g. a Trawler vessel, rather than a single fisher–person

- **Showing positive solutions at scale conveys the potential to effectively tackle ocean and climate issues and helps overcome present day fears**

Joan Sullivan / Climate Visuals

Pair emotionally powerful impacts with positive actions

- ○ Climate impacts can be emotionally powerful and promote a response

- ○ People are moved more by images of impacts – e.g. floods and destruction from extreme weather – than by 'causes' or 'solutions'

- ○ However, climate impacts – because they are so emotionally powerful – can also be overwhelming and leave people feeling hopeless

- ○ Therefore coupling or showing images of climate impacts with a concrete and attainable positive solution for people is very effective

Ideas to invite curiosity and foster engagement

- Combine multiple stories and concepts into single images

- Show individuals, communities and businesses who are innovating and collaborating to achieve sustainability

- Clear, concise caption information can summarise the issue and will aid the viewer

- Connect people to the wonderful diversity of natural places beyond their own experiences or knowledge

- Create in-depth, long form and truly lasting content

- Develop a sense of awe and responsibility by showing the wonders of the ocean combined with relevant story and caption information.

Prioritise ethics, safety, wellbeing and prevention of harm

- Honouring people who fight or campaign for the environment is vital but anonymity of people and places may be necessary to reduce risks

- Develop informed consent – collaborate, co-create and participate – so communities can take decisions collectively and positively

- Self-interested photography is a serious problem when working in many cultural contexts, Indigenous Territories, marginalised or vulnerable communities

- Be mindful of victimisation and respect the people you work with or photograph, ensuring you deal with everyone as your collaborator and active participant

- Strive to show utmost respect, friendship and appreciation for the support received

- Be mindful not to cause or normalise harming or disturbing wildfires or habitats

Be aware of problem narratives

- ○ Go beyond visual cliches, overused icons and familiar underwater imagery

- ○ Be cautious with protest imagery as the images may only resonate with people who already consider themselves activists, campaigners or environmentalists

- ○ However, protest images clearly involving people directly affected by climate impacts, especially seeking climate justice, are seen as more authentic and therefore more compelling

- ○ Recognise the problems of a saviour complex and avoid victim narratives

- ○ Don't misrepresent heatwaves as 'fun in the sun'

- ○ Be careful illustrating the ocean as 'vast and otherworldly' as it can undermine its real vulnerability and the risks of negative change

Nature Visuals

Nature visuals: Diversity in images of England's green and natural spaces

Use images to tell positive, identifiable stories

Create authentic representation, not tokenism

Depict diverse activities in diverse landscapes

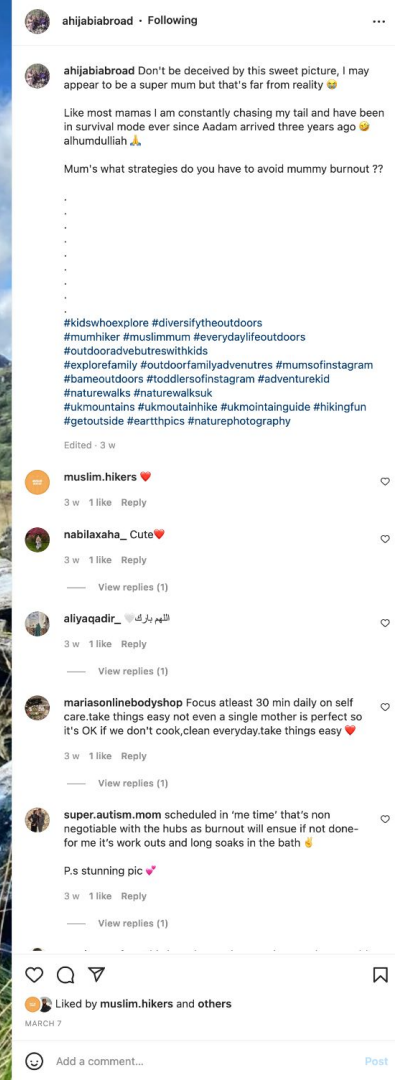Connect people to the wonderful diversity of natural places

Include more real people in images

Diversify who is behind the camera and the message

Use images to tell positive, identifiable stories

ahijabiabroad Don't be deceived by this sweet picture, I may appear to be a super mum but that's far from reality 😅

Like most mamas I am constantly chasing my tail and have been in survival mode ever since Aadam arrived three years ago 😅 alhumdulliah 🙏

Mum's what strategies do you have to avoid mummy burnout ??
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#kidswhoexplore #diversifytheoutdoors #mumhiker #muslimmum #everydaylifeoutdoors #outdooradvebutreswithkids #explorefamily #outdoorfamilyadvenutres #mumsofinstagram #bameoutdoors #toddlersofinstagram #adventurekid #naturewalks #naturewalksuk #ukmountains #ukmoutainhike #ukmointainguide #hikingfun #getoutside #earthpics #naturephotography

Edited · 3 w

muslim.hikers ❤️
3 w   1 like   Reply

nabilaxaha_ Cute❤️
3 w   1 like   Reply
⌐ View replies (1)

aliyaqadir_ اللهم بارك 🤍
3 w   1 like   Reply
⌐ View replies (1)

mariasonlinebodyshop Focus atleast 30 min daily on self care.take things easy not even a single mother is perfect so it's OK if we don't cook,clean everyday.take things easy ❤️
3 w   1 like   Reply
⌐ View replies (1)

super.autism.mom scheduled in 'me time' that's non negotiable with the hubs as burnout will ensue if not done- for me it's work outs and long soaks in the bath ✌️

P.s stunning pic 💕
3 w   1 like   Reply
⌐ View replies (1)

Liked by **muslim.hikers** and others

MARCH 7

Add a comment...   Post

themirnavator ✔ Can't wait to get back to adventuring again. This pic was in the first few months after I left an eighteen year long teaching career that included being Director of Equity and Inclusion at my last school @rabungap in Georgia! As I began to focus on training, speaking, leading trail running retreats for the Slow AF among us, my diversity work was de facto. But as our country has erupted because you know, COVID and um rampant racism rearing its ugly head so that even the most disbelieving now

Liked by **trailfest** and **others**

JUNE 11, 2020

Add a comment...   Post

Create authentic representation, not tokenism

Phil Young

Depict diverse activities in diverse landscapes

Cheryl Duerden

Connect people to the
wonderful diversity of
natural places

Include more real people in images

Hollie Fernando

Amaal Said

Diversify who is
behind the camera
and the message

Questions?

Exercise: real world examples of using photography

In your groups:

- Identify a real future use for photography in a group member's work
- Discuss the Climate Visuals guidelines and considerations for effective images
- Identify possible visual themes and images
- Make notes on the Jamboard and nominate someone in your group to present back

ClimateVisuals
a Climate Outreach project

CLIMATE
outreach

Welcome to Climate Visuals, a Climate Outreach project

The world's only evidence-based and impact focused climate photography resource

Using the Climate Visuals library

Search term

Browse our image library

Photo credit: Tom Vierus / Climate Visuals