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Communicating Climate Change: A National Security Framework

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ABSTRACT

There is a severe lack of public concern and engagement surrounding climate change due to various challenges, barriers, and failures in Climate Change communications. Framing is a communication concept and tool proven to help break communication barriers by presenting information through a new perspective. This study asks if reframing Climate Change under a National Security frame will interest and inform the public about the many complexities of climate change, resulting in public engagement and policy. Strategic frame analysis is used to identify issues in communicating Climate Change and reframe Climate Change under a National Security frame. Specific framing guidelines and toolkit are used to construct the frame into a presentable text for testing. As a pilot study, the survey research methodology of a focus group comprised of ten participants age eighteen and older is used to test and examine the effectiveness of the adopted National Security frame when communicating climate change and climate change issues. The National Security frame breaks communication boundaries by connecting the issue with common socio-political concerns such as the economy, energy, public health, and safety. The National Security frame succeeds in reframing people's perceptions of Climate Change and reduces political polarization regarding the issue by having a unifying tone resonating a moral and patriotic appeal rather than partisan agenda. This resulted in informing the public about the many complexities of Climate Change and cultivating social action.