



THE CLIMATE  
STORY LAB

# REPORT OUT

UK EDITION  
2020



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## INTRODUCTION

***“Both the coronavirus crisis and the climate crisis reveal that our world is inextricably interconnected, and it’s as strong or as fragile as those connections. We have to strengthen those connections. It is our only choice.”***

—  
Mary Heglar

Climate activist and Climate Story Lab participant



2020 will forever be associated with the devastating outbreak and spread of COVID-19. It was on the eve of the worldwide shutdown – during which billions of people across nations, understanding the immediate threat to human life, were compelled to adapt to a new reality – that Climate Story Lab UK took place in London.

COVID-19 has laid bare society’s fissures as we are forced to confront those things which are essential to our lifestyles and those which are not. Initially, mixed messaging and stark inadequacies in official responses left countless numbers of people floundering, and those on the frontline often lacking the resources to deal with the unfolding crisis.

Yet in the face of calls to make sacrifices in our everyday lives, people are collectively taking action – showing solidarity with the most vulnerable in their communities and placing pressure on governments and business leaders to introduce policies that would mitigate the worst effects of the crisis. Support for scientific expertise is increasingly clamorous as attention shifts onto how we plan for a brighter future.

For many, the current existential moment triggers thoughts around the ongoing environmental emergency. Contextualising the coronavirus against the backdrop of climate trauma, activist Mary Heglar writes: *“As with climate—which for far too long was understood strictly as a scientific issue, nothing to do with emotion, or justice—we are attempting to change human behaviour with facts and stats and shaming instead of compassion and understanding.”*

Whether 2020 proves to be a turning point in our relationship with the environment is yet to be decided. Over the past year we have witnessed waves of protest, often youth-led, demanding action on climate change, and political parties committing to a zero carbon future. The run-up to the next United Nations Climate Change conference (COP26 now delayed until 2021) provides the starkest of opportunities to showcase our capacity to care for the welfare of fellow citizens as well as the future of our species. During times of crisis, grief has the propensity to swiftly transition into hope.

***“Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.”***

—  
Arundhati Roy

From *The pandemic is a portal* published in the Financial Times April 3rd 2020



## ABOUT THE LAB

Climate Story Lab UK brought together over 100 climate experts and storytellers from across the world to London. Hoping to learn from past successes and failures in climate narratives, the Lab showcased a selection of new storytelling projects that aim to reach and engage diverse audiences throughout the UK and beyond.

Following the opening Lab which took place in New York in Summer 2019, this is the second in a series of interventions to harness the creative and campaigning expertise of [Exposure Labs](#) and [Doc Society](#) with the best of the Good Pitch Impact Labs and a determination to accelerate effective climate communication. Each day began with a poetry reading from Selina Nwulu – the Poet-in-Residence at Climate Story Lab UK.

*I wonder what will this all look like in 50 years' time.*

*How will our cities exhale then?*

*How will we wear our loss?*

*How will we sleep when we cannot turn our alarm clocks off?*

From '[We Have Everything We Need](#)'  
by Selina Nwulu



Encouraged to imagine how best to inspire citizens, provoke politicians and mobilise communities with their media projects, [fifteen teams of storytellers](#) were given the opportunity to strategise their projects – challenging their own creative ideas as well as developing more robust impact and distribution plans. Media projects were drawn from a multitude of worlds – poetry, podcasts, short and feature documentaries, comedy, fiction, and animation. The synopses can be found here: <https://climatestorylab.org/projects>

We were also joined by a dozen international partners including colleagues from Mexico, Kenya, Jordan, Greece, Germany, Lebanon, South Africa, India and Canada who had come to see if the Lab makes sense in their communities and to pilot the new [Climate Story Lab Toolbox](#).

Together we listened to leading experts from climate scientists to political strategists and campaigners sharing their latest insights on where we stand in the UK and what is working in terms of climate communications. We watched inspirational case studies and together brainstormed around each of the storytelling projects - suggesting partners for production, distribution and impact. The following report is a distillation of our three days together and the journey of ideas we embarked upon.



## TOP TAKEAWAYS

1. **The COVID-19 crisis has revealed that society is capable of acting swiftly, collaborating with experts, and prioritising the most vulnerable.** Though the response to the pandemic has been far from perfect, we now have an opportunity to re-envision the scale and magnitude of global cooperation needed to successfully address the climate crisis, and illustrate the potential of just solutions. Storytellers make these visions of the future come to life.
2. **We need a biodiversity of storytelling – as diverse as the ecosystems we seek to save.** Many stories that have received mainstream recognition portray a singular perspective on climate change, thus contributing to a further siloing of the movement. We need to support and amplify narratives that include a range of storytellers, trusted messengers, subject matters, and mediums to reach over political and cultural divides.
3. **Climate Justice must be centred in our storytelling and advocacy practices.** People of colour and those in the Global South are at the forefront of dealing with environmental devastation, and many times their voices and climate solutions are not included. We can begin to centre Climate Justice by acknowledging the perspectives of those on the frontlines, and by refusing to tell stories that deepen existing inequalities and injustices.
4. **Audiences want a broader emotional range beyond hope and fear.** Much like ourselves, our audiences are undergoing an emotional journey in their relationship with the natural world. Scare stories about the overwhelming scale of the task ahead can lead to inaction and paralysis. We have an opportunity to help our audiences develop the courage to embrace the unknowns that lie ahead.
5. **Now is the time to challenge current models of production.** Extractive filmmaking has long been the norm in the creative industries, but now is the time to look to the traditions of co-creation that encourage meaningful collaboration with the subjects and communities represented in our work.







# SECTION 1: TAKING THE TEMPERATURE

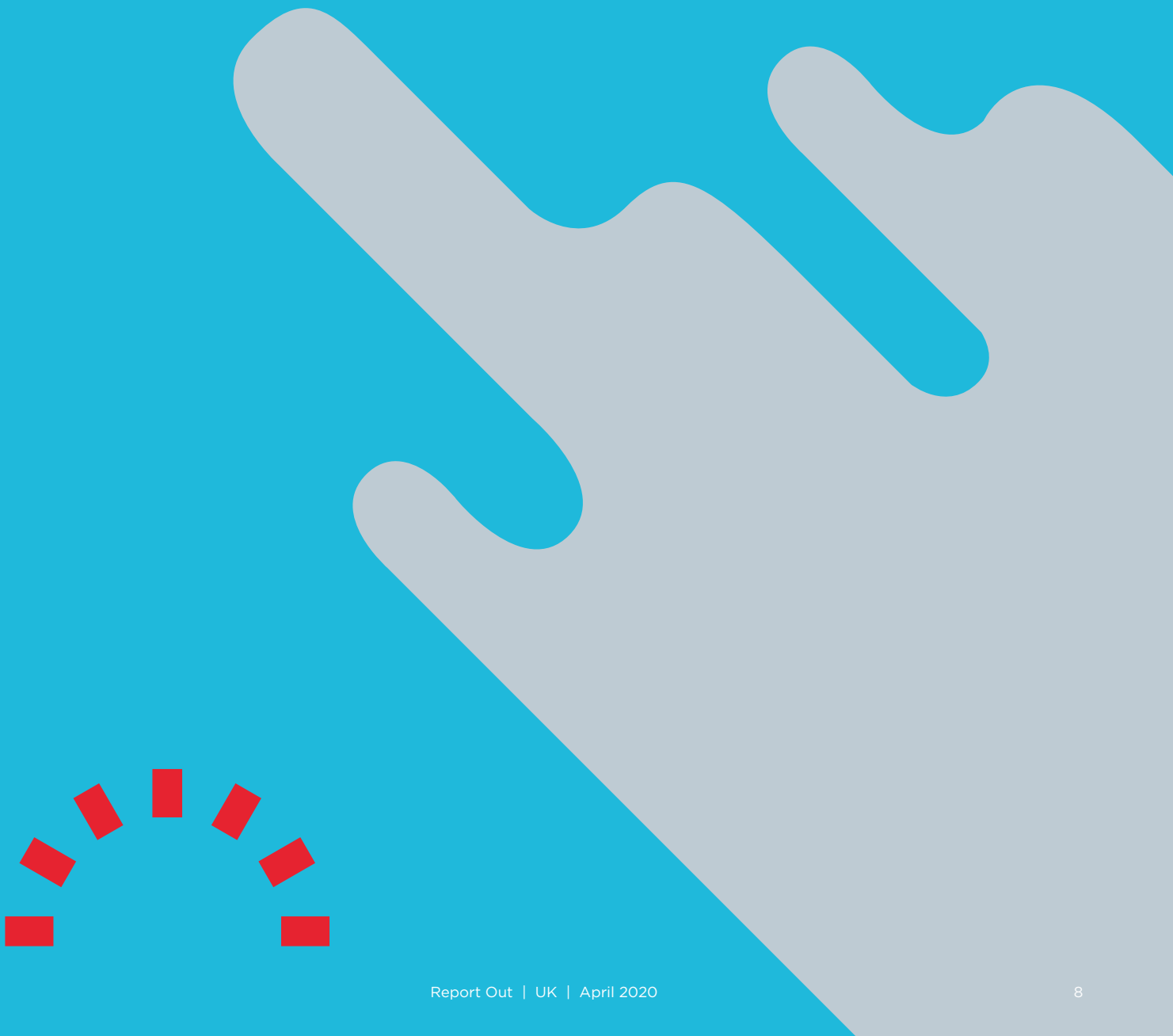




## SECTION SUMMARY:

There are myriad creative responses to crises. Artists are innovating and their role in encouraging positive social change has been acknowledged – the recent United Nations call for cultural industries to aid its COVID-19 response can be held as an example. For UK-based climate storytellers, it may be argued that the terrain has never been better – the science and public opinion is on our side, with unprecedented cross-party agreement that the country must work towards ‘Net Zero’ carbon in order to avert catastrophe.

However, to quickly encourage a shared understanding of the climate emergency and a willingness to take action throughout society we need to try harder to bring extractive work to a halt, fight back in a culture war against forces of reaction, prevent the spread of misinformation, build up our own resilience and encourage a spirit of generosity across our industries.





## THE FAILURE OF ARTISTS

***“When future generations look back upon the Great Derangement they will certainly blame the leaders and politicians of this time for their failure to address the climate crisis. But they may well hold artists and writers to be equally culpable – for the imagining of possibilities is not after all, the job of politicians and bureaucrats.”***

—  
Amitav Ghosh in *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*



Photo © Ivo van der Bent

What is the role of the storyteller in addressing the climate crisis? Indian novelist Amitav Ghosh's challenge is a humbling starting point for those creatives wishing to address the question. Ghosh feels that, with notable exceptions, there has been overall an imaginative failure in the face of global warming - the dominant modern forms of storytelling are unable to grasp the scale and violence of climate change.

The prehistory of telling stories to mass audiences — epics and sagas which could envisage old worlds dying and new worlds being born — were pushed aside with a global rise in popularity of the novel, essentially a product of colonialism and capitalism. This literary form sets the drama within much reduced horizons, say, the family or the marriage – anything larger-scale would have seemed, more often than not, absurd or overblown.

***“It is a simple fact that climate change has a much smaller presence in contemporary literary fiction than it does even in public discussion. When the subject of climate change occurs, it is almost always in relation to nonfiction... Indeed, it could even be said that fiction that deals with climate change is almost by definition not of the kind that is taken seriously: the mere mention of the subject is often enough to relegate a novel or a short story to the genre of science fiction. It is as though in the literary imagination climate change were somehow akin to extraterrestrials or interplanetary travel.”***

—  
Amitav Ghosh



Photo © Ivo van der Bent

Amidst current crises, artists and audiences are perhaps now ready to think the unthinkable. New storytelling opportunities addressing the climate emergency arise not only by the growth in 'Cli-Fi' (climate fiction) but through calls for a 'Green New Deal' which may provide creatives with ambitious opportunities to help paint a vision of a better future, as they once did during the original 'New Deal' in the United States.



*“It has been recognised that when an artist or musician is hungry he is just as hungry as a bricklayer and has the same right as a bricklayer has to be employed at his own trade. For the first time in our history, our government has become a patron of the arts, officially and quite unashamed.”*

—  
Jacob Baker (1895-1967) New York Times, 1934  
Administrator of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration

But Ghosh questions whether artists and writers are ready to be part of the solution. It's not simply that too many great creative minds go into advertising and PR. Creative work like novels and films unconsciously perpetuate desires for the unsustainable consumerism that got us into a crisis in the first place.

*“When we see an advertisement that links a picture of a tropical island to the word paradise, the longings that are kindled in us have a chain of transmission that stretches back to Daniel Defoe and Jean-Jacques Rousseau: the flight that will transport us to the island is merely an ember in that fire.”*

—  
Amitav Ghosh



What is certain is that every artist has a role to play in helping us imagine a different relationship with the world.

#### Key Resource:

- [The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable](#) Penguin Books, 2016

INSPIRATION: *RISE: FROM ONE ISLAND TO ANOTHER*

A filmic poem featuring indigenous spoken word artists Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner from the Marshall Islands and Aka Niviâna from Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), connecting their realities of melting glaciers and rising sea levels. [Through this video](#) we get a glimpse at how vast, and yet so intricate and interdependent, our world is. Rise was directed by photojournalist Dan Lin, a collaboration facilitated by [350.org](https://350.org).

**Sister of ice and snow**

**I'm coming to you**

**from the land of my ancestors,**

**from atolls, sunken volcanoes—undersea descent**

**of sleeping giants**

**Sister of ocean and sand,**

**I welcome you**

**to the land of my ancestors**

**—to the land where they sacrificed their lives**

**to make mine possible**

**—to the land**

**of survivors.**

[READ FULL POEM](#)

[VIEW VIDEO](#)



## CLIMATE OPINION IN THE UK

Polling in recent years shows a noticeable increase in climate concern, with significant public support for policies related to, for example, renewable energy. However, Jessie Nicholls, Strategic Communications Manager at the European Climate Foundation, tells us that, despite their influence, polls are imperfect. They don't allow us to get at the deeper motivations behind why people think, feel and act in certain ways.

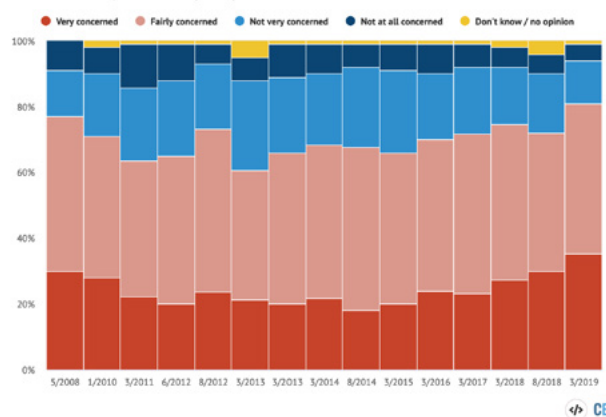
People's views don't fall neatly along demographic lines – engagement and a willingness to take action on climate change is influenced by personal beliefs around everything from the government and nature to the concepts of freedom, progress and risk. In other words, we have to take a much wider angle and look at a person's identity as a whole to understand the real drivers of public opinion.

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

### We've seen a big shift in public opinion

Over the past few years, there's been a noticeable increase in climate concern:

Concern about climate change has reached a record high  
Some 80% of the British public are now "fairly" or "very" concerned



British people believe climate change is:

Caused partly (40%) or mainly (33%) or entirely (15%) by human activity

Already having an impact in the UK (69%) or will do within their lifetime (11%)

Associated with rising sea levels (56%), extreme weather events like storms (54%), increased pollution (50%), increased coastal erosion (47%), plant or animal extinction (44%), more health problems (43%)

\* All data taken from the BEIS' Public Attitudes Tracker

From sampling almost ten thousand people spread across Britain, ECF found that public concern around climate change is connected to widely-held values including fairness, reducing waste, unity and pride.

The majority of those sampled believe that climate change concerns everyone, regardless of politics, income or background, and only a minority are worried about having to make changes to their lifestyle. The greatest benefits of the UK cutting its carbon emissions are perceived as "protecting future generations" and "creating a healthier society".

We don't need to choose from competing perspectives – only grapple with their tensions and uncertainties. Ultimately, we can succeed as climate campaigners and communicators by bringing people together as one community - getting out of our comfort zone and connecting the cause to universal values that inspire a popular idea of a 'good society'.

## What are we starting to find out?



### VALUES & IDENTITY

- Action on climate change is connected to feelings around waste, fairness, unity, pride, hypocritical behaviour:
  - Ending our throwaway culture is one of the most important ways to protect the environment (>80%)
  - Stricter rules to protect the environment are only fine if the same rules apply to everyone (>80%)
  - Working together to protect the environment could build a society that's based on sharing not selfishness, community not division (>70%)
  - When I do my bit to protect the environment, I feel proud (>60%)
  - Environmental campaigners are mostly hypocrites who fly on holiday while lecturing the rest of us about how to live (>50%)
  - I agree with the aims of climate and environmental activists but don't believe their tactics are helping the cause (>40%)
- The greatest benefits of the UK cutting its carbon emissions & protecting the environment are perceived as – in decreasing importance:
  - protecting future generations
  - creating a healthier society
  - preserving the beauty of our countryside
  - creating jobs and prosperity
  - helping the poorest around the world
  - preserving God's creation
  - giving me pride in my country
  - creating a fairer society
  - bringing the country back together again

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From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

The top responses to the question “How does thinking about climate change make you feel?” were: Helpless, Sad, Anxious, Angry and Scared. This sets a challenge for climate storytellers - while the public are more concerned and more informed than ever before, they feel pretty awful when encouraged to address the issue directly.

### Key Resources:

- More in Common, BEIS's Public Attitudes Tracker, [www.europeanclimate.org](http://www.europeanclimate.org)

## POLITICAL BATTLEGROUND

In 2019, the British Parliament declared a climate emergency, following similar declarations in Wales and Scotland, and dozens of towns and cities across the United Kingdom. Following December's general election — where scores of new MPs were elected across the parliamentary parties — and Brexit, there may be capacity for the British state to pursue the climate change agenda more rigorously.



From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

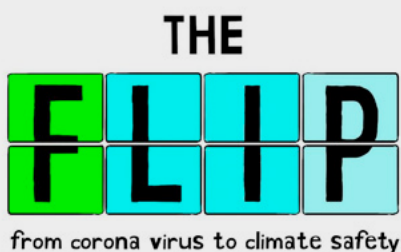
Luke Murphy, Head of the Institute for Public Policy Research's Environmental Justice Commission, believes that with the UK becoming the first major economy to commit to 'Net Zero' carbon by 2050 and the biggest government majority since 2005, there are many political opportunities to influence the landscape - from new parliamentary legislation (including the Environment Bill, the Agricultural Bill, the Fisheries Bill and the Trade Bill), to opportunities for lobbying devolved administrations (the Scottish Government or the London Assembly for example).

Though there are significant risks around restarting the economy post-COVID and negotiations on future trade deals, during which environmental standards may slide, it is imperative for the climate movement to keep up political pressure in both domestic and international arenas including at COP26 (delayed until 2021) if we are to successfully tackle the climate emergency.

## PUSHING FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

Storytellers have a crucial role to play in communicating climate ideas to the public and to decision-makers. Now is the moment to make the idea of a Green New Deal something that grabs society's imagination.

Pressure must also be put on broadcasters, particularly public service broadcasters the BBC and Channel 4, to step up their climate coverage. The issue needs to move beyond the news into all genre departments and broadcasters must get past reservations that their audiences aren't interested in climate storytelling. That may have been true in the past, but TV too often lags behind, rather than drives, changes in trends. If the public has been turned off by the way that the climate change story has been told on mainstream TV and radio (too often in science programming or documentary) we need the broadcasters to be more imaginative.



### PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

#### THE FLIP

Filmmaker Franny Armstrong—within three weeks of the lockdown—launched a new online climate discussion show [The Flip](#), which is helping to imagine the pathway from COVID-19 to climate safety. The first show (on 8 April) featured Caroline Lucas MP, writer George Monbiot and economist Faiza Shaheen.



## DISINFORMATION WARFARE

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

**DISMISS** — the opponent  
**DISTORT** — the facts  
**DISTRACT** — from the central issues  
**DISMAY** — the audience

**Climate storytellers are not alone on the playing field. Those that wish to uphold the status quo have been pouring their finances into misinformation campaigns about the climate for decades. The creation of conspiracy theories is a very well-resourced shadow industry.**

To counter progressive environmental narratives, climate deniers are pushing opposing messages. The libertarian Atlas Network — headquartered in Arlington, Virginia but with a global reach — has received funding from the fossil fuel industry, hedge funds and Big Tobacco, and host their own storytelling workshops. Cambridge Analytica came to prominence having successfully launched sophisticated disinformation campaigns, influencing voters en masse by creating compelling content and micro-targeting members of the public susceptible to conspiracy theory. Leading Trump strategist Steve Bannon has always taken an interest in the power of independent documentaries, producing over a dozen himself, the last ones as recently as 2016.

***“I’ve studied documentarians extensively to come up with my own in-house style. I’m a student of Michael Moore’s films, of Eisenstein, Riefenstahl. Leave the politics aside, you have to learn from those past masters on how they were trying to communicate their ideas.”***

—  
Steve Bannon, Wall Street Journal, 2011

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

A few days after the end of the Climate Story Lab UK, the following images appeared online, apparently from Extinction Rebellion. The message was that the Coronavirus was going to correct the climate crisis – akin to an act of god. It was a deeply troubling eco-fascist message. And one that had nothing to do with XR – it was neither an account they had created nor a poster they had made. A classic disruption campaign.



While the horrifying Australian wildfires in early 2020 felt like a global climate wake-up call, stories were manufactured and spread online claiming that the fires had been made worse by green policies – stories were circulated that they had been started by eco-arsonists. They were not true. But they also spread like wildfire, reinforced by influential conservatives figures like Sean Hannity on social media.



*“Many in the climate space are getting more actively involved in efforts to analyse and tackle systemic misinformation. Because unless we can win the strategies of public information, we can never win the climate argument.”*

—  
Jess Search, CEO at Doc Society



Coronavirus is also provoking its own wave of conspiracy theories about its origins. How do we fight them? We need to rebut them factually, but the thing about conspiracy theories is that they appeal to our sense that the world is more magical and mysterious than it seems.

At the Climate Story Lab in New York, Alex O’Keefe, from the *Sunrise Movement*, offered this insight, worth repeating here. *“Utopian visioning has to be the progressive left’s answer to the conspiracy theories of the right... distributive storytelling that moves on deep desires instead of paranoia.”*

What he so beautifully captures is that we cannot fight the swell of misinformation with technocratic language. We have to fight fire with fire.



## GRIEF AND SELF-CARE

According to psychologist Rebecca Day, filmmakers working around themes related to social justice often believe that ‘my pain and my struggle don’t have anything to do with the film, so I’m going to put that aside’. The founder of [Film in Mind](#), which provides therapeutic support for those working in the industry, hears climate issues frequently raised in her traditional counselling sessions, and reflects on the psychological consequences of these anxieties for both media-makers and audiences alike.

Documentary filmmakers often feel a responsibility to be a witness to their subject matter, affecting their ability to be vulnerable, to practice compassion (towards themselves as well as others), and have the courage to accept the associated grief and move on. Those working on climate issues must avoid isolation, and act less competitively with each other, encouraging more shared spaces and a spirit of generosity across the industry.

Find out more about therapeutic support available  
for filmmakers at  
<https://www.filminmind.co.uk>





## INSPIRATION: *HONEYLAND*

2019 film *Honeyland* directed by Tamara Kotevska & Ljubomir Stefanov portrays the life of a wild beekeeper in the remote mountains of north Macedonia. Starting work as a conservation project, the double Oscar-nominated film is a gentle, poetic rendering of the relationship between a woman and her bees when an itinerant Turkish family drives into the remote valley where she lives. A film that serves a clear ecological message without being labelled as an 'eco film'.

WATCH TRAILER



*"Watching Honeyland is like looking at the greatest problems of our time through a pinhole, but the film sees the situation with a clarity that gets under your skin and breaks your heart. Far from a scolding, rub-your-nose-in-it depiction of environmental havoc, this is a tender story about the chaos of abandoning the common good."*

—  
David Ehrlich, Cinema Critic





### *A QUIET STORM*

Forged out of Climate Story Lab UK, Selina Nwulu and Lindsay Lowe from Duck Productions partnered up to bring Selina's new poem to life in London's empty streets mid-lockdown.

WATCH





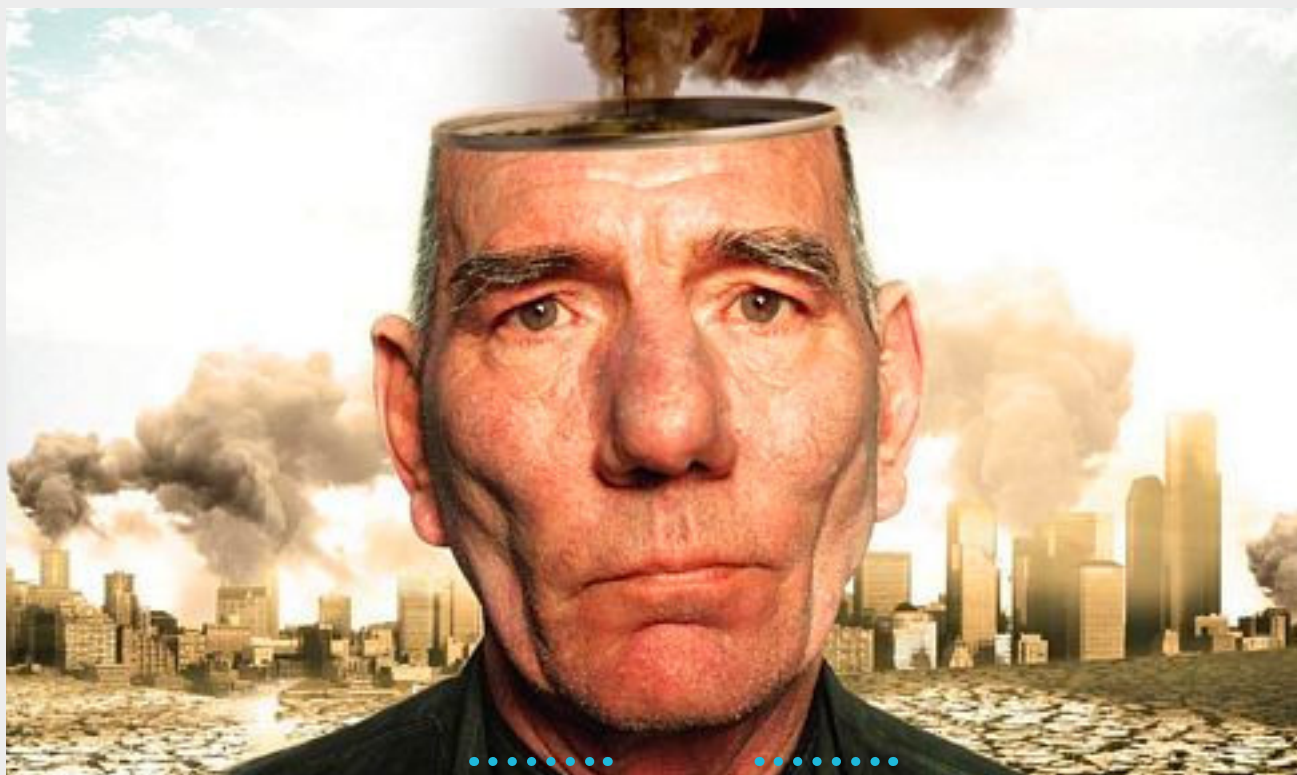
## CASE STUDY: *THE AGE OF STUPID*

Alice Bell from environmental NGO [Possible](#) (previously 10:10) reflects on the significance of the 2009 drama-documentary *The Age of Stupid* — directed by CSL UK participant Franny Armstrong. The film, starring Pete Postlethwaite as a man living alone in a world devastated by climate change, had an estimated global audience of ten million, and screened in over seventy countries. It was a trailblazing UK climate storytelling project that innovated in how it financed and distributed the film. The impact campaign led to the forming of a now decade-old climate NGO which aims to inspire more people to take more ambitious action on climate change.

Alice noted the success of the filmmakers in creating a genuine sense of community with their audience, strengthened by crowdfunding and communal ‘watch parties’. Many would go on to continue their activism through 10:10 and into Possible – an example of the longitudinal influence of one film.

WATCH TRAILER

Read more about the film  
case study here:  
<https://docimpacthi5.org/films/ageofstupid>

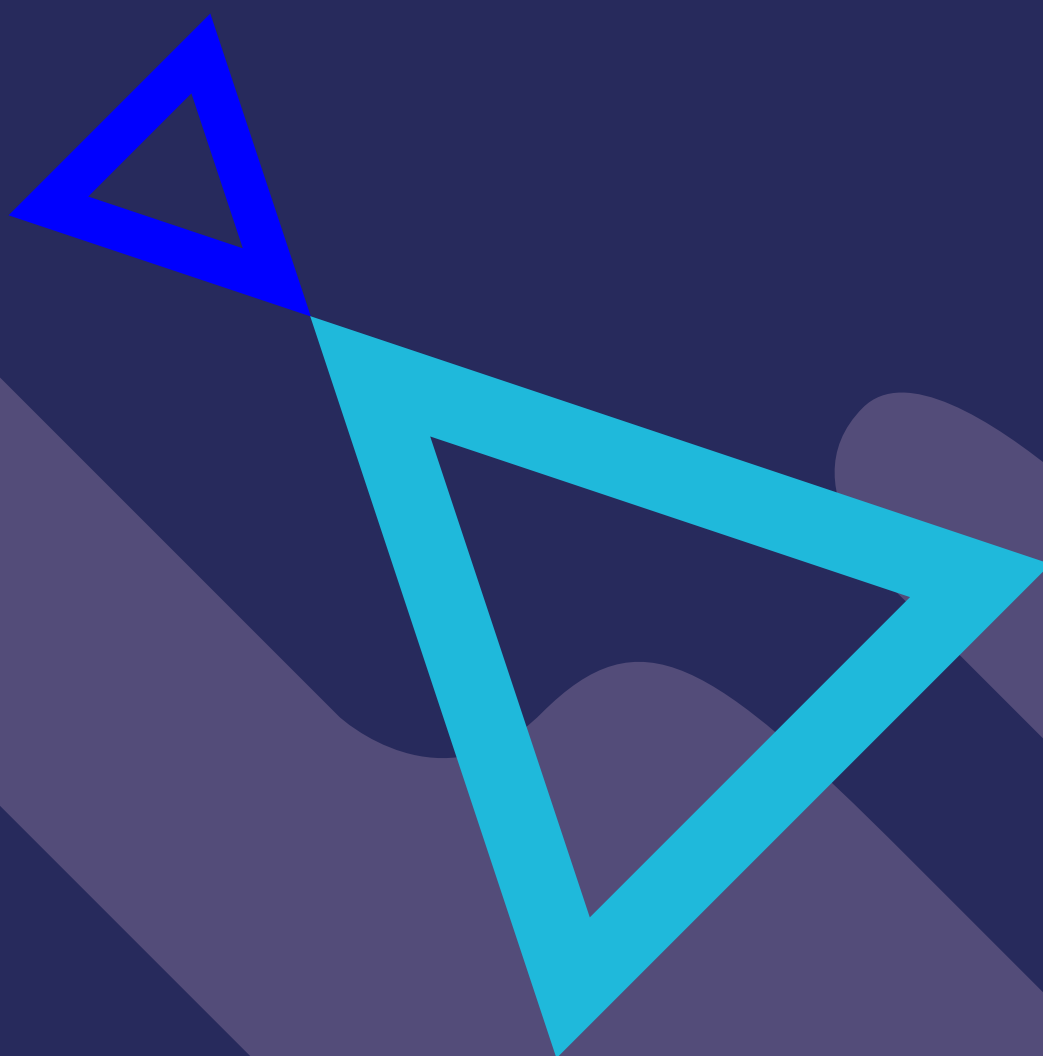








# SECTION 2: CENTRING CLIMATE JUSTICE



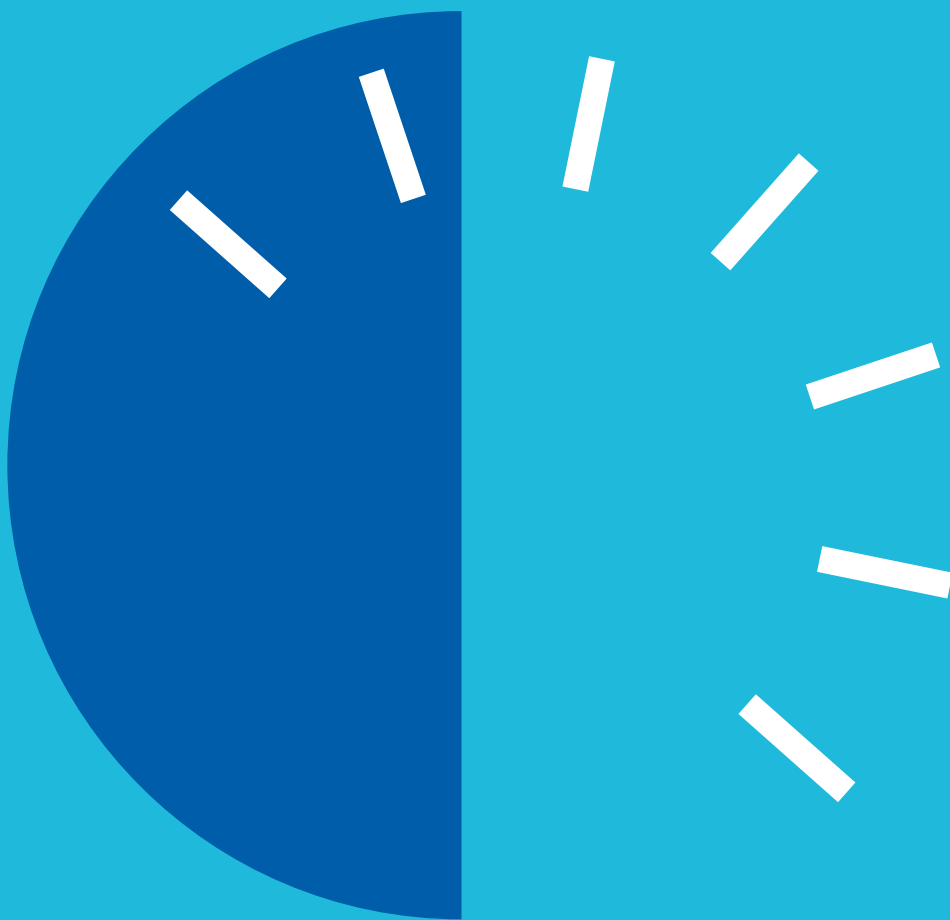


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## SECTION SUMMARY:

Climate communications must always be seen through two parallel lenses - justice and accountability. For far too long, stark social inequalities have been ignored, and those on the frontlines facing up to the realities of climate change denied their rightful voice - especially communities of colour and those living in the Global South.

Creative industries must seek to reframe debates, and encourage a greater connection with audiences - giving the historically marginalised centre-stage, learning from their experiences and providing platforms for radical discussion. Our work should always be undertaken in the spirit of co-creation - partnering with those who may lack the resources for creative expression, acknowledging colonial legacies and structural deficiencies between the Global North and South, and ultimately giving participants agency and audiences more authentic stories.



## FROM EXTRACTION TO CO-CREATION

How should documentary filmmakers give agency to the people featured on-screen? Australian director Maya Newell thinks we must leave behind extractive media practices and embrace a spirit of co-creation. Co-creation is not a new idea, and gives agency to those portrayed, earning their trust and consistently walking them through the filmmaking and distribution process.

Marginalised people whose consent and support is crucial if their lives are to be intimately captured by filmmakers must be kept fully informed at all stages, with impact campaigns designed to reflect a community's true priorities and needs. In documentary filmmaking, co-creation is not an optional extra – it should be embedded in everything we do.

Learn more from Maya about co-creation in the [Climate Story Lab Toolbox](#).

***"You don't just get up and leave at the end of a project."***

—  
Maya Newell



### INSPIRATION: *IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS*

Maya's documentary feature film *In My Blood It Runs*, whose lead character is ten-year-old Djujan, was a collaboration aiding indigenous communities to tell their own stories. There is a history of appropriation of First Nations storytelling by filmmakers who perpetuated negative and damaging representations of their communities. "I really wanted Australians to learn about their country", Maya says, and developed proactive steps to ensure they did not further this history of misappropriation and disempowerment.

WATCH TRAILER

WATCH FULL FILM

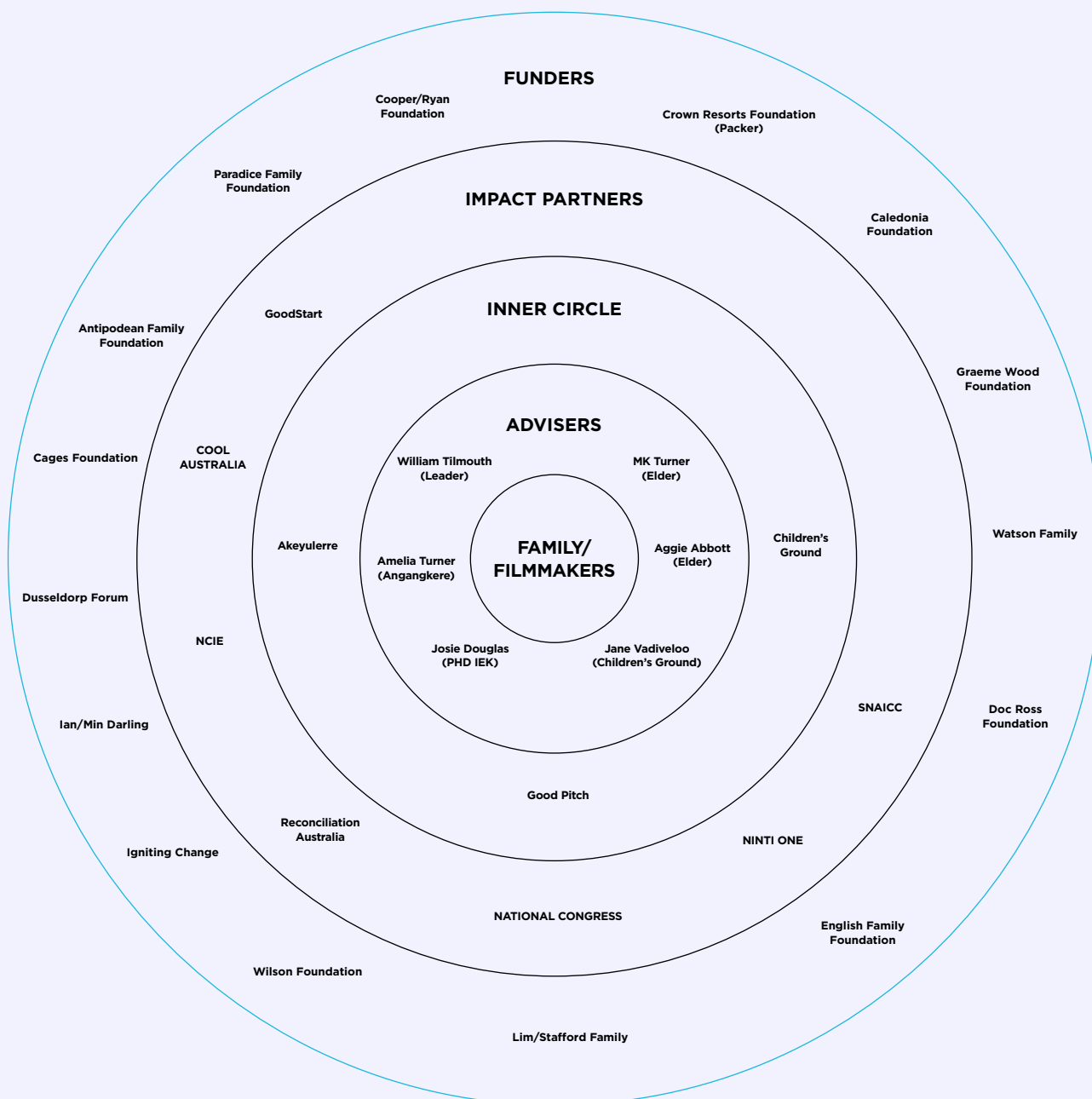


Recognition and  
Acknowledgement of  
Traditional Owners

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

## INSPIRATION: *IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS*

The model of consultation for *In My Blood It Runs* centres the families in the film and the board of advisors as the core partners, with the highest level of control over how their stories and images are portrayed.





## INSPIRATION: *IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS*

Understanding they had a duty of care to the protagonist, the team worked with the family and wider community, hosting regular consultative workshops and putting in place an advisory team, made up of elders and local educators – all selected by the family. The collaboration with the local community kept the filmmakers accountable – deadlines were made suitably flexible, and those intimately involved were rewarded with shared profits and Executive Producer credits.

*In My Blood It Runs* is running a multi-year impact campaign in close consultation with the families and advisors with the hope that the film will improve the lives and well-being of all First Nations children and their families. Here are the key messages of the campaign:

### KEY CAMPAIGN MESSAGES

- Aboriginal people have solutions
- Aboriginal people love & care for their children
- Aboriginal people's knowledge systems and culture are alive and well
- Aboriginal people should have right to determine and lead the terms of their education system
- Australia needs to be honest about our past in order to build a fair and just future
- Aboriginal people live with racism everyday and it causes harm
- We need restorative approaches to youth justice rather than punitive approaches

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

## MOVEMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

***“Climate justice compels us to understand the challenges faced by those people and communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Often the people on the front lines of climate change have contributed least to the causes of the climate crisis. This is an injustice”.***

—  
Mary Robinson  
Former President of Ireland & Chair of the Elders



***“God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts.”***

—  
Mahatma Gandhi, 1928

Ecological violence hits the Global South first – its residents are first to face poor air quality, hunger, public health crises, drought, floods and displacement. And yet, historically these voices have been marginalised, rarely appearing in the foreground of climate storytelling. US writer and activist Mary Heglar and UK critic K Biswas believe that people of colour are often sidelined from holding public platforms, even though their voices are central to any discussion of the climate emergency.

Mary believes that, in the majority, the media sees environmental disasters as meteorological rather than human stories. Until very recently, climate was seen only as a “science issue” requiring specific expertise, which sidelined young people and kept a lot of POC out of the conversation.



***“Science proves the crime, but you can’t build a movement on it. No one is going to go on a march for facts — that’s not a thing!”***

—  
Mary Heglar

Biswas expects a growing politicisation of borders as the effects of climate change create new divisions and access to resources and land intensifies. Many people of colour feel that climate movements are “too white”, and fail to factor in European imperial legacies around industrialisation. Former colonial powers attempt to lead the conversation around climate transition on a global stage, often ignoring indigenous communities on the frontline and the history of their struggles. Blaming majority non-white nations such as India and China for risking climate catastrophe by not taking appropriate transitional measures is described by Mary Heglar as the “biggest gaslight in history.”



INSPIRATION: *THANK YOU FOR THE RAIN*

Emily Wanja is the Impact Producer for the feature documentary *Thank You For The Rain*, which follows the journey of a subsistence Kenyan farmer Kisilu Musya from community activist to addressing the United Nations climate talks at COP21 in Paris. The film, a co-created project with team members from the Global South and North, premiered in 2017, receiving international distribution with 400 screenings worldwide. There is still a lack of climate storytelling which centres the heroism and resilience of those at the forefront of the climate emergency. The film was screened widely in the Global North including at COP23 in Bonn but its most important work was at home in East Africa in partnership with the Climate Justice Resilience Fund.

Emily understood that the story was “a tool to drive change on the ground”, showcasing everyday struggles and solutions when people are forced to deal with the adverse effects of climate change. “We couldn’t treat it just as a film project”, Emily remembers thinking. “We had to treat it as a kind of development project.”

At screenings in Kenya, Emily said, “a lot of kids looked at Kisilu and thought they saw their parents”. She believes that as an Impact Producer, there is a necessity to reach out to partners, consult the wider community of those you portray and spark ‘magic unlikely alliances’.

*“Our communities still need a seat at the table.  
Their voices need to be heard.”*

—  
Emily Wanja



WATCH TRAILER





## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

### THE WORLD IS (Y)OURS

*The World is (Y)Ours* is a short documentary film narrated by musician Louis VI and directed by Tanya Noushka. The project breaks new ground, engaging young black and brown people in Britain by exploring how actions in Western countries have negatively affected their ancestral homes across the world.

WATCH TRAILER



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

### CLIMATE REFRAME

The environmental movement in the UK needs to reflect the political and social realities facing the country's BAME communities. [Research by The Commitment](#) shows that BAME groups participate more in climate change activities than white British people. Climate Reframe, a project showcasing 100 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic climate voices living in the UK, was launched by Doc Society at the start of Climate Story Lab week. The initiative, which brings together activists, academics, creatives, community organisers and scientists who are people of colour and climate experts, is aimed at acknowledging the centrality of POC-led climate activism. Credit to Reframe authors Suzanne Dhaliwal and Aisha Younis. To find out more go to <https://climatereframe.com>

***"Climate Reframe is a powerful way to acknowledge the race and diversity issues that we face."***

Suzanne Dhaliwal, Campaigner



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

### SKIN DEEP ISSUE 9: IS THIS THE END

Anu Henriques and Georgie Johnson had just completed the latest issue of their bi-annual publication which amplifies voices of colour through discussions of race, politics and activism when the Lab began. It features the voices of several people highlighted in Climate Reframe including Suzanne Dhaliwal, Jade Begay and Farhana Yamin.

IT CAN BE BOUGHT HERE





# SECTION 3: MOVING BEYOND THE MONOCULTURE





## SECTION SUMMARY:

It has become increasingly clear that there is no single 'fix-all' solution to addressing public emergencies. In relation to climate change, simply aiming to reduce emissions is not enough – we must try everything in our power. As creatives currently operating in crisis-mode, we have a duty to open up the conversation and reveal the possibilities achieved through collective action.

Our stories need to move past feelings of fear and despair – supported by up-to-date science and authentic imagery, we can work together to highlight how climate change affects all aspects of society worldwide and create positive, practical messages for our audiences to take with them into their daily lives.

***“Maybe the next big thing in climate storytelling isn’t the next big thing – but a thousand small things.”***

—  
Jess Search, CEO at Doc Society





## BEYOND HOPE AND FEAR

*“Fear makes people vigilant. It impels them to notice things they might not otherwise have noticed; to pay attention to certain associations and ignore others; to remember prophecies they might previously have dismissed as absurd.”*

—  
*Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it Changed the World* by Laura Spinney

Fear of a future where ecological crisis devastates the planet has been a mainstay of climate storytelling for decades. It proved useful, making people vigilant to the dangers lying ahead if climate change goes unchecked – fear focused minds, alerting the environmental movement to mobilise in the hope of averting impending catastrophe.

Recently there has been an uptick in fear messaging as many people in the climate movement themselves become more fearful at the lack of action.

*“I would like people to be scared of what is possible because I’m scared. And because I am motivated by fear, I also hope they will be motivated”.*

—  
David Wallace Wells, author *The Uninhabitable Earth*

Yet, creative projects solely invoking the emotions of ‘Hope’ and ‘Fear’ may not necessarily prove effective in engaging new audiences. Especially not if (as mentioned in Section 1) most British people already feel Helpless, Sad, Anxious, Angry and Scared.

Mindworks, the Cognitive Science Lab of Greenpeace (hosted in Greenpeace East Asia), published a two-part report in 2019 called “The Inconvenient Mind”, considering the psychological impact of climate change in the design of campaigns to change people’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. When emotions like fear and anxiety are triggered, people are shown to be less likely to act – those seeking clear pathways and tangible outcomes may feel paralysed by the scale of the task ahead. If filmmakers want to create sustained change we need to move past hope and fear, and recognise how educational information around climate sits with the public – the intricate emotional journey audiences embark upon or a ten-minute engaging discussion following a screening may prove really important in encouraging viewers to take action on climate. Most importantly, we need to embrace creative experimentation, to build courage and resilience, and accept failure as part of our learning process.

### Key Resource:

- [The Inconvenient Mind](#) by Mindworks





## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

### EVENING CHORUS - LIVE IN THE BLUEBELLS

Head off into the woods with Climate Story Lab UK filmmaker Orban Wallace to watch *Evening Chorus - Live in the Bluebells* with musician Cosmo Sheldrake.

WATCH



## SAMARITAN

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

### SAMARITAN

This is a short climate drama about an immigrant doctor who lives off grid to avoid deportation. It is produced by Addy Raja, Nicci Brighten, & Dustin Curtis who say “We believe that narrative storytelling will always trump data-driven films”. Only the trailer is available now but we are sharing it to tip our hat to Dr Raja, who left the Lab to go and serve in his day job as a junior doctor.

WATCH TRAILER



## OUTREACH AND IMAGERY

*“2019 was a pretty good year for climate change awareness – but we cannot rest on our laurels...”*

—  
Joel Silver and Toby Smith



In 2019, climate change concern was at an [all-time high](#) in the UK, though certain audiences are still not being engaged. Joel Silver and Toby Smith from Oxford-based charity Climate Outreach – whose key mission is “to ensure that climate change and its impacts are understood, accepted and acted upon across society” – show how social science can deepen engagement “beyond the usual suspects” and help communicate in ways that “resonate with the values of your audience.”

### What we know about public engagement

**Concern about climate change is at an all time high in UK and this matches an international trend**

- Biggest peak since 2005 and slightly higher according to 2019 Ipsos data
- 2019 RESILRISK survey shows climate change now second only to Brexit as “biggest issue facing Britain in next 25 years”
- YouGov data: 66% willing to make sacrifices for the planet *as long as others are doing the same*

**Major change only comes about with cross-political and social consensus**

- Transformative policies require social mandate, generally implemented with 70-80% support
- Behaviour change occurs only when entire norms start to shift
- Corporations struggle when they have lost social license

**Climate communications and storytelling are more important than ever**

- Societal and behavioural change is vital for the transition to net zero, incorporating 62% of the emissions cuts required by 2050
- Powerful impact producing and documentary making are vital to this

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

In climate communications, some ways of storytelling work while others need to be left behind – it is ineffective to simply scare the public about the ill-effects of climate change. Research from Climate Outreach stresses the importance of identifying shared concerns and connecting with people over the political divide, ensuring that key points of action are delivered by trusted messengers. Climate change should not be framed as purely environmental – it concerns everything from healthcare, security, and economy, to community, faith, and social justice.

Connect across  
the political  
divide

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

### 4 Key Centre-Right Values

Integrity and  
authenticity

The need  
for security

A sense of  
responsibility

Keeping  
things  
in balance

Impactful visuals are crucial to effectively getting your message across. Those surveyed by Climate Outreach favour authentic and credible images which portray people in real-world situations. Familiar images prompted fatigue and cynicism in discussion groups, where participants showed a preference for images that were unusual, subversive and multi-layered.

#### Key Resource:

- [Climate Visuals Evidence Page](#)
- Guardian article: [“Why we’re rethinking the images we use for our climate journalism”](#)

## WHEN FACTS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT

***“The future will be both better and worse than we imagine.”***

—  
Dr Tamsin Edwards



The Paris Agreement to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C recognises the world’s need to substantially reduce the impacts of climate change. But, as climate scientist Dr Tamsin Edwards of King’s College London informs us, even if we met the incredibly challenging 1.5-2°C warming limit, risks would not be prevented, with hundreds of millions of people across the globe affected.

Humans cannot fully adapt to a 1.5°C increase and effects are not distributed equally, meaning that deadly heat waves would make life intolerable for many living in places from the Middle East to India. Melting ice sheets and mountain glaciers would lead to reef-building coral potentially becoming extinct by ocean warming, acidification and more intense storms. Millions of people depend on these ecosystems, their livelihoods immeasurably threatened.

For humanity to survive, reducing emissions is not enough. Dr Edwards stresses the necessity of pursuing ‘negative emissions’, extracting more CO<sub>2</sub> than we emit through processes such as afforestation, reforestation, and innovative forms of carbon capture storage. But we must also abandon those unhelpful climate stories we tell ourselves - from the dystopian (“We’re doomed”) to the utopian (“We can fix climate change with technology”). “There is no magic bullet,” Edwards warns, “we have to do everything.”

***“We have a system for dealing with the unpredictable: it’s called character. It’s called virtue. So that when something comes up that you never, ever thought would happen, it matters that the person making the decision has wisdom, has prudence, has courage, has humility, has openness to other voices.”***

—  
Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks



### Key Resources:

- Carbon Brief [ClimateActionTracker.org](https://climateactiontracker.org)

## INSPIRATION: *A MESSAGE FROM THE FUTURE WITH ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ*

Filmmaker Avi Lewis told the story of the short film which he co-wrote with congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, illustrated by Molly Crabapple. Set a couple of decades into the future, this utopian animation played a role in popularising the ‘paradigm-busting’ idea of the Green New Deal which *‘offers a path out of climate grief and cynicism and of the incrementalism that has bogged down climate action since the world started negotiating solutions to this crisis almost 30 years ago... The Green New Deal proposes something vast and hopeful and inspiring and a true sense of societal mission that leapfrogs past the divisions.’*

What is the role of art in this moment? One of the barriers to people embracing climate action is not having a concrete picture of what it is we are fighting for. Avi argues we need more stories of the future. Stories where we are not simply talking about reducing carbon emissions - we transform our broken economy and tackle the roots of inequality. As Ocasio-Cortez concludes in the film, our future has not been written yet and “*we can be whatever we have the courage to see.*”



## INSPIRATION: *VIRUNGA*

2014 film *Virunga* is the incredible true story of a group of brave individuals risking their lives to save Africa’s oldest national park in the midst of renewed civil war and a scramble for the region’s natural resources. Nominated for an Oscar, the film brought worldwide attention to the threat to the park from British mining company SOCO International, in the process forging an international coalition of partners that would help to protect Virunga and see SOCO retreat from the area.

***“Part environmental documentary and part political thriller, an intense and overwhelming portrait of an African nation trying to rebuild itself in the wake of civil unrest and ongoing corruption from political leaders and foreigners alike.”***

—

Zeba Blay, Indiewire

To read the full **case study** check out the report here:  
<https://docimpact5.org/films/virunga>



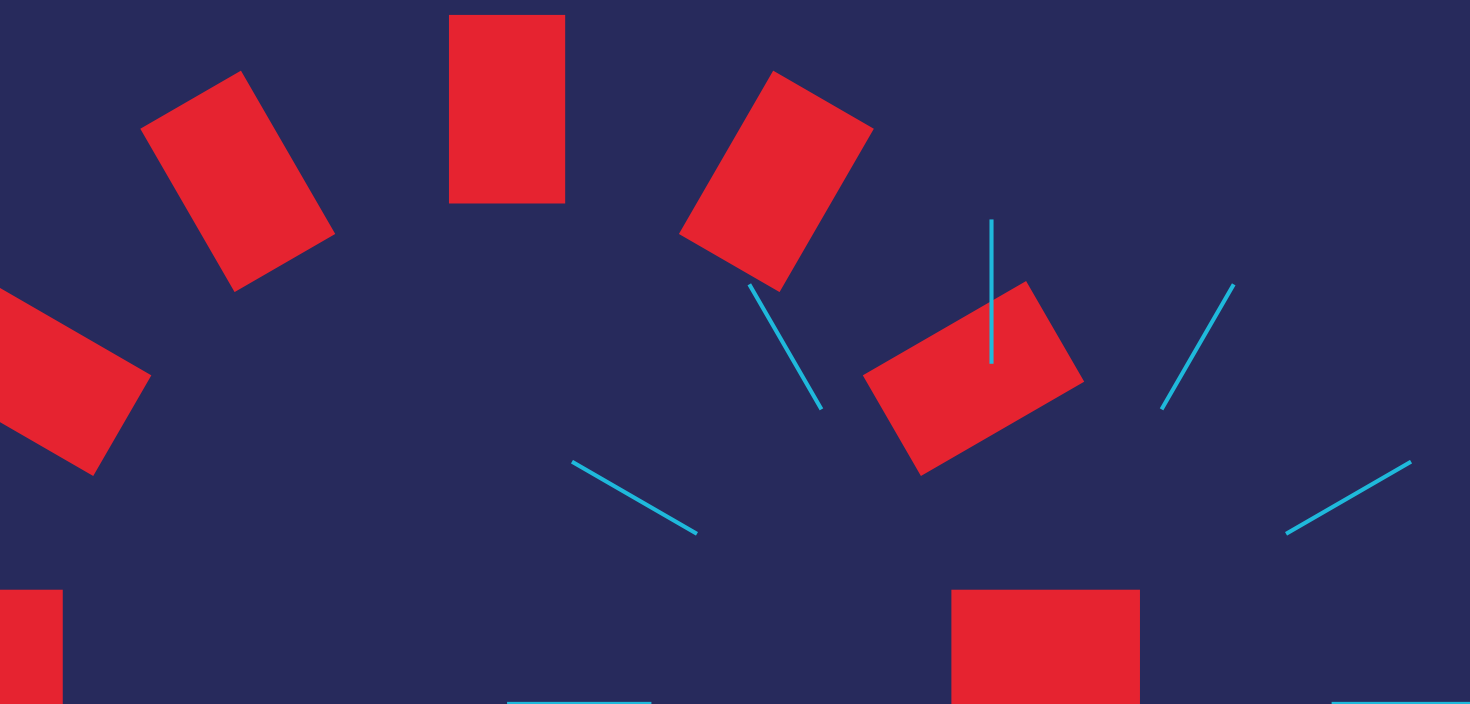
WATCH TRAILER







# SECTION 4: BUILDING UNLIKELY ALLIES





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## SECTION SUMMARY:

For storytellers committed to social justice, now is the time to venture outside our comfort zone. If we are to successfully tackle public emergencies - from coronavirus to climate change - we must address a global audience, including those all too often dismissed as 'hard-to-reach'.

We need to be smart in understanding the diversity contained within our communities, both talking and listening to people who may never before have involved themselves in social movements. Seeking to bring together parts of society that are currently polarised may involve leaving our prejudices at the door and using bold techniques - comedy, stark imagery, unifying messages - in order to reach over the divide and discover shared values.



## COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

Seven in eight of the global population have some form of religious faith and that includes 48% of UK society, which we often tend to think of as secular. Creatives who might view these communities as ‘impenetrable’ need to understand how the values of faith groups intersect with their own, and when inspired by powerful media projects, these communities are important drivers of social change.

Filmmaker and activist Macky Alston is a gay Christian born in Alabama, USA – “the cradle of justice and faith work”. Over the years he has made films that have been used to argue the Christian case for LGBTQ+ equality and is aware of the difficulties as well as the positives of such collaborations. In 2012, Macky used film to campaign on marriage equality in four states – multiple screenings reinforcing Christian messaging played a pivotal role in shaping people’s decisions, and ultimately winning the ballots. A story you can hear in detail in the [Climate Story Lab Toolbox](#).

When it comes to climate justice, Macky reminded the room how faith groups have been at the forefront of grassroots movements for decades. He says “Faith leaders are already living the moral mandate to heal a broken world” – the trick is to know how to engage them.



Left: Still from Macky Alston's film *Love Free or Die*

Kamran Shezad from the Bahu Trust, a Sufi Muslim organisation, acknowledges that he had become more “environmentally conscious” in the previous five years, and now acts as Climate Change Advisor to the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board. He believes film allows people to “articulate views that you can’t express in other ways”, recalling two videos shown to faith congregations: one on knife crime, the other on domestic violence. At first, the mosques he engaged with were afraid, not wanting the subject matter to be seen specifically as “a Muslim problem” - they were won over by the visible impact the screenings had on their audiences, and subsequently requested to be involved in future film initiatives. “Make something with a community and they will push it out with pride”, he adds.

Kamran believes that when engaging with faith communities, to avoid bureaucracy and risk-aversion, filmmakers must work “from the ground up”, though occasionally “be prepared to sacrifice your own values - and please be patient” when talking with more conservative elements of faith groups.

Reba Elliott of the Global Catholic Climate Movement aims to “see a vision for climate justice come to life in the Catholic church.” She believes that there is often an assumption that activist spaces are secular, and that communities of faith are a niche audience. She feels that creatives play a key part in bridging the gap between secular spaces and the rest of the world.

Partnering with ‘mainstream’ organisations regularly, she has seen an interest among Catholic audiences in “new ways of telling stories”, especially within the intersection of faith and the environment. She is currently working on a film project around Pope Francis’s *Laudato Si’* (with the blessing of the Pontiff), focusing on characters that bridge divides between: science and faith; young and old; and the Global South and North.

Ahlyah Ali of the UK Youth Climate Coalition admits to bringing “faith into everything that I do”, and looks at opportunities to explore the overlap between religion and climate. She works towards building an inclusive, resilient and welcoming environment among youth climate activists, recalling that the introduction of a prayer space within her network “felt quite radical”.

She witnessed the successful impact that a “rapid-fire video campaign” about aid efforts in Mozambique had among religious communities during Ramadan, arguing that approaching communities of faith does not necessarily mean having to deal with an institution: “There’s a difference between what individuals practice and how religious institutions present themselves.”

Hear more from Ahlyah’s perspective as a youth climate activist in the [Climate Story Lab Toolbox](#).



## COMEDY AND CLIMATE

***“Comedy is inherently disruptive and deviant.”***

—  
Caty Borum Chattoo



Comedy, far from replacing serious sources of information, disrupts and imagines new ways for audiences to engage with social issues like environmentalism. Professor Caty Borum Chattoo, Director at the Centre for Media & Social Impact at American University, reflects that we need comedians to provide us with “absurdity and hope and optimism”. As a form of persuasion, comedy “attracts our attention and helps to pass on messages quickly”, though it is always best to work with professional comedians, not rely on the ‘funniest’ person on your team.

She points to research which suggests that people remember a high degree of factual information presented in comedy form – first hearing about social issues through comedy is a gateway to finding out more. Comedy doesn’t supplant journalism, it supports it.

In 2017, Caty launched The Laughter Effect, a research and creative initiative that examines the role of comedy in social change, and in 2019, she co-founded the Yes, And... Laughter Lab, an initiative to incubate new comedy and encourage civic participation. Learn more about Caty’s work with a film she has made for the [Climate Story Lab Toolbox](#).

***“British comedy is all about failure.”***

—  
Sally Phillips



Comedy gives filmmakers the opportunity to say things they cannot say in straight documentaries. Comedian Sally Phillips reflects on why there has not been more climate comedy: “In comedy you have to punch up not down, but we are all implicated in the climate crisis so it’s hard to know where to locate yourself.”

Sally understands the eagerness of activists to use comedy to communicate with wider audiences but she doesn’t think that it is simply a tool to be used for this purpose. Comedy is a craft, with its own intentions that must be respected. For activists and comedians to work together productively, they will need to listen and respect each other’s agendas and practices.

On the issue of whether comedians have the right to offend, Sally comments that there is still an unacceptable lack of diversity in British TV comedy, but explains that comedy cannot happen without trust in the Writers’ Room. “In private, there have to be no ‘no-go areas’, no judgements. It has to be a safe place to say really awful things because where the hurt is – if you can push through and understand why it’s there – you will find the treasure.”





### PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

#### 2025: THE LONG HOT WINTER

Using actors and non-actors - from teenagers to pensioners - Jake Lancaster's and Alastair Hope-Morley's short fictional documentary, voiced by Brian Eno, is set in 2025 where a camera crew interviews Londoners about their first Christmas heatwave.

[WATCH TRAILER](#)



### PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

#### TEN YEARS TO NET ZERO

Director Franny Armstrong and 'Jonathan Pie' present an online 'drama-doc climate sitcom' where the fictional television reporter spends time with real scientists, activists and farmers pushing the ten-year transformation to a "Net Zero" society.

[WATCH](#)



### PROJECT HIGHLIGHT FROM THE LAB

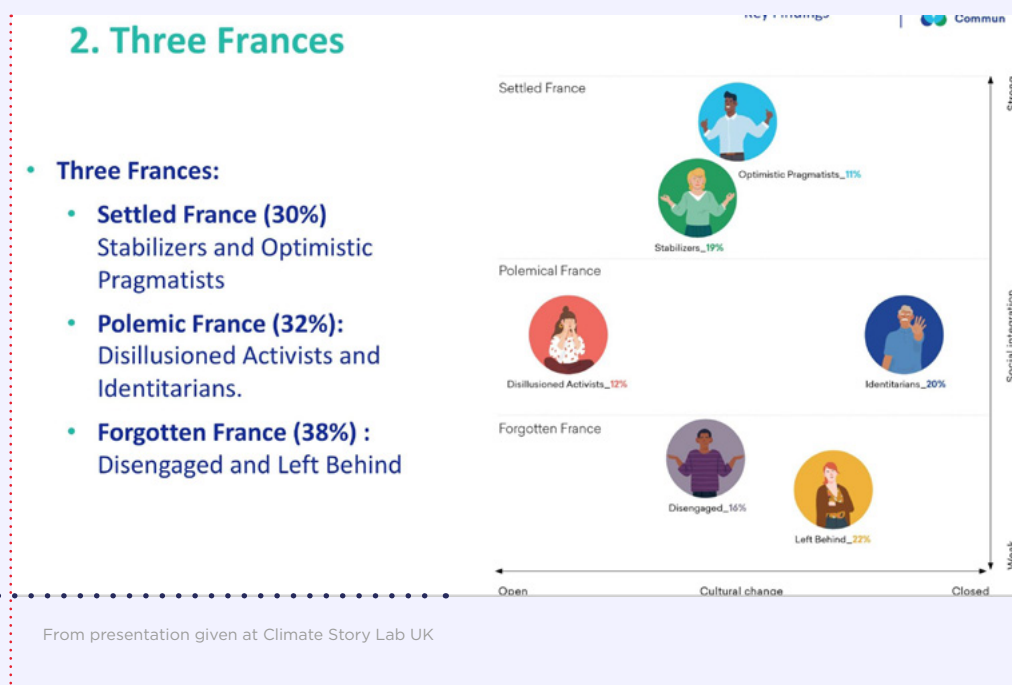
#### AIN'T YOUR MAMA'S HEAT WAVE

Forged at Climate Story Lab US, the comedy film [Ain't Your Mama's Heat Wave](#) is the first feature length production from Hip Hop Caucus's Think 100% FILMS. Based in Virginia and centred with communities that are grappling with the climate crisis, four stand-up comedians tell the story of their journey to Hampton Roads to "make the climate crisis funny". Things are not so funny when it's clear they are dealing with matters of life and death. But, in the African American tradition of struggle, resilience, and triumph in the face of existential threat, the joy of comedy, music, art, and dance informs and empowers. The film is in production right now and will be coming to screens later in 2020.

## REACHING FORGOTTEN FRANCE

Remember the yellow vest protests in France that sprung up across the country in 2018 against a proposed carbon tax on fuel? They caused dismay in climate activists circles – even getting to the point where the French government proposed a carbon tax felt positive, but in 2018 it seemed the country would not accept it. Or at least, a significant section of the French public had not been engaged with the climate crisis and thus had not seen themselves as part of its solution.

Mathieu Lefevre, co-founder and CEO of More in Common, has completed new, deep research into attitudes toward climate within the French population. Based on a six thousand person sample, it was released days before the Lab, and its findings made a big impact in the French press.



French society was segmented, not through traditional demographics, but around attitudes and values. The focus was largely on 'Forgotten France' - the 'Disengaged and Left Behind'. In an era when Marine Le Pen and her rebranded 'National Rally' party are seemingly on the rise, it is this group that is vulnerable to identitarian populists exploiting their isolation.

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

## 4. This is a concern for everyone everywhere

### CLIMATE CHANGE: ONLY A CONCERN FOR THE URBAN RICH?

Worrying about the environment is mainly a concern for the rich and those who live in cities

Protecting the environment concerns all of us, regardless of where we live



Which of these statements do you agree with more?  
Source: Destin Commun (2019)

The results give strong indications of how we in the UK may also best bring together divided groups through shared values, core beliefs and common identity.

- All groups in France, including ‘Forgotten France’, are very concerned about the eco-future.
- Its members don’t see a place for themselves in the climate movement.
- They have negative associations with climate activists who are perceived as hypocritical.
- They would support climate action if it was ‘fair’ – the carbon tax was seen to disadvantage working people more than elites.
- They believe in a shared France that solves its problems together.

## 6. The green economy is seen as an opportunity

### JOBS AND THE GREEN ECONOMY: OPPORTUNITY OR THREAT?

A transition to a greener economy is a threat to jobs in France

A transition to a greener economy is an opportunity to create new jobs in France



Which of these statements do you agree with more?  
Source: Destin Commun (2019)

From presentation given at Climate Story Lab UK

Perhaps most importantly, More in Common concluded that “polarised messaging does not work”, whereas protecting nature and the environment is a “high priority” for most French people and “has the potential to unite France across lines of division.”

Mathieu is currently replicating the project in the UK.

### Key Resource:

- [Finding France](#) – Can the environment reunite France?



## INSPIRATION: MAN-MADE DISASTER

There is a clear gender gap in climate action. Statistically, women not only leave a smaller carbon footprint than men, they are much more likely to be concerned about the environment and want to do something about it. In a world where the climate is being 'held hostage' by toxic masculinity ('socialised, regressive male behaviours'), environmental activism is seen by men as feminine.

Ashley Johnson from [Do The Green Thing](#), a design collective that uses creativity to help tackle climate change, produced an irreverent and elegant campaign about [patriarchy ruining the planet](#).



The campaign explored how this “Man-Made Disaster” is disproportionately affecting women and girls, predominantly poorer women of colour.

As dry seasons grow longer, women in rural developing communities have to work harder, walk further and put their health at risk to feed and care for their families. Women are 14 times more likely than men to die during natural disasters.

The climate movement needs to find better ways to distribute more power and resources to women. If female smallholders were given the same access to credit and tools as their male counterparts, they could grow 20-30% more food on the same amount of land – cutting two billion tons of emissions by 2050.

### Key Resource:

- [manmadedisaster.art](https://manmadedisaster.art)



Poster © MaryLou Favre



## INSPIRATION: CHASING ICE AND CHASING CORAL

*Chasing Ice* (2012) and *Chasing Coral* (2017) are two documentaries looking at the natural world which launched with creative impact campaigns. Megha Agrawal Sood from Exposure Labs explains that discussing the impact ambitions for *Chasing Coral* with Netflix was pivotal to the film's global reach. During the roll out of the impact campaign, the team launched a targeted effort to push elected officials to support climate legislation in politically conservative regions – deploying popular state-wide screening tours. Learn more about the partnership with Conservation Voters of South Carolina [here](#).

While global reach may have been gained through partnership with Netflix, the real impact in increasing public understanding of the issues came from hosting educational community screenings across the world – key rights for filmmakers to hold onto if they want to roll out an impact campaign.

To find out more about the details of both campaigns for *Ice* & *Coral* go to <https://docimpacthi5.org/films>

*Note: Netflix now supports educational screenings for all of its original documentaries. In response to teachers' requests for 'at home' educational content due to COVID-19, Netflix has made a few select documentaries available on its [YouTube page](#), including *Chasing Coral*.*



## INSPIRATION: THE END OF THE LINE

*The End of The Line* is a 2009 documentary feature revealing the devastating effects of overfishing. Executive Producer and marine conservationist Chris Gorell Barnes described an effective top-down strategy targeting policymakers as well as corporates, which began with a partnership with Waitrose (which happened to stock a range of sustainably sourced fish), who promoted the film with posters at supermarket fish counters.

In addition to influencing public opinion around sustainable sourcing, the film created a domino effect in improving supply chains of fish in supermarkets, with Marks and Spencer and Sainsbury's and even Whiskers cat food following Waitrose's lead. This success led to the founding of the Blue Marine NGO - with its own media and legal units, the organisation has played a significant role in bringing swathes of the world's oceans under protection.

To find these case studies and more to inspire, check out the library section of [Doc Society's Impact Field Guide](#):



### LIBRARY





# THANK YOU



To everyone who attended Climate Story Lab UK and who also contributed to drafting this report. In particular to K Biswas who captured each day's proceedings and lovingly shared them back out in the nightly newsletters and now in this document.

With the onset of COVID-19, these critical climate conversations will have to continue virtually for the time being. We need every great story about the climate to reach its full creative potential, both representing and connecting with diverse audiences. We hope you are inspired to take some of these questions and ideas back to your networks or community.

We offer up the Climate Story Lab as a convening model to be iterated and adapted by you to suit your context. Check out the [Climate Story Lab Toolbox](#). The model is yours to take, use, and evolve. We just can't wait to see what you do with it.

With love from all at [Doc Society](#) and [Exposure Labs](#)



## CSL UK LAB ATTENDEES MARCH 2020

<i>Abbi Knell</i>	<i>Dustin Curtis Murphy</i>	<i>Kris De Meyer</i>	<i>Rehad Desai</i>
<i>Adam Gee</i>	<i>Ed Sayers</i>	<i>Kristina Johansson</i>	<i>Rhiannon Roberts</i>
<i>Adnan Raja</i>	<i>Elena Sánchez Bellot</i>	<i>Laura Husti Radulet</i>	<i>Rosie Rogers</i>
<i>Ahlyah Ali</i>	<i>Ella Saltmarshe</i>	<i>Leah Borromeo</i>	<i>Ru Mahoney</i>
<i>Aisha Younis</i>	<i>Ella Gilbert</i>	<i>Lian Heinhuis</i>	<i>Sabrina Perry</i>
<i>Alan Chan</i>	<i>Elmaz Ekrem</i>	<i>Lindsay Lowe</i>	<i>Sally Phillips</i>
<i>Alastair Hope-Morley</i>	<i>Emily Wanja</i>	<i>Lisa Marie Russo</i>	<i>Sammy Wong</i>
<i>Alexandra Heal</i>	<i>Emmy Dexel</i>	<i>Lizzie Gillet</i>	<i>Sandra Whipham</i>
<i>Alice Bell</i>	<i>Farhana Yamin</i>	<i>Louis VI</i>	<i>Sarafina De Felice</i>
<i>Amisha</i>	<i>Farzana Khan</i>	<i>Lucy Jane</i>	<i>Sarah Becker</i>
<i>Abeyawardene</i>	<i>Fatima-Zahra Ibrahim</i>	<i>Lucy Wilson</i>	<i>Savannah Lovelock</i>
<i>Andrea Walji</i>	<i>Fatuma Khaireh</i>	<i>Luis González Zaffaroni</i>	<i>Selina Nwulu</i>
<i>Andy Jones</i>	<i>Fergus Haycock</i>	<i>Luke Murphy</i>	<i>Shanida Scotland</i>
<i>Angela Saey</i>	<i>Fiona Fletcher</i>	<i>Lynn Nwokorie</i>	<i>Shelley Jones</i>
<i>Anita Khanna</i>	<i>Franny Armstrong</i>	<i>Magid Magid</i>	<i>Sonia Medina</i>
<i>Anna Ram-</i>	<i>Gali Gold</i>	<i>Maia Kenworthy</i>	<i>Sophie Cowen</i>
<i>skogler-Witt</i>	<i>Georgie Johnson</i>	<i>Malinda Wink</i>	<i>Sophy VSivaraman</i>
<i>Anu Henriques</i>	<i>Hannah Bush Bailey</i>	<i>Marcela Teran</i>	<i>Susan Seymour</i>
<i>Ariel White</i>	<i>Harriet Bird</i>	<i>Mark Cridge</i>	<i>Suzanne Dhaliwal</i>
<i>Ashley Johnson</i>	<i>Helen Jackson</i>	<i>Mary Heglar</i>	<i>Tamsin Edwards</i>
<i>Aureliane Froehlich</i>	<i>Hilary Norrish</i>	<i>Matt Gould</i>	<i>Tanya O'Carroll</i>
<i>Beadie Finzi</i>	<i>Holly Daniel</i>	<i>Matt Locke</i>	<i>Tanya Noushka-Ram-</i>
<i>Becky Hutner</i>	<i>Holly Shuttleworth</i>	<i>Maxyne Franklin</i>	<i>surrin</i>
<i>Becky McCrae</i>	<i>Iris Andrews</i>	<i>Maya Newell</i>	<i>Teem Khan</i>
<i>Bethan Jinkinson</i>	<i>Isis Thompson</i>	<i>Megha Agrawal Sood</i>	<i>Theo Grainzevelles</i>
<i>Bonnie Chiu</i>	<i>Jakob Lancaster</i>	<i>Meghan Monsour</i>	<i>Thimali Kodikara</i>
<i>Brandon Pestano</i>	<i>James Weddup</i>	<i>Mona Yeh</i>	<i>Tobias Muller</i>
<i>Briony Hanson</i>	<i>James Fulcher</i>	<i>Monica Allen</i>	<i>Toby Smith</i>
<i>Caragh Davison</i>	<i>Jess Search</i>	<i>Naina Bajekal</i>	<i>William Kent</i>
<i>Cecila Nessen</i>	<i>Jessica Edwards</i>	<i>Naresh Ramchandani</i>	<i>Xiao Zhao</i>
<i>Charlie Russell</i>	<i>Jessica Jacoby</i>	<i>Nia Childs</i>	<i>Yarden Menelzon</i>
<i>Charlie Phillips</i>	<i>Jessie Nicholls</i>	<i>Nicola Davies</i>	<i>Yazmin Forhanna</i>
<i>Chi Thai</i>	<i>Jo Roach</i>	<i>Nicole Van Schaik</i>	
<i>Chloe Trayner</i>	<i>Joel Silver</i>	<i>Nicole Itano</i>	
<i>Chris Gorell Barnes</i>	<i>Jolade Olusanya</i>	<i>Oliver Rivers</i>	
<i>Chris Venables</i>	<i>Joya Berrow</i>	<i>Oonagh Cousins</i>	
<i>Christine Bardsley</i>	<i>Judy Ling Wong</i>	<i>Orban Wallace</i>	
<i>Christine Howard</i>	<i>K Biswas</i>	<i>Parvinder Marwaha</i>	
<i>Claire Smith</i>	<i>Kamran Shezad</i>	<i>Paul Dubois</i>	
<i>Corina Campian</i>	<i>Kat Mansoor</i>	<i>Rebecca Wolff</i>	
<i>David Kimbange</i>	<i>Katie Mandy</i>	<i>Rebecca Elliot</i>	
<i>Dayo Olopade</i>	<i>Kika Kyriakakou</i>	<i>Rebecca Day</i>	
<i>Dilhani Wijeyesekera</i>	<i>Konstantino</i>	<i>Rebecca Ashdown</i>	
<i>Dov Freedman</i>	<i>Papageorgio</i>	<i>Redford Healey</i>	

*"We need to remember what we are fighting for not just what we are fighting against. The Lab made me feel, better informed, better resourced and hopeful. We have the ability to tell a story that can affect change by engendering hope."*

—  
Rebecca Wolff, filmmaker  
and CSL UK participant



*"It was a total revelation to experience the generosity of spirit and climate of mutual support that you and the participants fostered throughout last week's lab. Nothing like that exists in publishing. I will be attempting to take those lessons into my world of books and use the example you set."*

—  
Nicola Davies, British Author



*"As an independent filmmaker that has been to many programs / development labs, this is the only program I have been part of that delivered on its commitment to centering and prioritising inclusion. For the first time, inclusion was not a sentiment but part of the DNA of the program itself. As compelling as inclusion was the content of the climate discourse it also did everything one hopes for in a great lab - which sets your imagination free and emboldens your ambition."*

—  
Chi Thai, Filmmaker



*"In the past, I've been to quite a few climate change related conferences and I can honestly say none of them come close to the delicate programming and compassionate hosting of CSL 2020. The conversations gave inclusivity, collaboration and impact a whole new meaning for me, and in a way that goes well beyond climate change and storytelling."*

—  
Alastair Hope-Morley, British filmmaker









# FURTHER RESOURCES ON COVID-19 AND CLIMATE








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***“The COVID-19 threat has shown that governments can act swiftly and resolutely in a crisis, and that people are ready to change their behavior for the good of humanity. The world must now urgently adopt the same approach to the existential challenge of climate change.”***

Mary Robinson and Daya Reddy, Project Syndicate

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***“If there is a silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is what it might mean for the climate crisis. Not only have attempts to control the virus led to a reduction in carbon emissions, they have also led to a significant shift in the way individuals, institutions and politicians discuss our responsibility to protect vulnerable groups in our societies.”***

Anne Orford, London Review of Books blog

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***“This could be the moment when we begin to see ourselves, once more, as governed by biology and physics, and dependent on a habitable planet. Never again should we listen to the liars and the deniers. Never again should we allow a comforting falsehood to trounce a painful truth. This coronavirus reminds us that we belong to the material world.”***

George Monbiot, The Guardian

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***“It’s frightening to think what the pattern of climate denial means for the coronavirus crisis. But it might be even more terrifying to think what the pattern of coronavirus denial means for the climate crisis. Our elderly ruling class, and the elderly voters who elect them, may be dead and gone by the time Miami is underwater. But those same old folks are precisely the ones who are most at risk from COVID-19.”***

Gilad Edelman, Wired

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***“The struggle to ensure that human rights protections and climate commitments are not COVID-19 collateral will continue in the US, the EU and elsewhere as governments face the task of restarting their economies in the weeks and months to come. The outcome will define our capacity and will to mitigate what threatens to be a global catastrophe far greater even than the viral pandemic.”***

Daniel Wilkinson and Luciana Tellez-Chavez, Foreign Policy in Focus

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***“COVID-19 is by no means a “silver lining” for the environment. Visible, positive impacts – whether through improved air quality or reduced greenhouse gas emissions – are but temporary, because they come on the back of tragic economic slowdown and human distress.***

***An important pillar in our post-COVID recovery plan must be to arrive at an ambitious, measurable and inclusive framework, because keeping nature rich, diverse and flourishing is part and parcel of our life’s support system.”***

Inger Andersen, head of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)

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***“As the COVID-19 pandemic is painfully showing, our challenges are increasingly global in nature and require systemic solutions. To control the coronavirus, governments have needed to mandate social distancing, ground aeroplanes and close borders. For climate change, they need to back clean technologies and end subsidies to polluting industries.”***

Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac, New Scientist



THE **CLIMATE**  
**STORY** LAB

 [climatestorylab.org](https://climatestorylab.org) 

