

# Panel Debate: Communicating climate change

**Time and location:** Tuesday,  
14 November 2006, 15:15-  
16:45, African Tulip Tree.

**“Without a connection to current disasters, global warming is the kind of problem people, and democratic institutions, have proved singularly terrible at solving: a long-term threat that can only be limited by acting promptly, before the harm is clear.”**

*The New York Times,*  
April 23, 2006



Former US Vice President Al Gore presents his view on the science of global warming in the movie "An Inconvenient Truth".

The aim of this event is to discuss to what degree the general public still has the impression that climate scientists strongly disagree about the extent to which climate change is human induced, and what may have caused this impression.

Has the journalists' struggle to achieve a balanced presentation given the so-called climate skeptics greater journalistic coverage than they deserve? Or are the majority of climate scientists simply unable to communicate their message effectively? What concrete steps can be taken to reduce the problems with respect to communication?

## Speakers

**Rajendra K. Pachauri**, Chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). *What are the main challenges and bottlenecks in communicating the IPCC's assessment reports?*

**Pål Prestrud**, Director CICERO and vice chair Arctic Climate Impacts Assessment (ACIA). *Experiences from ACIA information work and the media coverage of the ACIA report compared to the IPCC assessment reports.*

**Nick Nuttall**, Spokesperson United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). *How clear and simple does a message have to be to reach the public?*

**Jules Boykoff**, Assistant Professor, Department of Politics and Government at Pacific University, Oregon. *Journalistic Balance as Global Warming Bias – Creating controversy where science finds consensus.*

**Liisa Antilla**, Human Geographer. *What role do US mainstream media play in the dissemination of misinformation about climate change?*

## Discussion leader

**Alister Doyle**, Environmental journalist, Reuters.

## Biographies

[Dr Rajendra K Pachauri](#) assumed his current responsibilities as the head of TERI (Tata Energy Research Institute) in 1981. In April 2002, Dr Pachauri was elected Chairman of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), which was established by the World Meteorological Organization and United Nations Environment Programme in 1988.

[Pål Prestrud](#) is the current director of CICERO (Center for International Climate and Environmental Research – Oslo) and vice chair of ACIA (Arctic Climate Impact Assessment). He holds a doctorate in biology from the University of Oslo, and his previous positions include division director for the Division of Science and Technology at the Research Council of Norway, research director at the Norwegian Polar Institute, and deputy director general at the Section for Polar Affairs and Cooperation with Russia, Department for International Cooperation at the Ministry of the Environment.

[Nick Nuttall](#) is spokesperson for United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

[Jules Boykoff](#) holds a Ph.D. in political science. His work on U.S. media coverage of global warming, which he co-authored with Maxwell Boykoff (Oxford University, Environmental Change Institute), has appeared in a variety of scholarly and popular publications. Al Gore used their research in his film and book "An Inconvenient Truth". Boykoff teaches political science at Pacific University in the United States.

[Liisa Antilla](#) holds a master's degree in human geography from King's College London. She is an independent researcher living in Seattle, Washington, USA. Some of her work on media coverage of climate change is posted at [www.oneblueworld.blogspot.com](http://www.oneblueworld.blogspot.com).

[Alister Doyle](#) has been Reuters Environment Correspondent since 2004. Based in Oslo, he has worked in more than 30 countries with Reuters since 1982, with postings in Paris, Brussels, London, Central and South America.

### Additional reading

- "[Global Warming: An Inconvenient Principle](#)". Jules Boykoff and Maxwell Boykoff. Common Dreams, 6 July 2006.
- "[Warm Words: How are we telling the climate story and can we tell it better?](#)". Gill Ereaut and Nat Segnit. Institute for Public Policy Research, August 2006.
- "[Yelling 'Fire' on a Hot Planet](#)". Andrew C. Revkin, The New York Times, April 23 2006.
- "[The Next Big Storm: can scientists and journalists work together to improve coverage of the hurricane-global warming controversy?](#)". CSICOP, 3 August 2006.
- "[Scientists fear new attempts to undermine climate action](#)". The Guardian, 21 April 2006.
- "[Climate of scepticism: US newspaper coverage of the science of climate change](#)". Liisa Antilla. Global Environmental Change Part A Volume 15, Issue 4, December 2005.
- "[Journalistic Balance as Global Warming Bias - Creating controversy where science finds consensus](#)". Jules Boykoff and Maxwell Boykoff. Fair, November 2004.
- "[A Challenge to Journalists Who Cover Global Warming](#)". Sen. James Inhofe. October 24 2006.

### About the organizer CICERO

This side event is organized by Center for International Climate and Environmental Research – Oslo (CICERO). CICERO's mission is to provide reliable and comprehensive knowledge about all aspects of the climate change problem.

[www.cicero.uio.no/index\\_e.asp](http://www.cicero.uio.no/index_e.asp)