

Campaign Strategy Newsletter 85 – April 2013

Why We Need Climate Crises To Avoid Catastrophe

Here are three fundamental political truths relevant to many campaigns: first, politicians aspire to be in charge and remain in charge. Second, it is universally recognized that the first duty of government is to maintain public safety - from the integrity of the nation down to the safety of the individual. Third, little sharpens the political mind like being held responsible.

The climate is now plainly lurching into a state of dangerous extremes: record floods are followed by record droughts, storms, heat waves and fires. Seasons are warping and nature, farming and cultures are impacted. Livelihoods and lives are threatened.

People have noticed it is changing, and they don't like it. For instance the recent post *Climate Change Energy and Values: Surveys from Five Countries* at <http://threeworlds.campaignstrategy.org/?p=219> and the paper *Climate Change Energy and Values* (<http://bit.ly/12S72Hf>) reports that 87.4% of Brazilians and 88.8% of Indians agree "I have noticed that the climate seems to be changing" and 92.6% in Brazil and 85.1% in India agree "pollution should be controlled to limit climate change".

No Crisis of Responsibility

Yet the impacts created by the new climate extremes tend to remain 'disasters' not crises. Why? Because there is no crisis of responsibility. Scientists may inch towards closing the gap on attribution (<http://bit.ly/16wVviO>) – being able to say that this or that disaster, hurricane, flood, heat wave etc, was caused with X% likelihood by human-made climate change as a whole - and that is all well and good but it will not make a big difference until politicians (or others, eg coal company shareholders) are held responsible for climate impacts.

Of course there have been attempts to attribute social and legal responsibility for climate impacts, for example to oil companies, going back to the early 1990s. More recently leading climate scientist Myles Allen proposed it in 2005 (<http://bit.ly/10TsBac>) and there have been campaign experiments like <http://www.climatelaw.org> but by and large the climate itself is too big to connect to individual events and individual politicians. Attempts to find a legal locus for victims such as low lying island states to sue emitters of greenhouse gases, such as the work of FIELD (Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development) are noble and desirable but beset with problems, such as, in the words of Edward Cameron a former Maldives adviser, "Which court? Which case? Under which law and against whom?" (<http://nyti.ms/d0t1Oq>).

Most of all these attempts make little difference to the politics. Indeed they tend to reinforce it, suggesting that victim states may sue transgressor countries, and implying that the result will may be that Mrs Average of Pennsylvania will have to pay out for damage in a foreign country.

Campaign Strategy Newsletter 85 – April 2013

We need instead, to start from the other end of the politics: with domestic safety, in those countries most able to exert the biggest influence, through hard and soft power, on politics, industry, technology and even but probably last, international law.

If there was a comprehensive, inclusive, watertight international political climate regime and a universally accepted World Atmospheric Authority, things would be different. Just as in an office building where the heating system developed dangerous runaway tendencies, it would be apparent who was responsible and who needed to act. But there's no such system, and although the UN 'Climate Convention' staggers on, even its most enthusiastic attendees must now realise that it is a depository of commitments, not a driver of events.

It's Your Job To Keep Us Safe

What's possible instead is to stimulate the politics of local and specific responsibility for safety in the face of climate impacts. Campaigners and advocates do not need and indeed should not attempt to put forward comprehensive chain-of-causality arguments or analyses, any more than it is necessary to track down the exact source of an outbreak of measles or bird flu before a government Health Ministry feels, and society demands, that it should act to try and keep the public safe from the impacts.

Upstream, there are things that can be done, and need to be done, such as vaccination policy and services, and health education, and vaccine development, or changes in animal husbandry and international trade pressures that lead to conditions which lead to animal viruses jumping species to humans ... and analogously, upstream from the hurricane swamping a shore in NE USA, or a wildfire destroying a settlement in Australia, or sustained and unseasonal extreme cold caused by blocking highs in Europe killing livestock on European farms, there are national and international policies on energy, transport and emissions reduction which need changing, and much more.

The key to initiating the politics that demands this is a public expectation of safety, of protection against the acute impacts. The extent to which politicians realise they cannot deliver on that from their own resources, will determine the extent of their desire to cause and contribute to higher level change. How such demands can be articulated will vary from place to place but articulated they must be if disasters are to become crises of responsibility.

Time To Get Basic

What we need is not more of the 'high minded' Pioneer values politics of universalism and ethics but more of the basic Settler politics of the right to survival and safety, for us and our families, and the starting-out Prospector aspirations material improvement and a chance of 'getting on', of bettering themselves.

Extreme weather impacts shatter hopes and dreams and undermine lives and economies: from the integrity of the local flood defences, to compensation for crop

Campaign Strategy Newsletter 85 – April 2013

losses to storm-hardening of essential transport links and utilities and protection of sports fixtures against weather cancellation, to provision for dealing with 'climate refugees' and guarantees of food and water supplies or household insurance, politicians need to be held responsible for safeguarding voters and citizens against the current impacts of climate change.

With climate impacts perceived to be occurring in real time, the politics of climate can be real-time, personal and local too. What would be the bigger political crisis, the fate of future generations, or a food shortage tomorrow? The future extinction of a third of the world's biodiversity or a housing crisis this year?

Once they have a crisis to deal with, politicians will start to look more seriously and more quickly, for the most effective solutions.

Recent Blogs

There are several recent blog posts at <http://threeworlds.campaignstrategy.org/>

Climate, Energy and Values: Surveys from Five Countries (<http://threeworlds.campaignstrategy.org/?p=219>) and the linked report *Climate Change Energy and Values* (<http://bit.ly/12S72Hf>) publishes new data from surveys commissioned by *Greenpeace* from my company (*Campaign Strategy Ltd*) and *CDSM* (<http://www.cultdyn.co.uk> Cultural Dynamics) in five countries – Argentina, Brazil, India, China, the US, along with national values data from the UK.

Electric car salespeople and transport buffs may be interested that In India, the US and Brazil, we asked people if they agreed or disagreed with the statement "*I'd like my next car to be an electric one*". While not necessarily any sort of forecast of buying behaviour, this is a measure of aspiration and the acceptability of a breaking new 'green' technology.

64.4% of Indians, 61.8% of Brazilians and 31.5% of Americans 'agree'. Of the 29.6% Indians who 'strongly agree', significantly more *Now People* strongly agree than by chance, over indexing at 115.

All campaigners in the environmental field should be interested in the NP *Now People uber-Prospectors*. These fashionistas are a lynchpin of change because they are the gateway to mainstreaming behaviours started amongst the *Pioneers*, into the *Prospectors* and thus eventually to the *Settlers*. They are not actually often the most material rich people but they make materialism obvious and so are sometimes hate figures for the more overtly ethical *Pioneers* – who could not really be making a greater mistake.

Our surveys repeatedly find that the *Now People* are as enthusiastic, or more so, than any Pioneer group (being very similar to the *Pioneer Transcender Values Mode*) about 'being green' (see data examples) but they are hugely under-represented in

Campaign Strategy Newsletter 85 – April 2013

'green' NGOs, because the offers and asks they are presented with are unattractive, or even hostile.

Summary of Values Based Segmentation CR CSL March 2013 (<http://bit.ly/10Z99b4>) is a nine page PDF giving an overview of the main differences between the values (Maslow Groups) groups of *Settlers*, *Prospectors* and *Pioneers*, how to communicate with them, and what makes them tick. There are also a few diagrams you can steal for your own purposes – as long as you credit the source and don't try to charge for it please.

Also very relevant to *Now People* (for those unfamiliar with values terminology, read "involving celebrities"), the post *What's The Greater Risk: Nonylphenoethoxylate or Showing Your Knickers At The Oscars?* <http://threeworlds.campaignstrategy.org/?p=196> discusses the case of *Bond Girl* Naomie Harris and her support of green textiles in Hollywood. A case where to be too serious minded would simply have meant being ineffective.

How Long?

It often takes decades to get a complete 'win' on a campaign. For example over twenty years in the EU to get a complete ban on testing cosmetics on animals announced in March - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-21740745>

This is Good

5 Ways To Rescue Groups Gone Bad from *Cruxcatalyst*: what to do when you are facilitating (or even participating) and things go 'tits up'. <http://eepurl.com/wKdCf>

More Evidence Of Renewables Taking Over like Mammals

<http://tinyurl.com/bra2v8m> David Roberts at *Grist* on utilities recognizing the threat of solar PV, and Analysis: Renewables turn utilities into dinosaurs of the energy world <http://reut.rs/Z4zZ0w>

The Campaign Strategy Newsletter

© Chris Rose. You are free to reproduce all or any part of this Newsletter if you credit the source. Find the blog at <http://www.campaignstrategy.org/threeworlds/> <http://www.campaignstrategy.org> is a non-profit website on campaign techniques & strategies, designed to help NGOs. It is funded by <http://www.campaignstrategy.co.uk>

To subscribe to this free newsletter visit <http://www.campaignstrategy.org>.

To offer contributions or comments contact the author chris@campaignstrategy.co.uk

Books By Chris Rose:

How to Win Campaigns: Communications For Change (edn 2) Earthscan/Taylor and Francis 2010, in aid of the campaign to get Amazon to pay its taxes, try a different bookseller. Eg UK, Waterstones <http://tinyurl.com/alc4k8x> or the publishers Taylor and Francis.

What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors, and Pioneers, Troubador (2011), order it post & packaging free from <http://threeworlds.campaignstrategy.org>