



“Scrutinizing the impact of CCS communication on the general and local public”

Workshop: “How to communicate CCS?”

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General recommendations for the communication of CCS

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Comparative study of the communication methods: **Focus Group Discussions vs Information-Choice Questionnaires**

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Key attributes of the communication methods

Focus Group discussions

Information-Choice Questionnaire (ICQ)

Focus Group: a form of qualitative research. Typically, it consists of 6-10 people who meet to discuss a certain topic (in this case CCS). The topic is presented by an expert and the guidance of the discussion is made by a moderator.

Information-Choice Questionnaire (ICQ): is an instrument to collect informed opinions of a population. In this case, the information presented to the individuals is written.

General recommendations for CCS communication based on a cross-national comparative study of the CCS communication methods) (1)

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ICQ: a more effective communication method leading to higher quality opinions.

Opinions reported are:

- ✚ more stable over time,
- ✚ more consistent with evaluations of the specific CCS consequences, and
- ✚ people are more confident about their overall opinions

Effectiveness of **focus group discussions** in terms of opinion quality through:

1. Even-handed and comprehensible information
2. Skilled moderators
3. Experts well-established in the field of CCS → High credibility
4. moderator guidelines to keep the discussion focused
5. Good group selection (size and composition)
6. Use of environmental organisations, academic and selected research institutions

General recommendations for CCS communication based on a cross-national comparative study of the CCS communication methods) (2)

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The effectiveness of the ICQ and Focus Group Discussions depends on:

- ✚ the *scale* to be applied (national or regional with actual or planned CCS activities)
- ✚ the *aim* (education, measure public awareness of CCS, stakeholders engagement etc),
- ✚ the *target* group (local communities, general public, policymakers, NGO's etc.).

➤ *Combination* of quantitative and qualitative methodologies offers a deeper understanding of the social perception of CCS.

➤ Drawback: Both communication methods are costly (in terms of human and financial resources)

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In countries with actual or planned CCS activities a good communication approach would be:

- ✚ Focus Group discussions
- ✚ A shorter version of an ICQ incorporated in the focus groups
- ✚ Internet version of an ICQ distributed separately.
- ✚ Raise lay peoples awareness on CCS

Conclusions:

- ✚ The development and provision of good quality information about CCS (i.e., information that is relevant, valid, balanced, and comprehensible) enhances the effectiveness of both methods in terms of forming high-quality opinions .
- ✚ Information developed using a range of experts with diverse viewpoints has a high credibility because of its perceived objectiveness
- ✚ In countries with long-term CCS plans the design and development of web-based ICQs on CCS could increase the public awareness

Representative surveys of public awareness, knowledge and opinions concerning CCS

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National level

Greece
Romania

National and regional level (simultaneously)

Germany (Rheinschiene and Schleswig-Holstein)
Norway (Rogaland)
the Netherlands (North Netherlands)
UK (Yorkshire & Humberside)

Main purposes:

- ✚ Scrutinise the public awareness, knowledge and opinions concerning CCS in the context of more general attitudes towards climate change and other energy technologies.
- ✚ Test the reaction of respondents to existing proposals for the capture, transport and storage of CO₂ from a power plant in their region
- ✚ Contrast national attitudes in response to the specific proposal and other issues with those found in the regions.

General recommendations for CCS communication based on representative national and regional surveys

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1. Overall level of awareness is low - Need to raise public awareness

Over 60% of respondents in the six participating countries claim to have never heard of CCS and only 8 % had heard “quite a bit” about the technology.

2. Overall support for CCS among the six countries is mixed

In all six countries the majority of respondents supported the use of CCS as part of a strategy to address global warming. However, in the four countries where there was the greatest awareness of CCS (Norway, UK, the Netherlands and Germany) initial levels of support was below average.

3. National differences in current status of levels of awareness indicates a need to tailor communication strategies at the national and regional level

- ✓ *Not possible to assume similar levels of awareness in a European context.*
- ✓ *Strategies for communication must be based on nationally relevant data.*
- ✓ *Support for CCS does not automatically rise with greater awareness.*

General recommendations for CCS communication based on representative national and regional surveys

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4. Target specific sub-populations

While there are national variations as to the strength of differences between sub-groups three groups have lower levels of awareness: women, younger people and those without higher education

5. Balanced and valid information

The project developed balanced, valid and accessible information regarding CCS. This information functioned well for both Focus groups and ICQ respondents.

6. Regional differences

Regional differences exist regarding the initial attitudes towards CCS and the use of energy sources developed over time.

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7. Onshore transport and storage are seen as posing the greatest risks

Concrete proposals for the capture, transport and storage of CO₂ were provided and the most negative reaction was towards the elements of those proposals involving onshore transport and storage in the regions concerned

8. Risks and benefits must be clearly presented in order to enhance knowledge about CCS

The data on knowledge on the potential of CCS to reduce GHG emissions show that there are some misconceptions about the environmental benefits resulting from the implementation of CCS

9. Communication of CCS is also communication about the use of coal

In all six countries the use of renewable energy sources is strongly favoured and there is significant opposition to the use of coal and nuclear power.

General recommendations for CCS communication based on representative national and regional surveys

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10. The role of trust

In all countries surveyed, scientists, followed by environmental protection organisations and consumer organisations were viewed more trustworthy in providing information about energy-related issues than government agencies, journalists and political parties.

11. Television

Given a choice among standard mass media alternatives, most people in all countries would be most likely to seek information from television.

12. More interactive internet channels should be tried

A large share of the public uses the internet as a major source of information and in some countries, such as Germany, even blogs and wikis would be widely used.

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13. Further investigations

This is the first major investigation into this topic in some of the countries surveyed and in no country has there been a sustained or in-depth investigation on the subject of public communications. Further investigation into regional variation in awareness and acceptance seems clearly warranted.

14. Continued monitoring of CCS awareness and attitudes

In order to develop the most relevant policies and plans, the levels of awareness and support for CCS should be monitored at regular intervals

15. Investigations of constructions of meaning

In order to understand sources of opposition to CCS it is necessary to learn more about how people develop their attitudes, which arguments are important and persuasive and how different groups may react differently

For further details please visit

www.ccs-communications.gr