
We keep climate change in a photograph: costs and benefits of green pictorial metaphors

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Abstract

We aimed to study the costs and benefits of visual communication of climate change, focusing on pictorial metaphors. We created a database for visual communication in climate change, including metaphorical and literal images. Recruited participants rated each picture on several dimensions and performed a tag generation task. Participants' ratings and words generated revealed pictorial metaphors on climate change to be more difficult but also more aesthetically pleasing, in line with the idea that this kind of picture is cognitively costly, yet can yield some communicative benefits.

Keywords: visual metaphor, climate change, Relevance Theory

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