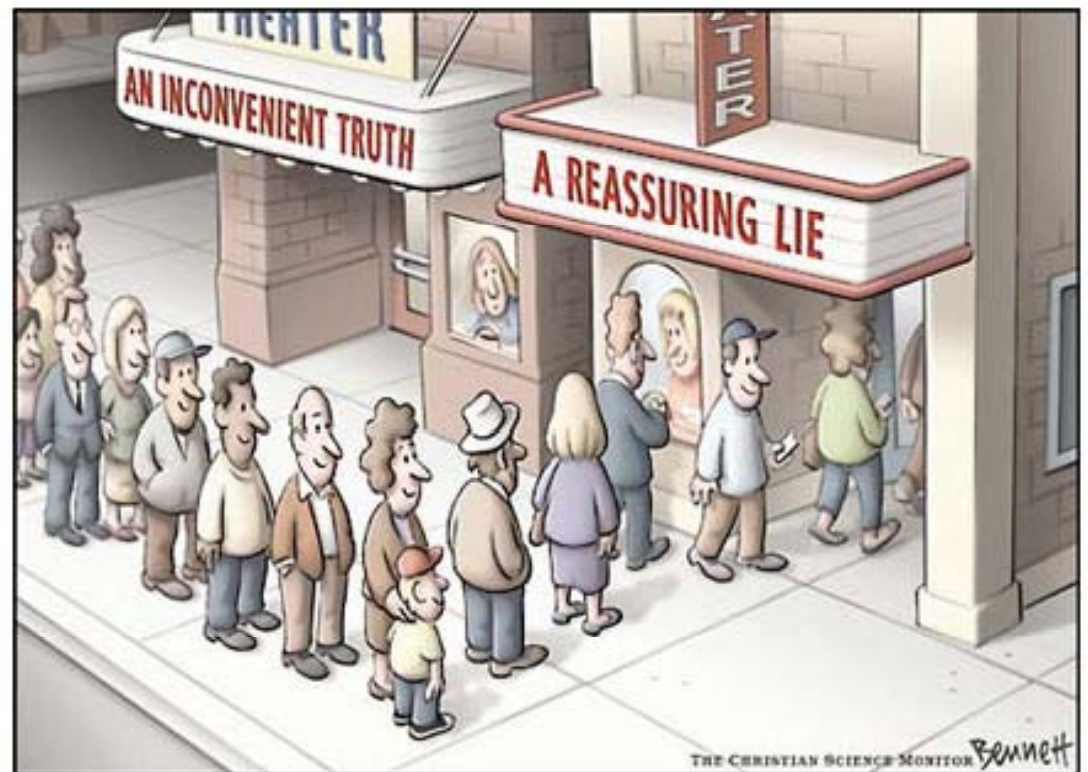
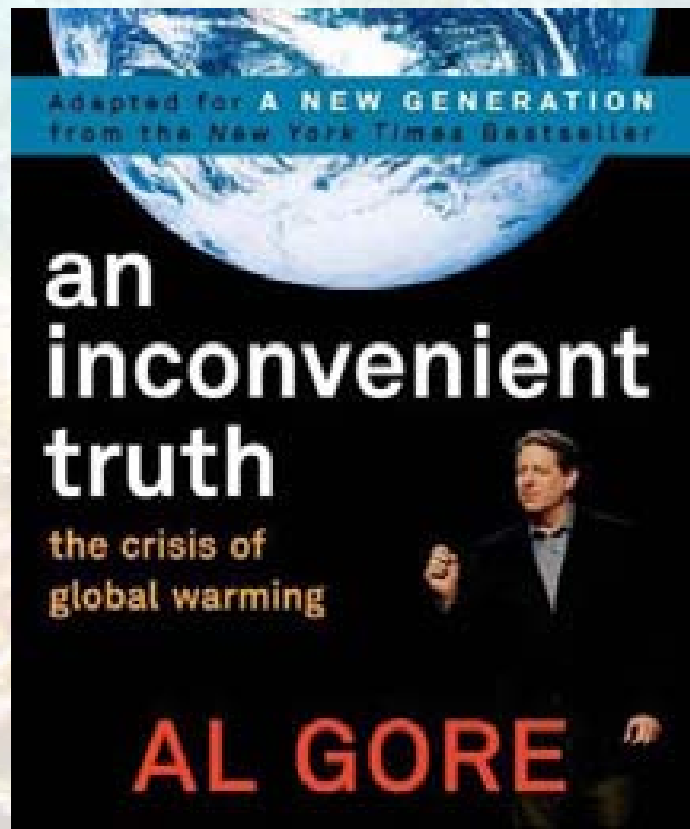


Communicating About Climate Change, Coral Bleaching, & Resilience



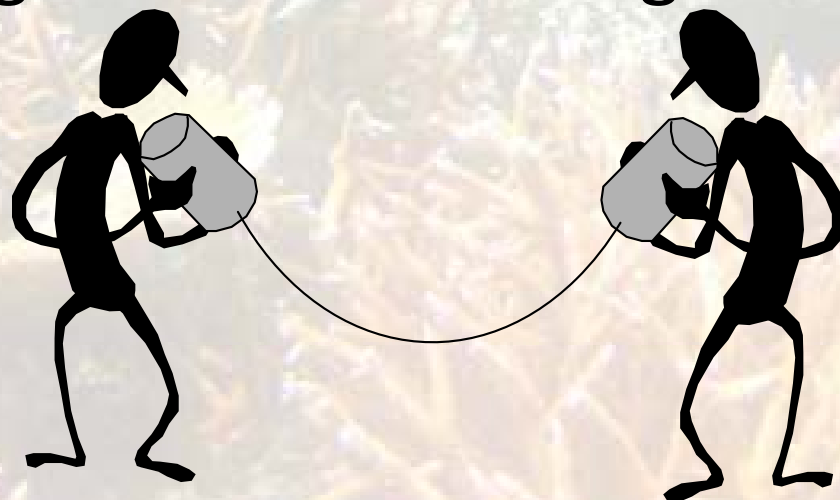
Trina Leberer
TNC

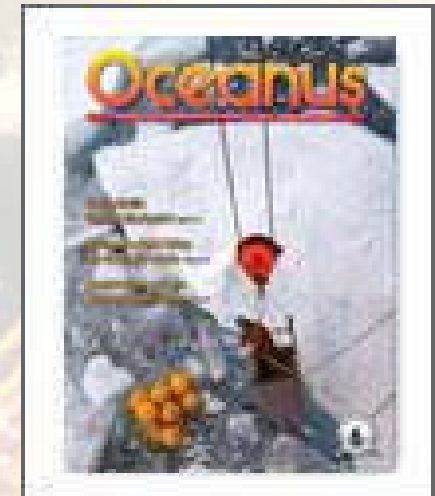
Importance of Outreach and Education On Climate Change



Current Status

- Lack of understanding
- Mixed messages from media
- Lack of fully engaged stakeholders
- Generally lack awareness on what is causing bleaching and climate change



[illegible]

Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

Has it succeeded?

**Peer-reviewed,
scientific articles:**

928

**Percentage in doubt as
to cause:**

0%

**Articles in the
popular press:**

636

**Percentage in doubt as
to cause:**

53%

No wonder people are confused

Old Educator's Model

INFORMATION MODEL

Why?

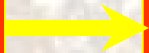
So...

So that ...

**They Don't
Do**



**Because
They Don't
Understand**



**We Teach
Them**



**They Will
Act**

Behavioral Model

So...

**They
don't
do**



**We must
learn why and
identify:**

- Perceptions
- Barriers
- Benefits
- Persuasions

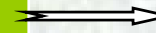
Then...



**Together we
develop
a program
that features:**

- Products people want
- Easy access to what they need
- Information they understand
- Channels they trust

So That...



**We all act to
sustain our
environment**

Desired Results

- Increased awareness
- Changed behavior
- Inspire action to increase coral reef resilience, change legislation, regulations
- Support raising funds to address climate change and coral reef resilience
- Adaptation strategies and action plans

What do we know about people's understanding of coral reefs?

Public Knowledge and Attitudes about Coral Reefs:
results of a national survey of US Adults (*Edge Research, 2002, n=500*)

KEY FINDINGS:

- Many plan to visit coral reef areas
- Most believable and compelling statements about coral reefs= damage already done
- Americans believe that 27% of reefs worldwide are fully protected
- Pollution and harmful fishing practices seen as top threats
- Television is the primary conduit for ocean-related information

Who Do we Need to Communicate With?

- The media → general public
- Reef users
- Colleagues/Partners
- Decision-makers



Communications on all Levels



Reef
Users

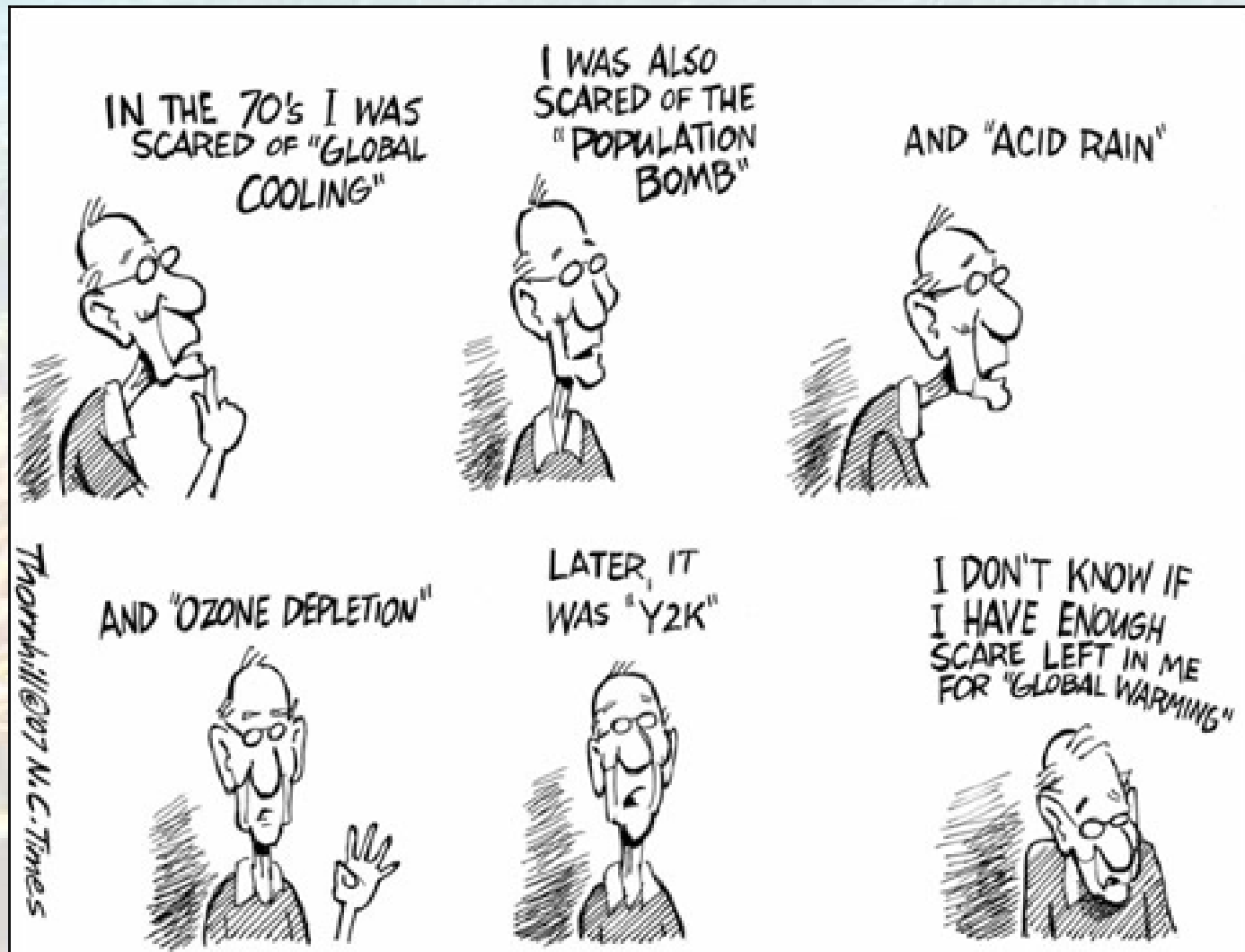
Solutions!

Research

Managers



The Media



The Media

Method of reaching audience

- Media releases, press conferences, contact key journalists, guest columns
- Media workshops

Goal of communication

- Increase profile of bleaching events, raise general awareness
- Help them learn so they care



The Media

Strategy

- Be proactive with the media
- Develop press releases with quick facts and FAQs

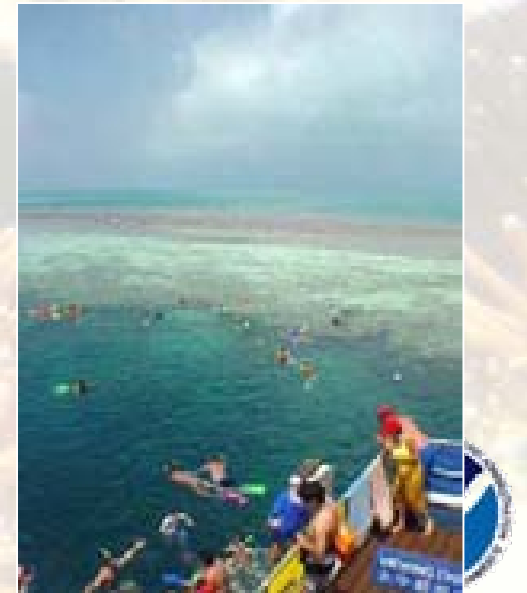
Tips

- Have on hand stock of high-quality images with human interest element (e.g. sea turtle)
- Be responsive, immediately
- Establish boundaries to avoid sensitive topics



Reef Users

- Includes a variety of groups
dive operators, recreational fishers,
commercial fishers, boaters, surfers,
cultural practitioners, and tourists
- Cannot be lumped into one group
and need to be targeted
individually



Reef Users

- **Method of reaching audience**

Target local scheduled meetings (dive club, fishing clubs etc.), media, community meetings, websites, newsletters, involving users in monitoring

- **Goal of communication**

Increased understanding, behavior change, community involvement, provide feedback



Nature
servancy
g nature. Preserving life.™



Reef Users

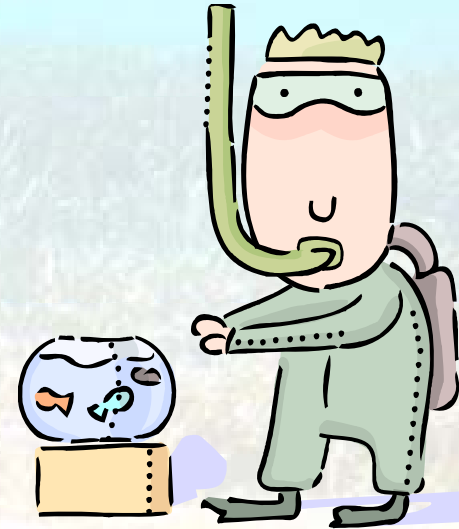
- **Strategy**

Two-way exchange of information

- **Tips**

Clearly show users involved in community monitoring how their information is being used

Let users know what they can do - be specific



Decision-makers

- **Method of reaching audience**

Briefings, meetings, scientific papers

- **Goal of communication**

Ensure that bleaching is a management priority, included in management decisions and strategies

Decision-makers

- **Strategy**

- Provide information early, present actions and solutions instead of just problems

- Encourage development of bleaching action plan

- **Tips**

- Provide scientific information along with the reef users' concerns

- Allow decision makers to say, “we know what is going on and we are working hard to address the situation”

- Recruit community spokespeople

Colleagues/Partners

- **Method of reaching audience**

Telephone, email lists, websites, presentations

- **Goal of communication**

Share scientific knowledge, identify research gaps, coordinate response and communication efforts

- **Strategy**

Mutual exchange of information
Same overall messages – seek consistency

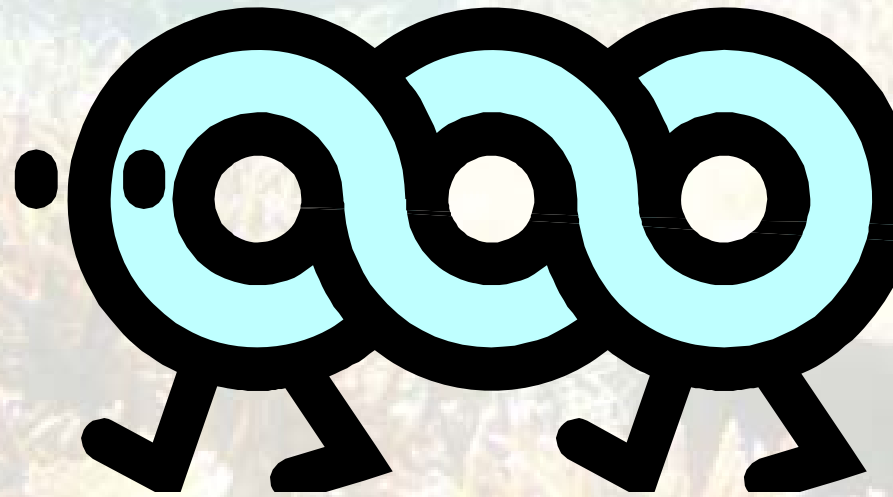


Communication Opportunities

- International Year of the Reef
- Discussion questions:
can you turn a bleaching event into a public relations advantage?
- Should there be concern for impact on tourism?



Keep Them In The Loop



**Consult early & often to increase acceptance
of problems & solutions**

Messaging

- Prior to bleaching events
- During current bleaching events
- Communicating to non-traditional audiences



What's the Message?

- Bleaching and climate change are real
- Climate change means long term impacts
- Keep reefs as healthy as possible to withstand stresses
- What must be done?
- What can regular people do?

What's the Message?

Avoid



Doom and Gloom!



Tell people what THEY can
do to help
Positive Messaging
Empowerment

Ask For Help

Community-based
monitoring/reporting to
engage and inform



Commitment to identifying
and implementing practical
tools



Maintain Credibility

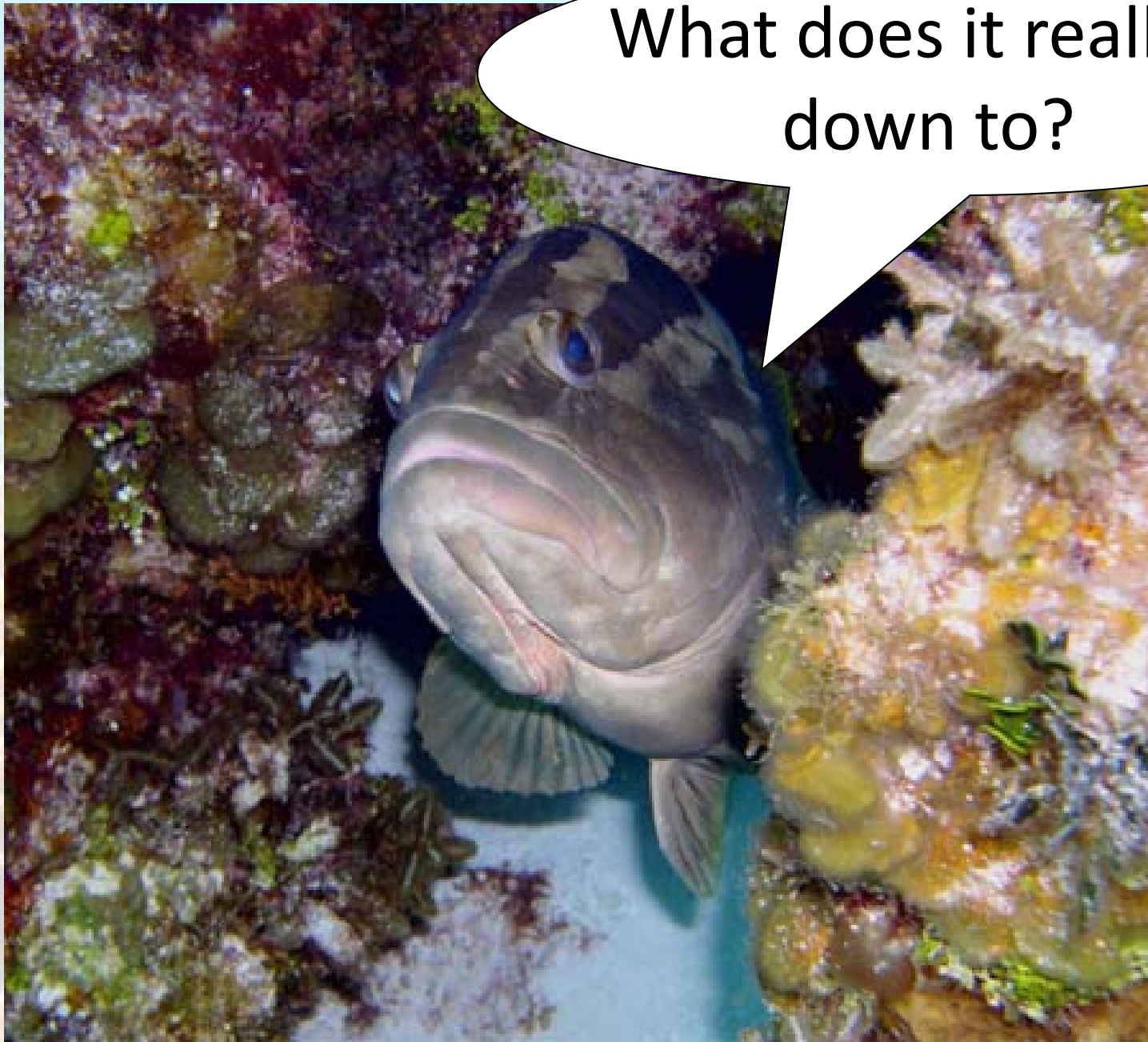
THE SKY IS NOT FALLING! THAT'S JUST A CROCK
OF PROPAGANDA FROM A BLUNCH OF LEFT-WING
ENVIRONMENTALIST WACKOS!



J. GLASBERGEN

Chicken Little, Age 40.

What does it really boil
down to?





N. Eristhee

N. Eristhee



How We Communicate



Examples!



Managing for Change: Communication & Lessons Learned



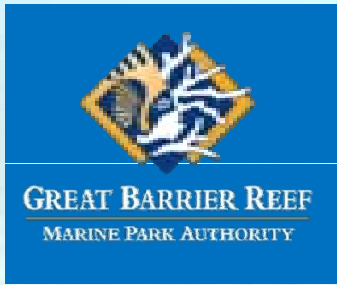
Photograph courtesy of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority



Rezoning of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

- Established 1975
- Management tools
- Coral reef-centric
- Ecosystem approach
- Representative Areas Program (RAP)
- Extent of rezoning





What They Did

Above & Beyond

- Community Information Programs (22)
- Public meetings (600)
- Brochures distributed (90,000)
- Information Hot Line (6,000)
- Media items: TV, radio, print
- (2000)
- Project Website (73,000 hits)

Photograph courtesy of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority



Received over 31,500 public submissions



Photos Courtesy of GBRMPA

“Despite careful preparation and planning...some communication messages became confused, deliberately twisted, or failed to get through”

-Thompson et al.



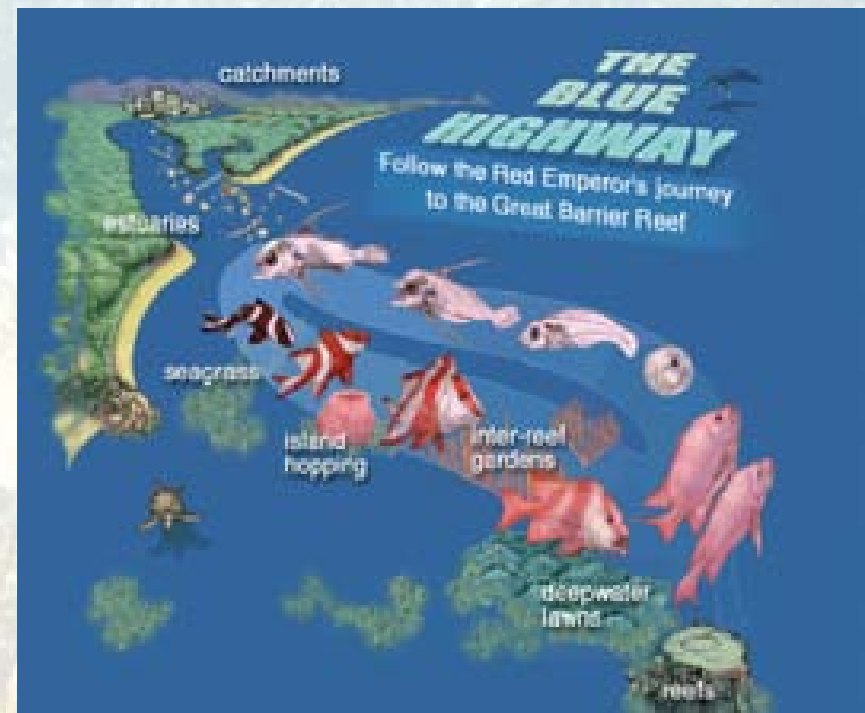
Barriers to Communication

- Problems understanding the problem
- Lack of trust & misinformation
- Differing cultural & sectoral views
- Lack of 100% scientific certainty
- Creating a conducive environment for effective communication
- Complex management arrangements



Understanding the Problem

- Public didn't understand that there WAS a problem
- Public didn't understand how the GBR 'worked'
- Public didn't understand the terminology

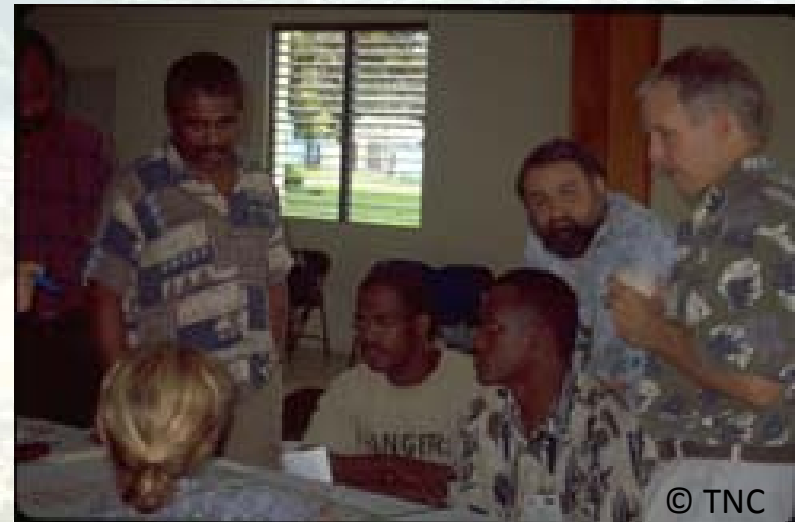


Biodiversity means all plants and animals together with the places they live and the natural processes that keep them alive



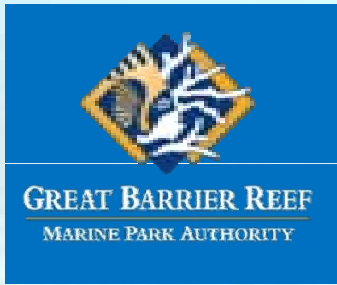
Building Trust & The Coconut Telegraph

Be transparent & involve
(listen to) public whenever
possible



Use distressed & suspicious
public to your advantage to
correct misinformation





Know Your Audience

Create different
messages for each
target audience



How you deliver the
message matters



Discussion:

What Communication tools and strategies have you used?

Who was your target audience?

What was your message?

How did you choose to communicate your message?

Have your strategies been successful?

What challenges have you run into in communicating management issues, climate change, etc?