



Climate Content Pledge Update from BAFTA albert December 2023

Context

Two years since the industry's [Climate Content Pledge](#) was convened at COP26, momentum is growing globally across the industry to tell more and better climate stories and weave sustainability in across all genres of programming. The 2022 update on the Climate Content Pledge is [here](#). The update from 2023 is set out below.

Meanwhile, at COP28, BAFTA albert partnered with Futerra, ThinkFilm and Bellona on the first ever [Storytelling for Action pavilion](#) in the Blue Zone to represent the industry's efforts to date and explore the role for storytelling in engaging global audiences to tackle climate change. The programme of panel sessions are set out [here](#).

Activities

Summary of activities from the industry since the last update:

1. New research from York University, commissioned by BAFTA albert, showing:
 - a. There is strong demand for climate content, raising audiences' interest and concern
 - b. Content works best if it is relevant to where the audiences live and features achievable solutions
 - c. Both intrinsic and incidental mentions of climate in content are equally effective when done right
2. Collaborative efforts from the past twelve months:
 - a. IPSOS mori research
 - b. Energy saving campaign
3. Individual updates from each signatory in the last twelve months
4. Wider industry efforts beyond the pledge

1. The Impact of Climate Content: new research from York University (to be published Dec 23)

Supported by Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) at the University of York and Research England, BAFTA albert commissioned a piece of academic research to support industry insights as part of its participation in the Climate Content Pledge.

The research explored:

- The existing evidence on the impact of climate content on audiences from a 'pro-environmental behavioural' perspective;
- What the audience demand for climate content is and what audiences want it to achieve;
- The audience response to different types of climate content

Through this multi-phase research, there are five key takeaways:

1. There is demand for climate content across a range of genres, especially that which intersect with social and environmental issues (e.g. inequality, health, nature and biodiversity loss).
2. Climate content is proven to raise audiences' interest and concern for climate change and environmental issues considerably. The effect on audience behaviour is complex, with positive changes often short-lived and dependent on audiences' pre-existing values.
3. UK audiences are most interested in climate content which shows the impacts of climate change in the UK, portrays achievable solutions and provides information on climate science.
4. The likelihood of positive audience impact was increased with support of post-viewing material, collaboration with a range of experts, integrating climate content authentically, and by aligning content with the anticipated audiences' pre-existing values.
5. Incidental and intrinsic climate content elicited similar positive behavioural responses, with intrinsic content impacting a slightly wider array of specific pro-environmental behaviours. Both intrinsic and incidental climate content significantly increased audience concern for global issues and climate change.

By mainstreaming climate-compatible decision-making into all stages of content creation, content can be made which reflects audience values and interests around climate change, and visualises and facilitates a just transition.

Citation: Graves, C., Swords, J. and L. Morris (2023) 'The impact of climate content', albert: London

2. Collaborative efforts from pledge signatories:

- a. Energy Saving Tips:

The pan-broadcaster collaboration saw energy-saving tips feature across our collective output in December 2022. A week after the launch over 50% of the population reported seeing tips from a broadcaster and 38% said they acted as a result. UK broadcasters together reached more people in that period than the Help

for Households advertising (which launched shortly afterwards) or consumer advice websites. In the first week, one tip alone – on turning down the thermostat by 1 degree – meant that broadcasters helped over 4m people save energy, thereby saving an estimated 1 million tonnes of carbon. Although the info reached fewer young people, they were the demographic for whom it had the most impact, with young people being most likely to say that they implemented the advice. This might indicate that prior to the campaign young people were the least well informed re energy saving tips.

b. IPSOS Mori research:

See further details of this in albert's Telling Climate Stories [Pocket Guide](#).

3. Signatory updates

BBC Group (including BBC Studios and UKTV)

BBC Group delivering on the Climate Content Pledge: Increasing Ambition, Investigating Impact and Supporting Creativity

Across the entire BBC Group (BBC Public Service, BBC Studios, UKTV and BritBox) BBC have continued to raise ambition to reach the widest possible audience; to increase our impact, informing and inspiring; and to share and collaborate with the wider creative sector.

Unrivalled reach: In 2022/23, Public Service UK TV and Radio content containing explicit environmental themes – outside of News bulletins and sequence programmes – reached approximately 67% of the 16+ UK population. It probed the big solutions needed (Rethink Climate), celebrated those pioneering change (Green Sport Awards, Earthshot Awards) and showcased the natural world while highlighting its fragility (Earth, Planet Earth III, Wild Isles and accompanying pan-BBC nature focus). But beyond that, three of the BBC's biggest titles so far in 2023 included environmental references or themes – not just Planet Earth III but also the Coronation Concert and Happy Valley. From The Great British Sewing Bee to Silent Witness, planting for beginners on Radio 2 to Green Badges on Blue Peter, the authentic inclusion of environmental themes is baked into our approach and commissioning process. We continue to find new ways to engage audiences, for example with the #BecomeAVoiceForNature initiative, which seeks to inspire audiences to follow Sir David Attenborough's lead and start conversations with friends, families and communities that might lead to positive change.

This commitment extends into the work of BBC Studios internationally and for other broadcasters (Life Below Zero) as well as in UKTV's Everyday Sustainability campaign, dedicating £1 million worth of its own airtime across the network's seven linear channels and streaming service, UKTV Play, to encourage viewers to make more sustainable lifestyle choices.

Making an impact: The BBC monitors its impact through regular online polling and against Wild Isles a more sophisticated, multi-faceted approach has been taken, revealing that over half of viewers accurately recalled key information; 84% of target species featured in Wild Isles saw spikes in Google searches and Wikipedia page views

on the day of transmission; 35% of viewers said they spoke to friends and family more about wildlife or nature as a result of Wild Isles; and watching the programme was associated with statistically significant increases in pro-environmental behaviours (such as creating no mow areas or planting), visits to greenspaces and overall wellbeing.

Sparking creativity: Apart from combining mandatory training with bespoke workshops and events for editorial staff, the BBC is committed to supporting our creative supply chain and the wider industry. We've updated our universally accessible [Environmental Sustainability Topic Guide and Glossary](#), with Section 3 coming early next year; published the insights from our [Audience Sustainability Tracker](#); and for the third year run the BBC Academy [Climate Creatives](#) event, reaching over 650 on the day and almost 1,500 since with watch-agains and additional resources.

Channel 4

- In November 2023, Channel 4's CHANGE CLIMATE season investigated potential solutions to the climate crisis, whilst holding to account the government and big businesses with the power to implement change. Programming included: The Great Climate Fight, Chris Packham: Is It Time To Break The Law?, The Big Beef Battle, and In Too Deep: The Great Climate Scandal.
- Accompanying this season was a bold advertising campaign calling out the actions and inactions of those in power. The advert features politicians and businessmen revelling in their opulent lifestyles whilst contributing to the carbon skid mark in their underwear.
- Channel 4 addressed climate change in additional programming, including Guy Martin's Power Trip – exploring the potential of sustainable energy. After watching the show, 90% of viewers felt the Government should do more to support renewable energy production in the UK, and the programme was awarded the 2023 Edinburgh Festival Climate Impact Award - meaning Channel 4 has won the award on both occasions since it began (with Joe Lycett vs the Oil Giant winning in 2022)
- Channel 4 entered a partnership with Vinted including a four-part digital series – Second Hand Style-Up. In each episode, guests are surprised with a fashion makeover comprised only from second-hand outfits, demonstrating the benefits of pre-loved fashion whilst offering practical tips to sustainably update your wardrobe.
- Channel 4 Streaming was updated with both Climate and Sustainability collections, highlighting our top programmes in one place.
- Channel 4 assembles a pan-genre group of commissioners to drive our programming in this area, our "Green On Screen" initiative integrated climate questions into our editorial processes, asking every production to report on how they showcased environmental sustainability on screen

Channel 5 / Paramount

- Announced its '**Everyday Sustainability**' initiative, an editorial drive to inspire, encourage and support its viewers to live more sustainable lives, by integrating environmental themes seamlessly across its entire programming schedule, from

drama to documentary to consumer programming. At the start of each project creative conversations between commissioners and independent producers will explore where sustainability can best feature in programme narratives, and end of series reports will highlight where sustainability featured in the final show.

- Delivered a range of programming that highlighted climate change and sustainability both in the UK and abroad, including *Swimming in Sewage: Britain's Water Scandal*, *Ice Age*, *Shop Smart Save Money* (featuring tips on sustainable and energy-saving tech across the series) and upcoming commission *Into The Amazon With Robson Green*.

ITV

- ITV has strengthened its Commissioning Green Team, which includes representatives from all genres, with additional training and off-site inspiration on climate content
- Emmerdale has introduced a 'Green On-Screen Pledge' with the aim of including a sustainable moment or mention in every single episode.
- Content highlights in 2023 have included:
 - on-the-nose content:
 - A special film from ITV's international correspondents on the human impacts of reporting on the climate crisis
 - a Good Morning Britain exclusive on plastic bottle sales in the UK and Joanna Lumley understanding the challenges wild turtles face
 - A major nature documentary A Year On Planet Earth.
 - Embedded content:
 - Fletcher's Family Farm, which follows first-time farmer Kevin Fletcher living a more sustainable lifestyle on a farm
 - A recycling bin character on The Masked Singer
 - Year round climate content organically embedded through ITV's Daily output for viewers such as this morning, GMB national and regional news on an ongoing basis.
- ITV has also actively been engaging with advertisers:
 - Love Island has continued its groundbreaking fashion partnership with eBay, spotlighting preloved fashion to millions of viewers across the season. The partnership won the Grand Prix at the Ad Net Zero awards 2023.
 - Secondhand marketplace brand Vinted came on board to sponsor Big Brother, with pre-loved Vinted clothes worn by members of the Big Brother house. Big Brother's famous diary room chair was made wholly out of 100% recycled materials.
 - ITV has published The Greenprint, together with System1 and behavioural scientist Richard Shotton, using analysis of 1000 top performing ads to decode the most effective forms of storytelling around sustainability.

RTÉ

- Internal engagement: Regular staff updates on RTÉ intranet highlighting themed content, green initiatives, achievements and training and development opportunities. Lunch & Learn sessions for personnel working in

News / Current Affairs to engage with guest speakers onsite to discuss and help journalists understand what they can do to help Irish audiences understand climate change and climate action in a user-friendly way, breaking down the science and not alarming audiences with only negativity. Session themes include: 'What's Happening to the Climate?', 'Climate Misinformation and Division, what journalists need to be aware of?' and 'Climate Change for the non-climate reporter'.

- Audience engagement: RTÉ now also has a dedicated 'green rail' on its player giving access to our viewers of content specifically themed around climate. RTÉ published its strategy document, RTÉ on Climate 2023 - 2025 earlier this year. It is available here: [RTE-Climate-Action-Screen.pdf](#)

Examples of Content output:

- 'Primetime': One of RTÉ's flagship current affairs series which broadcasts twice weekly highlights the theme of climate change on an ongoing basis. Topics covered include flooding, carbon emission reductions, the cost of living, EV use and transport etc. with topics made relatable to the Irish viewer with scientific backup and studio discussion.
- 'Heated': A new six-part series which aired this autumn looking at the implications of climate change for individuals, families, communities and industry in Ireland. This was also promoted as part of Science Week on RTÉ in November which focused on climate action and our future.
- 'Will Ireland Survive 2050?': In this programme, climate activist Dr. Cara Augustenborg and meteorologist Gerald Fleming discuss the unsettling effects of extreme weather. They look at images predicting what Ireland could look like in 2050 if change is not implemented.
- 'Far Away Places': The premise of this series was for a 'privileged' farmer or fisherman in Ireland to do a like-for-like profession in a developing world country, seeing first-hand how climate change and economics has affected livelihoods.
- 'Tomorrow Tonight': The central focus of Science Week on RTÉ in November, this docu-drama set in 2050 takes viewers through the breaking news moments on a seismic night, as climate change pushes the planet to a moment of crisis, a moment that seems inevitable if immediate corrective action is not taken - the catastrophic effects of global warming and sea level rise on ordinary families at home and abroad, the global climate refugee crisis that has hit home on Irish shores and the holding of business leaders and politicians alike to account for past actions of denial and delay.

Sky

- Sky uses insights to inform audience engagement, creating impactful content and tailored messaging across multiple channels.
- As well as featuring heat and air quality issues live during high profile events such as the US Open tennis, Sky Sports supported Green Football Weekend, raising awareness with a range of sustainability related features across its shows, and a Sky Zero branded graphic takeover.
- For the Brassic Series 5 launch, Sky produced a [sustainability short](#) featuring lead cast. The first time Sky has created bespoke content to raise audience awareness of its sustainable production initiatives through the lens of popular entertainment characters.

- Sky also recently released a brand-new Sky Kids documentary *Save Our Wildlife*. The latest in its slate of bespoke kids' programming on climate and protecting wildlife, sees eight-year-old conservationist Aneeshwar Kunchala and five friends from around the world focus on the threats facing six iconic species. WWF and Sky created an [online hub](#) for families to get involved in making positive changes for the planet at home. And, Obki the eco-friendly alien returned to Sky Kids for a third season. Full of humour, this series aims to teach kids that small changes can make a big difference, offering actionable solutions in a fun and easily digestible format.

STV

- The cornerstone of STV's on-screen activity was the launch of Sustainable Scotland Week, a cross-platform campaign capitalising on our unrivalled reach in Scotland to inform and encourage behavioural change to more sustainable lifestyle choices. The campaign included:
 - commission of a one-off documentary, *Sean's Scotland SOS*, fronted by STV's weatherman Sean Batty which looked at the impact of climate change on local waterways, beaches and communities.
 - daily news segments highlighting a range of climate-related issues.
 - a climate-focused edition of current affairs programme, *Scotland Tonight*.
 - an engaging promo campaign featuring sustainable tips from our viewers to inspire others to make *Little Changes*.
 - a Green Hub of programming on streaming service STV Player.
- Sustainable Scotland impact: post campaign research confirmed that Sustainable Scotland week activity reached 1.5m Scots, 72% of which said it made them more likely to make more environmentally conscious choices.
- Across the wider business, we continue to progress our STV Zero strategy to deliver our science based emission reduction targets, and become a net zero business by 2030. And we will continue to partner with albert to achieve albert certification of all our UK-produced programming in 2024.

WarnerBros.Discovery

- Themes of salvaging, upcycling and renovation are at the forefront of Warner Bros. Discovery's long-standing UK & Ireland series, including *Salvage Hunters*, *The Yorkshire Auction House*, *The Woodland Workshop*, *Derelict Rescue*, and more. From motoring to antique genres, the editorial of the shows encourages creative transformations through repurposing versus wasting unwanted items and materials.
- Across Food Network, there's no single-use plastic and food in the shows is locally sourced, making sure sustainability is the focus on- and off-camera.
- *Wheeler Dealers* and *Richard Hammond's Workshop* are examples of motoring shows that explore inventive and sustainable methods in repairing and restoring old and classic vehicles. *Fifth Gear: Recharged* on discovery+ takes a much-loved motoring format and puts spotlight on the benefit and appeal of electric vehicles.
- The youngest viewers on WBD's kids channels can learn how to live sustainably by completing daily challenges through *Cartoon Network Climate Champions*, a multiplatform campaign that uses Cartoon Network's beloved brands,

animation, and fun-filled storytelling to inspire and empower children aged 6-12 years to fight against climate change.

4. Wider industry efforts beyond the pledge:

Netflix

BAFTA Albert member Netflix helps provide research support to creators looking to integrate sustainability into character arcs or plotlines. The company curated over 220 series, films and specials into a Sustainability Stories Collection that features some of their most popular titles like blockbuster Don't Look Up, Oscar-winning My Octopus Teacher, and animated family favourite The Sea Beast. Based on Netflix's website, more than 70% of their members in 2022 (165+ million households around the world) chose to watch one or more of these stories. Their site also features a reel of examples from many other films and shows from every genre.

In 2023, Netflix partnered with GM, pledging to feature more EVs in their productions, and announced in the most prominent way possible with this Super Bowl ad starring Will Ferrell, which won many marketing accolades, including a Clio award.

NBCUniversal

- At NBCUniversal, in front of the camera, we aim to do what we do best: leveraging the reach of our iconic content and supercharging the power of storytelling to spotlight pressing environmental issues and inspire a sustainable future for our viewers.
- Universal Filmed Entertainment Group launched in March 2023 the entertainment industry's first GreenerLight Program, which embeds sustainability across the entire filmmaking process, from script to screen. UFEG partners with National Resources Defense Council and its [Rewrite the Future Program](#) to inform the studio's strategy around climate storytelling and ensure its efforts are driven by science. ([video here](#), [article here](#))
- NBC News also focused on climate forward programming with NBC News New York's [Chasing Our Climate](#) digital series and MSNBC Films' [From Devil's Breath](#). Al Roker, for instance, regularly takes a deep dive into climate change, extreme weather, and strategies and solutions through TODAY Climate. ([video here](#), [article here](#))
- [The End Is Nye](#): The Volcano Paradox took home a 2022 EMA Award for reality television for its portrayal of climate change and inclusion of climate solutions, in addition to receiving an EMA Gold Seal recognition of the crew's work behind the scenes. Nye takes viewers on a journey through the myths and realities of both natural and unnatural threats, including topics like climate change and chemical warfare.

Other networks and groups are convening to advance efforts:

Climate Storytelling Stakeholders in Entertainment is a network of approximately 70 groups brought together by CAA Foundation, Producers Guild of America, National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), BAFTA/Albert and others, to collectively advance the entertainment industry's engagement on skillful representation of climate change

and sustainability in film and TV content. Network members are active in climate storytelling and represent most sectors of the industry including the creative guilds, talent agencies, TV and film academies, studios and production companies, academic and scientific research groups, social impact agencies, and environmental and other advocacy groups focused on climate storytelling.