

HOW BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AND AMONG SCIENTISTS AND POLICYMAKERS CAN STREAMLINE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Session: In-Person

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Environmental processes such as climate change are extremely time-sensitive issues that require policy that is enacted quickly and efficiently. Despite the need for action to be taken from political authorities, little environmental policy is enacted in a timely manner, which is incredibly important when we have such minimal time to halt environmental destruction. A major reason for this is the difficulty that environmental scientists and policymakers face when trying to communicate. The purpose of this study was to identify how to improve this communication between and among the two parties. To do this, I interviewed scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and surveyed outside scientists to recognize their preferred communication methods. I also conducted a literature review for policymakers' opinions. I found that the two groups have different preferences, as scientists prefer to communicate through publishing their science, while policymakers learn toward receiving concise briefs on the action that needs to be taken. However, the two parties would both benefit from building relationships with each other to facilitate an understanding of needs and expectations. Additionally, scientists should consider their use of visual aids, scientific jargon, and frequency of holding meetings within their own agencies to ensure communication is effective. Lastly, both groups could find it helpful to reinstate modes of causal chitchat that the COVID-19 pandemic has since taken away. When this is achieved, scientists can begin to make their research more powerful, while policymakers can create positive progress for the environment.