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SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC ON SCIENCE-BASED SOCIAL ISSUES AND POLICIES

Policy analysts in the United States, and many democracies, are taught they are not advocates for, but rather trustees of the public interest. However, policy analysts often lack political communication skills in how they present science-based information such as environment and health issues, finding their data ignored or manipulated by others. Using environmental issues in the United States, this paper suggests understanding both the values behind policy prescriptions and the values of constituents can help policy analysts educate the public without engaging in manipulating the public.

Biography

Donna L Lybecker is a Professor of Political Science and Chair of the Political Science Department at Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho, USA. Her research and teaching cover the areas of Environmental Politics and International Relations, with emphasis on water policy, political narrative, and border studies. Current research includes work on ecosystem services, focusing on the political and ecological linkages between the environment and people, including health related elements; public and stakeholders' values, perceptions, and uses of resources; and the effects of policy narrative on perception and policy development surrounding international borders. With her research, Dr. Lybecker aims to improve decision-maker and public understanding of human-environmental connections and contribute to better-informed conservation. Recent publications include articles in Environmental Politics, International Journal of Sustainable Society and Politics and Policy.

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