

Climate Code: Guidelines for the editorial handling of the climate crisis

Preamble

The “Klima-Kodex” (English: Climate Principles) serves as a guideline for appropriate, clear and constructive reporting on the climate crisis. By implementing it, media outlets are responding to the increased interest in climate reporting [1] of their audiences. The principles do not interfere with editorial independence. The weighting and all editorial decisions are the responsibility of the respective medium.

Climate Principles

1. The climate crisis is, together with biodiversity loss [2], the most urgent crisis [3] of this century. It endangers our livelihoods [4] and is therefore a top priority. A stable climate is a prerequisite for a safe and peaceful coexistence [5].
2. [The medium] acknowledges the scientific facts about climate change and considers them as a dimension across departments and topics. Climate reporting needs adequate space and resources.
3. [The medium] meets the challenge of reporting appropriately on the climate and biodiversity crisis on the basis of scientific findings. In addition to the consequences of global warming, it also shows different solutions and possible courses of action.
4. Climate journalism is not activism.
5. [The medium] ensures that images and words do justice to the extent and consequences of the climate crisis. Events that can be traced back to anthropogenic global warming are not played down.

For all the points mentioned, corresponding scientific sources can be found on the next page.

Sources:

[1] Gallup Institute (2022). Gallup-Stimmungsbarometer: Klimakrise geht in der Berichterstattung unter. [LINK](#)

[2] IPBES (2021). IPBES-IPCC Co-Sponsored Workshop: Biodiversity and Climate Change. Scientific Outcome. Page 6. [LINK](#)

[3], [5] IPCC (2022). Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, B. Rama (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA, 3056 pp., doi:10.1017/9781009325844. S. 113-117 (*RKR-H is one of 8 key risks*). [LINK](#)

Relevant chapters:

- [3] B: Observed and Projected Impacts and Risks (S. 20)
- [5] & [6] Chapter 7: Health, Wellbeing and the Changing Structure of Communities (S. 1056)
- [7] Chapter 5: Food, Fibre and Other Ecosystem Products (S. 729)

[4] Steffen, W., Richardson, K., Rockström, J., Cornell, S. E., Fetzer, I., Bennett, E. M. et al. (2015). Planetary boundaries: Guiding human development on a changing planet. Science 347: 1259855. [LINK](#)

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