

ECREA Science and Environment Communication Section

Mission statement

The 21st century faces unprecedented challenges in the environment and science fields. The meanings of issues such as climate change and biotechnology, and the decisions taken in relation to them, are associated with a variety of communication practices. Research on communication can therefore provide a central contribution to current debates about scientific and environmental problems and issues of democracy, citizenship and power.

The Science and Environment Communication section seeks to foster a strong network of research in the wide area of science and environment communication. Science is understood here in broad terms as research that has its roots in the social sciences, humanities or natural sciences, including technology. Environment is also understood broadly as both the natural and the built milieu.

As the issues that are categorized as environmental and/or scientific, are also political, economic and social, the section aims to promote an integrated, inter- and trans-disciplinary analysis of communication practices. This poses new opportunities for research and education, including collaboration with other ECREA sections.

The section welcomes work that crosses a range of disciplinary (communication/media/cultural studies, science and technology studies, sociology, social psychology) and methodological (quantitative/qualitative/empirical/theoretical) boundaries.

Examples of topic areas that are covered in the section include - but are far from restricted to - the following:

- Media representations of science and the environment, including production and consumption practices
- Political discourse on the environment
- The discourse and politics of environmental activism
- Advertising and the environment
- Communication and scientific governance, democracy and citizenship
- Public engagement with science and the environment
- Constructions of nature and science in popular culture
- Communication in the production of research-based knowledge
- The dialogic, interactive communication of research-based knowledge

The main goals of the section are as follows:

- To develop a European network of scholars committed to the study of science and environment communication
- To organise section panels at ECREA conferences and other relevant fora
- To promote the regular exchange of research experiences and insights
- To further cooperation among researchers and practitioners in science and environment communication
- To enhance the visibility of European research on the communication of science and the environment.