

Developing Simple Communication Strategies for Complex Climate Concepts

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☁️ What's Up With the Weather?

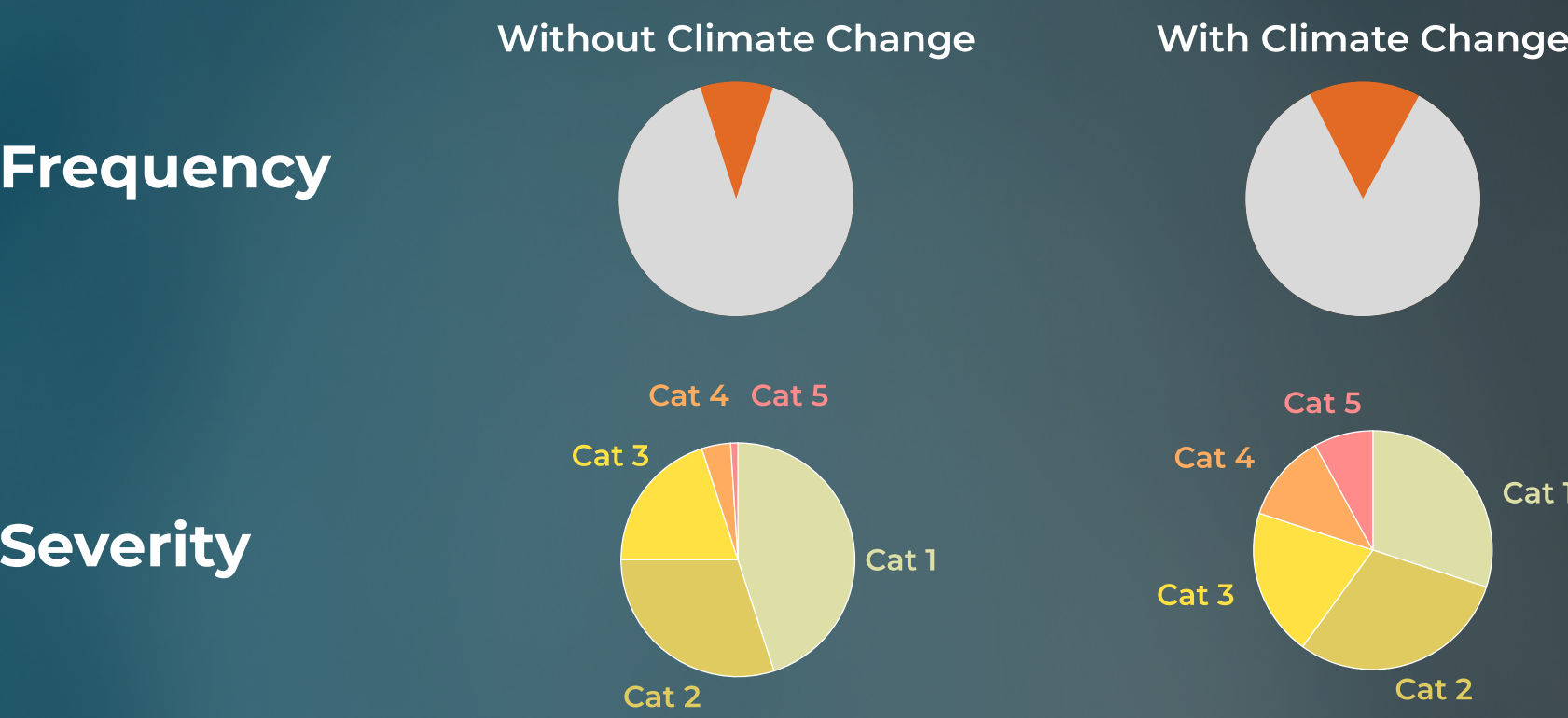
- Recent years have brought super typhoons, apocalyptic wildfires, heat waves and other extremes.
- The potential role of climate change in making these extremes worse has entered the public and scientific conversation.
- Scientists have made considerable progress on statistical climate attribution—the study of whether climate change made it more likely that an event occurred.
- However, **explaining these statistical concepts** to the public has posed **challenges**.

📖 Building Climate Literacy

- Members of society **do not need to know everything about climate** and its related changes **to make decisions**.
- Building climate literacy across society is **crucial** to better inform those decisions.
- Spinner boards are one demonstration of how to explain a difficult concept.
- If developed and used by communication partners, like TV weather forecasters, **this method holds the potential to significantly improve climate literacy**.

😊 Spinner Boards Can Help!

- Using spinner boards, 28 participants aged 18–76 **understood basic concepts** of attribution and explained those concepts to others (even those **who did not understand the difference** between **weather and climate**).
- This included both **understanding** and **explaining** the way in which an extreme weather event may be **more probable** and/or **intense** due to climate change.



✨ Spinner Boards Are Adaptable

- A standard way of communicating about the return period of rare events is to talk in terms of an N-year event, like a 1-in-100-year flood.
- Using spinner boards, you can explain the fact that a 100-year flood could happen two years in a row by noting that, while **unlikely**, there is a **slim chance** that the spinning pointer could **land twice in a row** on the narrow red segment.

💡 Want to Learn More?



A Simple Strategy to Communicate about Climate Attribution

Dryden & Morgan (2020)
Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society



Lay Detection of Unusual Patterns in the Frequency of Hurricanes

Dryden, Morgan & Broomell (2020)
Weather, Climate, and Society