Green Writing: Embedding Climate, Nature, and Sustainability in Film and Television

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Abstract:

Climate change increasingly affects every aspect of contemporary life, yet it remains largely absent from mainstream television and film narratives. While climate communication has often focused on engaging audiences through explicit information or advocacy, comparatively little attention has been given to the role mainstream storytelling can play in reflecting the realities of climate change.

This qualitative study draws on document analysis, industry roundtables, and semi-structured interviews with screen industry practitioners to examine the principles and strategies used to integrate climate, nature, and sustainability into mainstream storytelling.

Across both the document analysis and practitioner discussions, climate was consistently understood not as a genre, but as an ordinary feature of contemporary life that should be reflected across character, conflict, world-building, and narrative rather than positioned as the defining subject of a story. These approaches were understood to create the conditions under which audiences become more willing to engage with climate while expanding their capacity to imagine different futures.

These findings contribute to the emerging field of climate storytelling by documenting how practitioners are integrating climate, nature, and sustainability into mainstream storytelling in ways that reflect the realities of climate change and help create the cultural conditions for change.

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Foreword:

When I began this research, I wanted to understand how storytelling could contribute to meaningful responses to the climate and ecological crisis. To do this, I set out to explore the role that hope and fear play in motivating climate action through environmental documentaries.

As my research progressed, my thinking expanded beyond individual behaviour and toward the broader role storytelling plays in shaping culture and our collective response to the climate crisis. If stories help shape culture, I came to understand, then the stories with the greatest cultural influence are not necessarily environmental documentaries, but the mainstream film and television that millions of people already watch. This led me to scripted film and television. I became less interested in climate as the defining subject of a story than in how climate, nature, and sustainability could be woven into stories of every genre to meet audiences where they already are, rather than asking them to seek out a story about climate specifically.

Along the way, I came to realize that I was no longer asking how stories persuade. I was asking how they shape what people come to see as normal. That shift changed how I understood climate storytelling's power. It lies not in communicating environmental information, but in normalizing the relationships, behaviours, and values of a transitioning world through the characters and stories audiences watch and love.

This evolution closely reflects the objectives outlined in my Plan of Study. What began as an exploration of audience engagement strategies evolved into a broader investigation of communication theory in practice, examining how narrative, characterization, and world-building shape cultural understanding and social change. In doing so, this research fulfilled my goal of bridging research and professional practice. It informed the development of a

professional training course for the screen industry, providing practical guidance for writers, producers, broadcasters, and others working to, or interested in, integrating climate, nature, and sustainability into screen storytelling.

Stories have long shaped what societies consider possible, acceptable, and ordinary. As storytellers, we can illuminate possibilities, helping audiences imagine not only the challenges of a changing climate, but also the many ways people might live, adapt, and thrive within it. My hope is that this research contributes, in some small way, to that ongoing work.

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1. Introduction

> "The climate crisis has been concealed from our collective imagination by the very forms of art and literature that are thought to be most realistic.
>
> When future generations look back, they will certainly blame leaders and politicians. But they may well hold artists and writers equally culpable."
>
> Amitav Ghosh

Since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's first report, decades of outreach, education, and scientific communication have sought to convey the urgency of the climate crisis. Yet public and political action still does not align with the scale of the challenge (Moser & Dilling, 2011; Bieniek-Tobasco et al., 2019). Ghosh (2016) argues that this disconnect reflects not only a scientific or political failure, but a cultural one, rooted in the limitations of modern storytelling practices that exclude climate realities from everyday narratives, making it difficult for societies to fully recognize and respond to the crisis.

Scholars have suggested that responding to climate change requires not only knowledge, but imagination - the ability to envision different ways of living and possible futures (Wapner & Elver, 2016). Imagination, however, does not occur in a vacuum; it is shaped by what we see, experience, and come to understand as normal. Film and television play a powerful role in shaping that imagination, influencing how audiences think, feel, and relate to the world around them (Schneider-Mayerson et al., 2025). As Albert Bandura (2001) suggests, media helps establish what is perceived as normal, desirable, or expected. When sustainability and climate narratives are embedded as an ordinary part of life on screen, they can contribute to shifting social norms; when they are absent or superficial, this reinforces the perception that the climate crisis is peripheral or irrelevant (Bandura, 2001). In this context, climate change can be

understood not only as a problem of knowledge, but as a challenge of meaning - how individuals understand its relevance to their lives, a view consistent with broader arguments that human behaviour is shaped by narratives, values, and shared understandings, as much as by information (Bandura, 2001; Wapner & Elver, 2016). Screen-based storytelling, therefore, represents a critical site for addressing this gap by embedding climate realities within the fabric of everyday narratives.

While the screen industry has made significant progress in reducing the environmental footprint of production, the role of climate storytelling itself remains an emerging area of practice. This paper examines how climate, nature, and sustainability are being integrated into screen storytelling, with particular attention to the development and scriptwriting stages. Drawing on document analysis, and conversations with practitioners working in this field, this study explores the tools, frameworks, and creative strategies being used to make climate more present, engaging and organically embedded in narrative. By identifying effective approaches, this research aims to support creators in developing stories that not only reflect the realities of the climate crisis but help shape the cultural conditions necessary for change.

2. Literature Review

The Climate Communication Challenge

While scientific consensus affirms that climate change is real, human-caused, and a significant threat to life on Earth (IPCC, 2023), public concern and prioritization of the issue continue to vary (Brulle & Norgaard, 2019). Climate change has historically ranked lower than more immediate concerns, such as the economy and healthcare, in public opinion surveys (Brulle & Norgaard, 2019). In addition, while belief in human-caused climate change has increased over time, these shifts have been relatively modest despite strong scientific agreement and extensive communication efforts (Tyson, 2024). Scholars have questioned the effectiveness of decades of outreach, education and engagement efforts in communication, while rejecting the assumption that the public is indifferent (Moser & Dilling, 2011). Instead, research points to a 'perfect storm' of challenges that complicate climate change communication, including the politicization of the crisis, cognitive biases in information processing, the media through which the crisis is communicated, and the abstract nature of the crisis itself (Moser & Dilling, 2011). Because climate change is not an obvious or direct threat to most people, it is considered a low priority (Nordhaus & Shellenberger, 2009). At a broader level, climate change destabilizes the cultural and ideological systems that shape social norms, and produces what has been described as social inertia (Brulle & Norgaard, 2019). Further, repeated catastrophic warnings lead to the rejection of science altogether, a phenomenon referred to as 'apocalypse fatigue' (Nordhaus & Shellenberger, 2009). Together, these dynamics contribute to a public that is resistant to both education and persuasion.

Addressing the climate crisis requires change across multiple levels, including individual behaviour, institutional practices, and broader ideological frameworks that shape social norms (Brulle & Norgaard, 2019). The scale, complexity and urgency of this societal transformation is unparalleled, with limited time to act and serious consequences if action is delayed (Coren & Wang, 2024). However, the capacity to accept climate change and envision meaningful solutions depends on our ability to imagine alternatives to the world we know and, as Wapner and Elver (2016) argue, imagination is bound by lived experience, cultural narratives, and dominant ideologies (Wapner & Elver, 2016). In this context, storytelling emerges as a critical site of intervention. Climate storytelling has the potential to expand the boundaries of what audiences perceive as possible, whether through speculative futures, documentary representation, or the integration of sustainability, nature and climate themes into everyday narrative worlds.

Media, Culture, and the Role of Storytelling

Bandura (2001), a social cognitive theorist, argues that media plays a significant role in shaping what people perceive as normal, desirable, or expected. When sustainability is presented as a conventional, valued aspect of everyday life, it has the potential to influence social norms, institutional practices and the ideological frameworks that Brulle and Norgaard (2019) argue are necessary for transformation. Conversely, when sustainability is absent or tokenized within media, it may be perceived as marginal or irrelevant and fail to reflect the realities of our time (Bandura, 2001; Wapner & Elver, 2016).

Building on this, Wapner & Elver (2016) emphasize the role of storytelling in fostering emotional and moral engagement. Through narratives, audiences grow attached to people, places, things and ideas, allowing them to experience the emotional dimensions of climate

challenges and to imagine the world differently from how it is currently understood (Wapner & Elver, 2016). Stories do not simply communicate information; they allow audiences to experience complex issues in ways that can shape understanding and engagement (Wapner & Elver, 2016).

Wapner and Elver (2016) identify several ways in which individuals and communities engage with climate-related storytelling: (1) stories simplify complex issues, (2) stories enable audiences to imagine solutions, (3) stories create space to explore moral questions, (4) stories foster emotional connection, (5) stories help audiences understand broader systems, and (6) stories reach diverse audiences regardless of background, belief systems, prior knowledge or direct experience with climate change (Wapner & Elver, 2016). Conversely, didactic, virtue signalling, and other performative approaches risk disengagement, distrust, and alienation (Ettinger et al., 2021; Moser & Dilling, 2004). Together, these dynamics enable storytelling to transform abstract or distant threats into experiences that feel immediate and personally meaningful, creating space for reflection and potential behavioural change (Wapner & Elver, 2016). Schneider-Mayerson et al. (2025) further highlight the growing recognition that on-screen stories influence public attitudes, values, and behaviours related to environmental issues (Schneider-Mayerson et al., 2025).

The significance of these cultural processes is increasingly recognized at an institutional level. The IPCC (2023) identifies social and cultural dynamics as key drivers of climate action, noting that they can both reinforce carbon-intensive practices and serve as levers for shifting social norms and behaviours (IPCC, Chapter 5, 2023). Similarly, bell hooks (2012) argues that film does not merely reflect culture but actively participates in its construction (hooks, 2012). In this

context, narrative functions as a key mechanism through which social norms, values, and behavioural responses to climate change are shaped and reinforced.

Narrative Persuasion and Entertainment-Education

This growing recognition of media's influence aligns closely with the concept of entertainment-education (E-E), a widely used strategy that embeds prosocial messages into mainstream media to inform audiences and shape attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). Evidence from The Kaiser Family Foundation (2004) demonstrates how embedding health messages into popular television programming has led to measurable public awareness and behaviour changes (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004). For example, the television series *ER,* which aired on NBC, improved viewers' understanding of emergency contraception and human papillomavirus (HPV); Friends (also on NBC) influenced public perceptions of condom efficacy. Similarly, the *KNOW HIV/AIDS campaign* promoted HIV prevention, testing, and stigma reduction through its integration into soap operas and sitcoms (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004).

A significant example demonstrating E-E's capacity to influence behaviour is the Harvard Alcohol Project's Designated Driver Campaign. Launched in the late 1980s, the campaign embedded prosocial messaging about drinking and driving directly into the scripts of popular television series. In collaboration with major broadcasters (ABC, CBS, and NBC) and Hollywood studios, television writers incorporated references to designated drivers into top-rated shows such as *Cheers*, *Dallas*, and *L.A. Law*, introducing a new social norm through narrative rather than instruction (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, n.d.). Over a four-year period, more than 160 prime-time programs included subplots, scenes, and dialogue addressing drinking and driving, featuring designated drivers within everyday social interactions. This

widespread integration contributed to the circulation of the concept into public consciousness, with the term “designated driver” becoming a household phrase and appearing in the *Random House Webster’s College Dictionary* by 1991. Public opinion data further reflected the cultural shift. According to Roper Poll findings, 37% of Americans reported serving as a designated driver by the same year (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, n.d.). By 1994, alcohol-related traffic fatalities declined by approximately 30%. While multiple factors contributed to this reduction, including legislative changes and enforcement measures, the Designated Driver Campaign is widely recognized as an important component of the decline (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, n.d.).

The effectiveness of E-E can be better understood through the mechanisms of narrative persuasion. Rather than persuading through direct argument, narrative storytelling operates by reducing resistance to persuasion (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). Scholars identify several forms of resistance that can inhibit behaviour change, including counterarguing, where audiences mentally dispute a message; psychological reactance, where individuals resist when they feel their freedom or beliefs are being challenged; and perceived invulnerability, where people assume the risks presented do not apply to them (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010).

Narrative formats are uniquely positioned to overcome these barriers by lowering perceived persuasive intent and fostering emotional engagement with characters. This occurs through key narrative processes that influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, including identification, parasocial interaction, and narrative transportation (Kennedy et al., 2011; Brown, 2015; Moyer-Gusé, 2008). Narrative transportation refers to the cognitive and emotional engagement of the audience with a narrative and its characters (Brown, 2015). Parasocial interaction describes the

development of imagined relationships between audiences and media figures, creating a sense of familiarity and connection (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Identification involves the alignment with, and internalization of a character's values, beliefs, and behaviours (Brown, 2015).

Together, these processes enable audiences to become immersed in narrative worlds and more receptive to embedded messages, reducing the likelihood of critical resistance (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). This is reinforced by Jane M. Gaines (1999), who, in her book, Collecting Visible Evidence, describes the phenomenon of "mimesis", by which on-screen characters not only shift viewers' consciousness but also inspire them to act (Gaines, 1999, p. 88). In this way, storytelling does not confront resistance directly, but rather side-steps it, allowing audiences to engage with the embedded messages without feeling put upon or overtly persuaded thus allowing prosocial ideas to be absorbed more readily (Moyer-Gusé, 2008).

Beyond individual narrative effects, research suggests that consistent and repeated messaging across various narratives can produce a cumulative impact, a phenomenon referred to as cultivation (Gerbner, 2001). This cumulative effect has been demonstrated in practice, most notably through the Harvard Alcohol Project's Designated Driver campaign.

Emotional framing also plays a critical role in how audiences engage with narratives. Research has explored the relative effectiveness of hope and fear in motivating behavioural change. While fear-based messaging can capture attention, it does not promise sustained engagement or action, particularly when audiences feel overwhelmed or unable to influence outcomes (Moser & Dilling, 2004; O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009). Conversely, narratives that combine emotional engagement with a sense of agency may foster meaningful responses (Moser Dilling, 2004; O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009).

Taken together, these findings suggest that E-E strategies - particularly when messaging is repeated and reinforced - offer a valuable template for integrating climate, nature, and sustainability themes into storytelling. When embedded in ways that shape narrative, character, and audience identification, these approaches have the potential to disrupt social inertia, shift societal norms, and inspire meaningful change. Yet despite the well-documented capacity of narrative media to influence attitudes and behaviours, these strategies have not yet been widely applied to climate and environmental storytelling.

The Absence of Climate in Film and Television

This gap is reflected in the continued absence of climate change within mainstream narrative media. Large-scale analyses reveal a consistent pattern of underrepresentation across both film and television. The first systematic study of environmental representation in popular films found that, among 250 of the most widely viewed scripted films between 2013 and 2022, climate change appeared in only 12.8% of them, while other environmental issues, such as pollution and biodiversity loss, were present in just 19.2% of the films (Schneider-Mayerson et al., 2025). Another analysis of 37,453 film and television scripts from 2016 to 2020 found that only 2.8% contained any climate or climate-adjacent references (Giaccardi et al., 2022).

This persistent absence highlights a critical disconnect between the demonstrated capacity of narrative media to shape attitudes and behaviours, and the limited integration of climate and environmental themes within mainstream storytelling. While research and industry frameworks outline the potential of narrative tools to influence audiences, there remains a gap between these insights and their application in creative practice. This study addresses this gap by examining how sustainability, nature, and climate themes are integrated into contemporary film and

television, providing insight into both the narrative tools available to storytellers and how they are currently being used within the screen industry.

3. Methodology:

This study employed a multiple-methods qualitative research design combining document analysis with industry roundtables and two semi-structured interviews to explore strategies for embedding sustainability, nature, and climate content in film and television. The purpose of combining these methods was to examine both the institutional frameworks shaping climate storytelling and the experiences of practitioners working to implement these approaches in practice. Together, these complementary data sources provided a rich understanding of climate storytelling as both an emerging body of guidance and an evolving creative practice. Their use also enabled methodological triangulation, allowing institutional frameworks to be compared with practitioners' lived experiences, thereby strengthening the credibility and interpretive depth of the findings.

3.1 Data Sources:

Two complementary data sources were examined: industry documents and practitioner perspectives gathered through industry roundtables and semi-structured interviews.

Document Analysis:

The study examined 20 documents industry reports published between 2015 and 2026. The documents included three types of practitioner resources: storytelling guidance documents**,** research reports, and industry strategy documents**.** Documents were identified through purposive sampling using academic databases, Google Scholar, and targeted searches of organizations

recognized for their work in climate storytelling, including Good Energy, Climate Spring, BAFTA albert, the NRDC, and EcoProd. Additional documents were identified through snowball sampling by following references and citations within key reports, as well as through recommendations from practitioner participants. Documents were selected based on their relevance to the research questions, their influence within the screen industries, and their contribution to emerging guidance on climate storytelling and creative sustainability. A complete list of documents included in the analysis is provided in Appendix A.

Selection criteria included:

- Relevance to scripted film and television storytelling practices
- Accessibility (publicly available or provided with permission)
- A primary focus on North American, UK and EU -based resources

Selected documents fell into the following categories:

1. Industry reports and white papers, including Albert [UK], Good Energy, Reel Green, Sustainable Production Alliance.
2. Case studies of specific film and TV projects with climate, sustainability and nature themes for an in-depth exploration to identify strategies, best practices, successes and failures (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018).
3. Climate storytelling frameworks and resources (including existing Course syllabi and training materials) used by producers, screenwriters, consultants and decision makers.

Exclusion criteria included documents that did not feature narrative content relevant to scripted storytelling. This included content relevant to factual, reality or documentary television and

film. Documents and resources that prioritize production sustainability measures over creative content were also excluded.

Industry roundtables and interviews:

Four facilitated 60-minute industry roundtable discussions brought together a total of 13 participants, including filmmakers, writers, consultants, and decision-makers. The discussions explored the role and purpose of sustainability, climate, and nature themes in storytelling and helped identify strategies currently used to integrate these themes into scripted content. Two additional participants, who were unable to attend a roundtable session, were interviewed individually, bringing the total participant sample to 15.

Participants worked across scripted film, television, and digital media and brought perspectives from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Germany, France, Switzerland, and South Africa.

Industry roundtables and interviews followed a semi-structured protocol that balanced consistency with flexibility for both participants and the facilitator (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The discussion guides used to facilitate the roundtables and interviews are included in Appendices B and C. A detailed breakdown of participant characteristics, including professional role, sector, country, and data source, is provided in Appendix D.

3.2 Recruitment and Participants

Participants were recruited using a convenience sampling approach (Stewart et al., 2007), drawing on professional networks, industry affiliations, and snowball sampling. Initial participants were identified through personal and professional contacts, as well as publicly

available information (e.g., production credits and organizational affiliations), and invited via email. Recruitment invitations were also shared through professional groups, industry newsletters, and LinkedIn, with additional participants recruited through referrals from existing participants.

Inclusion Criteria:

Industry experts were invited to participate in the industry round table groups or interviews based on their professional experience integrating sustainability, climate, or nature themes into scripted onscreen narratives.

Exclusion Criteria:

Individuals without relevant experience in applying climate, nature and sustainability themes to film and television projects were excluded. Participants who were unable to discuss their work openly due to contractual restrictions such as non-disclosure agreements were also excluded.

3.3 Data Collection

Documents: 20 industry and academic documents meeting the inclusion criteria were collected from industry organizations, academic sources, and publicly available climate storytelling initiatives. Documents were compiled and organized for subsequent interpretive analysis.

Industry Roundtables and interview: Five 60-minute industry roundtables and two semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom. Roundtables ranged in size from between 2-5 participants. All sessions were audio recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim using transcription software prior to analysis. The interviews followed the same protocol as the

roundtables and were conducted to include the perspectives of two participants who were unable to attend any of the scheduled group sessions.

3.4 Data Analysis

Document Analysis:

Document analysis followed Bowen's (2009) interpretive approach. Documents were reviewed thematically to identify recurring concepts, assumptions, and narrative frameworks related to climate, nature, and sustainability storytelling. Because the purpose of the document analysis was to identify recurring concepts, assumptions, and narrative frameworks rather than generate themes inductively from participant accounts, the documents were analyzed interpretively rather than formally coded.

Interviews and Roundtable Analysis:

A thematic analysis approach was used to identify, analyze and interpret patterns of meaning across the industry roundtable and interview transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis followed an iterative, inductive process that moved between repeated review of the roundtable transcripts to identify recurring ideas and develop broader thematic patterns.

1. Initial Coding:

All industry roundtable and interview transcripts were read in full to gain familiarity with the dataset. Transcripts were coded based on recurring concepts and language relevant to integrating sustainability, nature and climate themes in on-screen narratives. These initial codes captured references to strategies, motivations, challenges, and outcomes associated with climate and sustainability storytelling (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Coding was conducted using an iterative process in which codes were refined, merged or expanded as patterns became more apparent across the dataset. A coding table was used to organize excerpts, track emerging codes, and group related ideas into thematic categories.

2. Theme Identification:

Following initial coding, related codes were grouped into broader conceptual categories. These categories were refined into themes that captured the recurring patterns across the roundtable discussions and interview transcripts. The themes represented the higher-level patterns of meaning that reflected shared perspectives, narrative strategies, and structural influences shaping how sustainability, climate and nature are integrated into onscreen storytelling (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Cross-source comparison

Following the separate analyses of each dataset, themes identified through the interviews and industry roundtables were compared with insights drawn from the document analysis. This comparative process enabled the study to examine where institutional frameworks and industry guidance aligned with, diverged from, or were adapted within creative practice. Comparing the two data sources strengthened the interpretive depth of the findings by illuminating both formal guidance and practitioners' lived experiences of implementing climate storytelling.

NotebookLM (Google, 2024) was used as an AI-assisted organizational tool to support document retrieval, excerpt organization, and preliminary pattern identification. It was not used for coding or interpretation. All coding and interpretive analysis remained the responsibility of the researcher.

3.5 Ethics and Reflexivity

This study received approval from York University's Research Ethics Board (REB) prior to data collection. All participants provided informed consent and were informed of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time. Industry roundtables and interviews were conducted with permission to record, and transcripts were anonymized during analysis to protect participants' confidentiality. Given the relatively small and interconnected nature of the screen industry, care was taken to ensure that participants could speak openly without risk to their professional standing. All data were secured in password-protected files and will be retained until August 31st, 2029, after which time all electronic files will be permanently deleted, and any hard copies shredded.

As a producer working within the screen industries and an aspiring climate communicator and educator, I recognized that my professional experience and interest in climate storytelling could influence both the questions I asked and the way I interpreted participants' perspectives. Throughout the study, I therefore adopted a reflexive approach, remaining attentive to my own assumptions and seeking to ground interpretations in the data.

4. Findings & Discussions

4.1 Climate is not a genre

4.1.1 Findings

A consistent finding across both the document analysis and roundtable discussions is that climate storytelling should reflect climate change as an existing condition of contemporary life (Good Energy, 2022; USC Norman Lear Center, 2023; BAFTA albert, n.d.; Natural Resources Defense

Council, n.d.). Dorothy Fortenberry, writer and producer of *The Handmaid's Tale*, famously notes, "If climate isn't in your story, it's science fiction" (as cited in Good Energy, 2022). Within this framing, the analyzed frameworks consistently encouraged integrating climate within mainstream, entertainment-first storytelling, where it is embedded within the narrative world rather than foregrounded as a central focus, a separate topic or a distant, speculative future (Climate Spring, n.d.; ImpactWild for BAFTA albert, n.d.). Industry guidance encouraged repositioning of climate content beyond traditionally issue-focused or niche genres such as science fiction (cli-fi), disaster films, or climate documentaries (Good Energy, 2022; USC Norman Lear Center, 2023; BAFTA albert, n.d.; Natural Resources Defense Council, n.d.). Several frameworks provide practical guidance for achieving this integration. The *Climate Reality Check* proposes that if a story is set in the present day, climate change should be treated as an existing condition of that world, with at least one character acknowledging it (Good Energy, 2022). Implicit across these documents is the assumption that embedding climate within everyday narrative worlds allows audiences to encounter it as a lived and normalized condition rather than as a distant, abstract, or exceptional phenomenon.

Participants articulated this same principle through the lens of lived experience. As one participant explained, climate is not an abstract or specialized concern but something every character encounters through ordinary life:

> "Everybody has a lived experience of this... everybody eats, everybody buys things, everybody wants a future, everybody listens to the news, everybody has a house they need to heat in the winter, and no one wants to lose their house to a fire."

A further theme emerging across the document analysis, and echoed by participants, is the importance of representing climate change within its broader social, political, and economic context. Rather than depicting extreme weather events, environmental degradation, or resource scarcity as isolated occurrences, the guidance recommends explicitly linking these experiences to climate change and, where appropriate, to the institutional and structural forces that shape them (USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Futerra, n.d.). Across the documents, writers are encouraged to move beyond narratives of individual responsibility by making visible the influence of governance, industry, economic systems, and other structural drivers of environmental change (EcoProd, n.d.; Channel 4, 2025; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Futerra, n.d.).

Implicit across this guidance is the assumption that authentic climate storytelling requires representing not only the physical manifestations of climate change, but also the unequal ways in which those impacts are experienced (USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Futerra, n.d.; Channel 4, 2025). Several frameworks encourage stories that acknowledge how climate intersects with race, class, geography, and other forms of social inequality, positioning these realities as integral to contemporary life rather than peripheral to it (USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Futerra, n.d.; Channel 4, 2025). Collectively, the documents suggest that representing climate authentically involves depicting both the environmental conditions characters inhabit and the wider systems that influence those conditions (USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Futerra, n.d.; Channel 4, 2025).

Participants also emphasized that this understanding extended beyond environmental issues themselves. Drawing on science communicator Katharine Hayhoe's metaphor of climate change

as "a hole in every bucket," one participant argued that climate is inseparable from issues such as poverty, women's rights, education, and immigration because it shapes how these realities are experienced.

Taken together, the document analysis and roundtable discussions position climate not as an exceptional subject requiring exceptional stories, but as an ordinary feature of contemporary life that naturally belongs within mainstream storytelling.

4.1.2 Discussion

Amitav Ghosh (2016) argued that the absence of climate from mainstream storytelling is not accidental but reflects a failure on the part of writers and artists to represent one of the defining realities of our time. The findings of this study suggest that the industry frameworks analyzed, and the practitioner participants are converging on a shared understanding that climate storytelling should not be treated as a distinct genre. In doing so, they redefine what counts as a climate story, responding to Ghosh's critique not by advocating for more stories about climate, but by integrating climate into the ordinary worlds of contemporary storytelling.

Importantly, the findings also suggest that authenticity extends beyond depicting the physical effects of climate change. Participants and documents emphasized representing the social, political, and economic contexts that shape how climate change is experienced, moving beyond stories that place responsibility solely on individual behaviour. In this way, authentic climate storytelling reflects not only environmental change, but also the systems and institutions that influence people's experiences of it. In this sense, climate storytelling becomes less about climate stories and more about representing contemporary reality.

This reframing is consistent with Bandura's (2001) argument that media shapes what audiences perceive as normal. At present, stories that omit climate entirely typically pass unnoticed because its absence is normalized. As climate increasingly appears through ordinary settings, behaviours, and relationships, audiences may come to expect these features as ordinary elements of contemporary storytelling. In time, stories that ignore climate altogether may begin to feel incomplete or out of step with contemporary reality.

Together, these findings suggest a shift in how climate is understood within storytelling. Rather than being treated as a genre, climate is increasingly understood as an ordinary feature of contemporary life and, therefore, a reality that contemporary storytelling should reflect.

4.2 The Craft of Climate Storytelling

4.2.1 Findings

4.2.1.1 Reframing Climate Storytelling as Creative Practice

Across the documents analyzed, industry frameworks consistently reposition climate, nature, and sustainability away from a distinct, issue focused genre and toward a “generative lens” that can enrich characterization, world-building, and deepen narrative conflict across genres, including romance, thrillers, drama, comedy, and children’s programming (Climate Spring, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; ImpactWild for BAFTA albert, n.d.; Futerra, n.d.; Natural Resources Defense Council, n.d.). Rather than encouraging writers to create stories *about* climate change, the frameworks position climate as a creative resource.

Participants described this same idea through the practice of story development. Rather than treating climate storytelling as an issue-based form of writing, they consistently characterized it as a creative lens through which character, conflict, setting, world-building, and narrative

structure are reconsidered. Participants repeatedly framed climate storytelling as a process of asking different creative questions rather than writing different kinds of stories. Instead of centering stories around environmental messages or climate science, they encouraged writers to reconsider everyday assumptions embedded within everyday scripts, including examining how characters move through the world, interact with nature, consume resources, travel, eat, or imagine their futures. One participant described this approach as encouraging writers to simply "think differently" when approaching familiar storytelling habits:

> "Can you think in another way when you're writing?... Are they talking in the car because that's what you've always seen in films?... Stop. Think. How can I think about all this differently?"

Together, the documents and practitioner accounts position climate storytelling not as its own separate category of storytelling, but as a different way of approaching the creative process itself.

4.2.1.2 Questioning Established Storytelling Conventions

A consistent finding across the industry guidance is that climate storytelling asks writers to move beyond familiar narrative conventions that can limit audience engagement or constrain how climate issues are represented. The guidance cautions against recurring tropes such as lone heroes, white saviour narratives, stereotypical environmentalists, and techno-solutionist or apocalyptic storylines, while encouraging more collective, relational, and systemic approaches to storytelling (Good Energy, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; EcoProd, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; Futerra, n.d.; Hollywood Climate Summit, n.d.). Across the industry documents analyzed, writers are encouraged to question inherited assumptions about

who drives change, what constitutes meaningful action, and the kinds of futures that stories imagine.

Participants similarly described climate storytelling as prompting writers not to accept inherited storytelling conventions as fixed, rather they encouraged writers to question established approaches to protagonists, conflict, setting, and narrative structure. One participant described this work as:

> "Part of my work is a deconstruct of the kinds of biases, habits and reflexes that you have as a writer that have been constructed, like having a single hero. Is that really what you want? Or is it just because you've been told that you needed a single hero with a journey?"

Participants also described climate storytelling as an opportunity to imagine alternative ways of living rather than reproducing familiar narratives centred on consumption, status, or individual achievement. They encouraged writers to explore different forms of aspiration, collaboration, and relationships with the natural world that more accurately reflect the realities and possibilities of a changing world. As one participant explained, "what would be great is to also infuse the stories with alternative ways of being." Another reflected on the challenge of making "frugality and sustainability sexy," while another emphasized the need for stories that offer "examples of collaboration, other kinds of characters, other kinds of relationships with the environment."

Taken together, the industry document analysis and practitioner accounts suggest that climate storytelling involves more than incorporating environmental themes into existing narratives. It also requires writers to critically examine and challenge the conventions that typically shape

stories, the assumptions embedded within them, and explore alternative ways of constructing character, conflict, and social relationships.

4.2.1.3 Climate as Creative Opportunity

Across the analyzed documents, climate, nature, and sustainability are positioned not as constraints on storytelling but as opportunities to expand narrative possibilities. The guidance and frameworks encourage stories that move beyond catastrophe toward narratives of transition, collective action, regenerative futures, and "messy utopias" or "thrutopias," while emphasizing climate, nature, and sustainability as sources of characterization, dramatic tension, and richer world-building (Climate Spring, n.d.; Futerra, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Natural Resources Defense Council, n.d.).

Similarly, rather than describing climate as a creative limitation, participants consistently framed it as a source of creative opportunity. As one participant explained:

> "This is new conflicts, new characters, a better way to approach world building. This is another way to read your script, to challenge it, to find all these things that writers get excited about... this is making us better writers, more relevant writers."

Participants described climate, nature, and sustainability as resources to solve creative problems, deepen characters, strengthen world building, and generate new forms of conflict without fundamentally altering a story's premise.. As they summarized:

> "How can I use the environment as a solve?"

Another participant described looking for opportunities to incorporate sustainable elements that "enrich the characters or the situation that's already happening." Rather than competing with storytelling, climate was presented as strengthening it.

Together, these findings position climate storytelling as expanding, rather than restricting, creative possibilities by opening new avenues for character, conflict, and world-building.

4.2.1.4 Creative Entry Points

Across the industry guidance, character, place, and lived experience are consistently positioned as the primary entry points for integrating climate, nature, and sustainability into stories. The guidance emphasizes creating complex, relatable characters whose contradictions reflect the realities of living in a fossil fuel dependent world (Good Energy, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022). The documents emphasize that the goal is not to model perfect environmental behaviour, but to make more sustainable choices appear believable, attainable, and socially normative. This is frequently framed through the recommendation to depict the internal conflict, contradiction, and moral ambiguity within characters (Good Energy, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d.).

Alongside these recommendations, the documents caution against recurring character tropes that can undermine narrative credibility or reinforce problematic assumptions, including stereotypical portrayals of environmentalists, such as flawless or morally superior activists, overly despairing characters, or the caricature of the “deranged eco-terrorist” (Good Energy, 2022; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Hollywood Climate Summit, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d).

Participants similarly located opportunities for climate integration within character development. One participant emphasized that climate storytelling "doesn't need to be like a character who's suddenly talking about CO2 emissions" - it is instead a matter of interrogating the character choices already embedded in a script:

> "Where did your character grow up, what relationship to the natural world do they have, are they anxious about what's happening in the world or are they struggling to pay the energy bill... do they eat meat... what do they imagine the world to be in 10 years or 20 years."

Another participant put it even more directly:

> "It's not about environment, environmental issues. To me, it's really about the attitudes of the characters."

The documents encourage writers to recognize that climate change is experienced unevenly, with its impacts influenced by factors such as race, class, gender, geography, disability, and colonial histories. Rather than presenting climate change as a universal experience, the guidance advocates for stories that reflect the diverse ways people encounter environmental change and the unequal burdens and opportunities it creates (Good Energy, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022).

Participants agreed and described climate as intersecting with the social, emotional, and material realities that already shape people’s lives. One participant noted that climate vulnerability often compounds existing inequalities and described weaving climate into narratives centred on gender

or queer issues. For this participant, climate was “always rooted in lived experience,” even when the story did not explicitly identify itself as a climate narrative.

4.2.2 Discussion

Collectively, participants positioned climate storytelling not as an additional obligation for storytellers, but as an evolving creative practice that strengthens rather than constrains storytelling. Read alongside the document analysis, these findings suggest that climate storytelling is less about adding environmental messages to existing stories than about approaching characterization, conflict, world-building, and narrative design through a different creative lens.

Participants described this new approach as broadening creative possibilities including: new forms of conflict, richer world-building, more nuanced characterization, and alternative conceptions of place, aspiration, and social relationships. This challenges the common assumption that including climate, nature, and sustainability limits creative freedom. Instead, participants described climate functioning less as subject matter than as an approach to story development - an additional way of reading, questioning, and strengthening a script.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the most significant contribution of climate storytelling guidance may not be encouraging writers to tell more climate stories, but encouraging them to tell richer, more authentic stories in which climate is understood as part of the world rather than the subject of the narrative.

One implication of these findings is that framing climate storytelling as a creative lens rather than an environmental obligation may reduce resistance among non-climate writers. Participants

consistently rejected the idea that climate storytelling required them to sacrifice creativity or incorporate overt environmental messaging. Instead, they described climate, nature, and sustainability as creative opportunities to create richer characters, stronger conflicts, more authentic worlds, and more relevant stories. This suggests that industry efforts to encourage climate storytelling may be more successful when they are presented as tools for enhancing creative practice rather than as expectations for environmental advocacy, reducing resistance among writers who value creative autonomy.

A further implication of these findings is that approaching climate storytelling as a creative lens may make the practice more accessible to writers. Writers may feel they lack the scientific knowledge or policy expertise required to tell climate stories and, as a result, assume the topic falls outside their experience or creative comfort zone. However, the findings suggest that climate storytelling does not require specialist environmental knowledge. Instead, by beginning with lived experience, avoiding familiar tropes, and asking how climate, nature, and sustainability shape a character's world, writers can create stories that authentically reflect contemporary reality without making climate change the central subject of the narrative. In this way, climate storytelling becomes less about mastering environmental issues than about approaching storytelling through a different creative lens.

4.3 Emotional Storytelling

4.3.1 Findings:

4.3.1.1 Emotional Connection Over Information

Across the analyzed documents, emotional engagement is consistently positioned as a key mechanism through which climate storytelling influences audiences. Rather than emphasizing

the communication of scientific information or environmental messages, the guidance emphasizes compelling characters, emotional authenticity, relatable conflicts, and audience identification as the primary means through which climate themes become meaningful. Climate, nature, and sustainability are therefore positioned less as messages to communicate than as experiences to be felt through story (USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Good Energy, 2022; Climate Spring, n.d.). Implicit across the frameworks is the assumption that audiences are more likely to engage with climate-related themes when they encounter them within stories that foster identification, empathy, and emotional investment (USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Good Energy, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.).

Similarly, participants consistently described emotional engagement, rather than factual accuracy or message clarity, as the mechanism through which climate storytelling succeeds or fails. Rather than beginning with a climate message, they encouraged writers to begin with the story itself, allowing climate, nature, and sustainability to emerge through characters, relationships, and conflict. As one participant put it, viewers only change their minds "when we are touching the hearts of the audience."

This emphasis on emotional connection extends beyond how stories are told to whom they are able to reach. Across the analyzed documents is the assumption that audiences are more receptive to climate-related ideas when they are encountered through engaging stories, particularly those that reach beyond already engaged viewers. This reflects an emphasis on engaging broader or “hinge” audiences who may not actively seek out climate-focused content (Narrative Observatory, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.).

Participants likewise argued that emotional engagement depends not only on how stories are told, but also on who encounters them. Rather than expecting viewers to seek out overtly environmental programming, they emphasized meeting audiences where they already are by integrating climate, nature, and sustainability into mainstream entertainment that audiences are already choosing to watch. As one participant reflected:

> "Whenever I watched films that had to do with this, they were always in certain kinds of festivals, and you always talked about them with a certain kind of people. And I always thought this is a problem. We're talking about the same issue all over again within the same groups and this needs to go further."

Several participants expressed concern that overly didactic storytelling risks alienating audiences, whereas stories grounded in compelling characters and authentic situations invite viewers to engage without feeling judged. As one participant observed:

> "Audiences don't want to be lectured... it's important that we find a way to incorporate it that feels authentic."

Another participant similarly argued:

> "It's not like I'm preaching to you... otherwise you'll just go watch a documentary."

A third offered a practical test for catching didacticism before it lands on the page: when a story idea feels too "on the nose," the task is to ask, "what's over here that might be surprising or not feel didactic." Rather than accepting preachiness as an inevitable consequence of writing about climate, they treated it as a creative challenge, encouraging writers to find more subtle, unexpected, and story-driven ways of expressing the same ideas.

Participants also identified a related risk: that message-driven storytelling can unintentionally evoke feelings of shame, reducing rather than strengthening audience engagement. Several participants cautioned that stories perceived as judging audiences for their behaviour or values may prompt defensiveness instead of reflection. As one participant explained:

> "This emotion of shame...When we are giving them the feeling that they are doing something wrong, they are not opening their heart to get [the] message."

Taken together, the document analysis and practitioner accounts suggest that climate storytelling creates emotional engagement not through information or persuasion, but through connection, authenticity, and identification. Across both datasets, climate storytelling is understood as inviting audiences into emotionally resonant experiences rather than attempting to convince them through facts or overt messaging.

4.3.1.2 Hope, Agency and Imagination

Across the analyzed documents, there is consistent caution against relying on fear-based approaches to climate storytelling, including doomism, apocalyptic tropes, and dystopian narrative frames (Climate Spring, n.d.; Futerra, n.d.). Rather than positioning climate change as an inevitable endpoint of collapse, the guidance encourages narratives that acknowledge climate change as an ongoing process of transition, emphasizing stories that depict social, technological, and community responses (BAFTA albert, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022; Climate Spring, n.d.; Futerra, n.d.). Several frameworks also caution that placing climate impacts in distant speculative futures can reinforce the perception that climate change is someone else's problem rather than a present reality (Futerra, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; NRDC, n.d.).

Several participants specifically pushed back against dystopian and apocalyptic narratives as a default mode, describing them as both overused and counterproductive. One noted that mainstream climate-catastrophe films tend to stop short of usefulness: they "underline there is a massive problem," but "don't tell you what to do. And they don't give you hope" - leaving audiences with diagnosis but no path forward. One participant explained that stories centred solely on systemic failure can leave audiences emotionally exhausted:

> "...you just say, 'OK, I'm going to watch a comedy now because this is... hard.'

Another described apocalyptic material as "too anxiety provoking, it's a downer," and audiences respond not with resistance to the facts but with a request for direction:

> "...come on, give me some help here. How am I going to do this?"

This does not amount to a call for false optimism. One participant was explicit on this point, "I'm not saying happy hippie hope... let's be realistic. Things are not good, but let's bring some hope on the table," suggesting that hope helps keep audiences engaged without minimizing the seriousness of the climate crisis.

Participants converged strongly on the idea that fear-based storytelling, characterized by guilt, doom, and catastrophe, fails to motivate audiences, even when it succeeds at raising alarm. One participant drew on audience psychology to explain this perspective:

> "...guilt, anger, frustration, fear... none of those will change how people feel about the climate crisis and make them do anything. The biggest thing you can do is show positive

> action that people feel satisfied in actually experiencing and watching. So, action creates action."

Importantly, industry guidance does not advocate avoiding difficult emotions altogether, rather several frameworks encourage stories that allow audiences to witness characters navigating climate grief, uncertainty, and moral ambiguity, positioning viewers to feel validated rather than isolated in their own experiences (Good Energy, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.). By seeing characters experience and process climate grief and other internal conflicts on screen, viewers are positioned as feeling validated and less isolated in their own anxieties (Good Energy, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.).

Several participants argued that emotionally effective climate storytelling shifts attention away from crisis alone toward depicting responses that audiences can imagine themselves participating in. One participant suggested that this also requires reminding audiences what remains worth protecting:

> "...the real world today, which is still beautiful and rich and biodiverse... there's still a lot to protect. And I think that's where the conversation should be going. It's more actionable than what can't we do."

In place of apocalyptic or idealized utopian futures, the documents advocate what they variously describe as "messy utopias" or "thrutopias": futures grounded in conflict, complexity, and emotional realism that nevertheless depict collective efforts toward more sustainable and regenerative societies (Futerra, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; NRDC, n.d.).

Implicit across these documents is the assumption is that audiences are more likely to engage with stories that pair emotional realism with plausible pathways for change than narratives centred solely on catastrophe or collapse.

Consistent with the document analysis, participants viewed hope not as optimism detached from reality, but as a narrative strategy that enables audiences to envision meaningful responses to climate change. Participants repeatedly emphasized that hope alone was insufficient. Stories also needed to provide audiences with a sense of agency by depicting realistic, achievable actions available to individuals and communities. Rather than leaving audiences overwhelmed by the scale of the crisis, participants advocated for narratives that emphasized "progress over perfection," portraying responses that audiences could realistically imagine themselves participating in.

Underlying this preference for hope over fear, several participants pointed to what they described as a broader cultural failure of imagination. As one participant observed:

> "We have a total lack of imagination. It's been decades. We don't imagine another world."

Participants suggested that imagination itself is constrained by what people have previously encountered through culture and media. For some participants, addressing this constraint meant depicting desirable alternatives rather than crisis alone, futures worth wanting rather than futures to be feared. As one participant reflected:

> "I want to imagine another kind of government... It's impossible because I never saw it and they never told me it could be true."

Participants described storytelling as doing more than entertaining or communicating information. They suggested that stories can make unfamiliar possibilities visible and emotionally believable, expanding what audiences perceive as possible. One participant likened well-crafted climate stories to "vision boards for a sustainable future," suggesting that stories allow audiences to imagine and emotionally connect with alternative futures that might otherwise feel beyond reach.

4.2.1.3 Nature, Place and Emotional Connection

Another key theme emerging across the data is that climate storytelling becomes emotionally meaningful by reconnecting audiences with the natural world through lived relationships with nature and place. Across the analyzed documents, writers are encouraged to position the natural world as a dynamic narrative force rather than a passive backdrop. Landscapes, ecosystems, weather, and relationships with the natural world are presented as shaping character, conflict, and narrative, positioning the environment as an active element of story rather than simply its setting (Climate Spring, n.d.; Good Energy, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d.; ImpactWild for BAFTA albert, n.d.; USC Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project, 2022).

This includes making characters' relationships with the natural world central to their motivations (EcoProd, n.d; ImpactWild for BAFTA albert, n.d.). Additional guidance suggests re-integrating the natural world into everyday life on screen by naming and specifying the more-than-human world, such as local plant and animal species, and incorporating natural elements into sound design (ImpactWild for BAFTA albert, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.) Implicit across the documents is the assumption that a root cause of the environmental crisis is humanity's cultural disconnection from the natural world. By visually and narratively reconnecting viewers to nature,

on screen storytelling is positioned as fostering a stronger human-nature relationship (Futerra, n.d.; (ImpactWild for BAFTA albert, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.).

Similarly, multiple practitioners described nature itself as an important source of emotional connection within storytelling. Rather than treating the natural world as scenery or backdrop, they encouraged writers to foreground relationships between characters and the environments they inhabit. As one participant explained:

> "It's not about climate change that much. For me, it's more like let's bring in nature so that people, the audience, are reminded that we are part of nature and we are not separated from this."

For this participant, nature became meaningful not because it communicated environmental themes, but because it fostered a sense of identification and belonging. As they reflected,

> "once I'm connecting with nature, I can feel my soul because I'm part of this."

Participants suggested that this connection to nature was often experienced through relationships with particular places, recalling landscapes that had changed over time, "somewhere they used to go on holiday that has now changed," or "when they were eight, they went to this incredible place and now it's different."

Participants also emphasized that place should be treated as a deliberate narrative choice rather than simply a location, encouraging writers to consider how particular places shape characters, relationships, and audiences' emotional connection to the story. One participant, working as a creative consultant, explained:

> "What is the place that you're putting your story? Why are you putting your story there? How does that impact your characters and the story that you're telling with these characters?"

For this participant, the goal was not to introduce climate as new information, but to draw out experiences audiences already recognized.

Taken together, the document analysis and roundtable participant accounts suggest that climate storytelling strengthens emotional engagement by positioning nature and place as meaningful relationships rather than passive settings. Across both datasets, audiences are invited to connect not simply with landscapes themselves, but with the emotional significance those landscapes hold within characters' lives and stories.

4.2.2 Discussion:

Across both sources of data, stories were consistently described as creating the conditions for audiences to care by fostering emotional connection with characters and their experiences rather than by communicating climate information directly. Rather than emphasizing facts, warnings, or moral appeals, participants repeatedly described storytelling as inviting audiences into emotionally meaningful relationships through which climate-related themes could emerge naturally.

This interpretation aligns closely with narrative persuasion theory, which proposes that stories influence audiences by fostering identification with characters, emotional engagement, and transportation into the narrative world, thereby reducing psychological resistance to persuasive messages (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Kennedy et al., 2011). Rather than evaluating climate information

directly, audiences engage with the emotional experiences of characters, making complex or contentious issues feel personally relevant rather than abstract or off-putting. Participants echoed these mechanisms throughout the industry roundtables and interviews, consistently emphasizing that viewers change not because they receive more information, but because they become emotionally invested in the people and stories presented to them. As one participant observed, audiences only change their minds "when we are touching the hearts of the audience."

The findings also suggest that not all forms of emotional engagement are equally effective. While practitioners consistently emphasized the importance of emotion, they distinguished between emotional experiences that invite audiences into climate stories and those that create distance. Narratives grounded in blame, guilt, shame, or moral judgment were widely understood to provoke resistance, whereas hope, agency, imagination, and meaningful relationships encouraged audiences to remain engaged with difficult realities.

The document analysis encouraged stories in which characters experience climate grief, uncertainty, and moral ambiguity while continuing to navigate meaningful relationships and choices. The participants did not suggest avoiding difficult emotions altogether, rather they argued that audiences respond most strongly when stories acknowledge difficult realities without leaving viewers trapped in despair. This distinction suggests that the effectiveness of climate storytelling depends less on avoiding negative emotions than on creating emotionally authentic experiences that audiences can identify with.

Practitioners emphasized that hope is not the opposite of fear or a call to optimism. One participant was explicit on this point:

> "I'm not saying happy hippie hope... let's be realistic. Things are not good, but let's bring some hope on the table."

For some participants, hope took the specific form of reminding audiences what's worth protecting. As one participant put it, storytelling should return attention to "the real world today, which is still beautiful and rich and biodiverse... there's still a lot to protect," adding that this framing is "more actionable than what can't we do." Read this way, hope is not simply an emotional counterweight to fear, but a shift in orientation, from what audiences have already failed to prevent toward what remains within their reach to protect. Hope therefore becomes closely linked to agency by encouraging audiences to imagine themselves as participants in protection, adaptation, and collective response rather than as passive observers of environmental decline.

Ghosh (2016) argues that the climate crisis is, in part, a crisis of imagination: societies struggle to envision futures meaningfully different from the present. Participants echoed this diagnosis directly: "we have a total lack of imagination. It's been decades. We don't imagine another world." Wapner and Elver (2016) extend this argument, suggesting that imagination is shaped by the stories, cultures, and assumptions that surround us. The findings suggest that participants respond to this challenge by expanding the kinds of worlds, characters, relationships, and futures that mainstream storytelling presents as ordinary and possible. Futures that are worth wanting rather than futures to be feared, consistent with the document analysis findings of this study, in which industry frameworks advocate for "thrutopias" or "messy utopias" grounded in conflict and complexity but oriented toward collective possibility (Futerra, n.d.; Climate Spring, n.d.). One participant described the effect of workshop exercises built around this idea, where writers

left "using our imagination" to picture a future with "joy" and "desire" on "a sustainable planet," while another described well-crafted climate stories as functioning like "vision boards for a sustainable future."

The findings further suggest that nature is understood not primarily as a setting, but as a relationship through which audiences experience emotional connection. Across both datasets, nature and place acquire narrative significance through the meanings they hold for characters, allowing audiences to connect with those relationships emotionally.

The storytelling practices described by participants appear to reduce different forms of distance that can inhibit audience engagement. By helping audiences connect emotionally with characters, stories make climate change feel less distant and more personally relevant (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Kennedy et al., 2011). Hope, agency, and imagination help narrow the gap between concern and meaningful action, while stories grounded in nature and place strengthen audiences' sense of connection to the natural world. Viewed together, these findings suggest that climate storytelling creates emotional connections through which climate becomes personally meaningful and relevant.

4.4 Implicit Integration as Creative Practice

4.4.1 Findings:

A key strategy identified across the analyzed documents is the normalization of sustainable behaviours on screen. This approach is described using terms such as "nudges," "planet placement," and "clandestine pedagogy," all referring to implicit forms of climate integration (Climate Spring, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d.; Futerra, n.d.; Rare Storyteller Toolkit, n.d.). In contrast, explicit integration positions climate-related issues as central to the plot, often

as a primary source of narrative conflict or obstacle (Climate Spring, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d.; Green Storytelling Initiative, n.d.).

These forms of implicit integration foreground actionable, realistic behaviours within the narrative world. They involve weaving sustainable behaviours into set design, background details, and character choices, such as bike riding or carpooling, eating plant rich diets or using reusable water bottles - allowing these actions to appear routine and socially normative within the narrative world (Climate Spring, n.d.; BAFTA albert, n.d.; EcoProd, n.d; Rare Storyteller Toolkit, n.d.; Channel 4, 2025). The frameworks also encourage rethinking dominant markers of success associated with high-carbon lifestyles and excessive consumption, instead depicting alternative values such as community, minimalism, and relational well-being (EcoProd, n.d.; Green Storytelling Initiative, n.d.)

Implicit across these documents is the assumption that social norms and everyday behaviours are shaped through observation, particularly when sustainable practices are performed by characters with whom viewers identify or perceive as aspirational.

Participants described climate integration as occurring along a continuum, from climate-centred storylines to subtle forms of integration embedded in character behaviour, production design, and visual detail. Their discussion focused particularly on implicit strategies that could normalize sustainable practices without interrupting the narrative or drawing attention away from the story.

This involved identifying small elements of an existing script that could be shifted. One participant described looking for "what everyday things you can just change a little bit or tweak" small enough not to register consciously, but cumulative in effect. In practice, this ranged

widely: from passing choices, like a character riding a bike instead of driving, installing solar panels, or shopping locally, to a structural one, like reorienting a story around the strength of a community rather than a single hero.

This approach also extended to swappable details within a scene, an independent sandwich shop in place of a fast-food chain, a character with a smaller wardrobe who isn't constantly changing outfits, small substitutions with no plot function beyond quietly recalibrating what the world looks like on screen. As one participant put it:

> "The more you see it, it shouldn't even consciously register... it becomes the new normal."

One participant described providing writers, directors, designers, and crew members with more than 200 practical prompts and "nudges" that could be incorporated naturally into existing stories to encourage sustainability on screen, emphasizing that these small interventions collectively reshape audience expectations without disrupting narrative flow. A representative sample is reproduced in Appendix E with permission.

Taken together, the document analysis and practitioner accounts position implicit integration not as a diluted form of climate storytelling, but as a deliberate creative practice through which sustainable behaviours, values, and social norms are woven into the fabric of everyday storytelling. Rather than interrupting stories with environmental messages, implicit integration normalizes climate-conscious ways of living by embedding them within the ordinary worlds that audiences encounter on screen.

4.4.2 Discussion:

The findings suggest that the use of implicit integration described across both the document analysis and practitioner accounts represents more than a creative stylistic choice. Read alongside theories of narrative persuasion, implicit integration can be understood as functioning as a strategy for reducing audience resistance by embedding climate, nature, and sustainability within familiar narrative worlds rather than presenting them as explicit environmental messages. In this sense, implicit integration functions not by avoiding climate, but by normalizing it as an ordinary feature of contemporary storytelling.

Narrative persuasion theory suggests that stories are most effective when audiences do not perceive themselves as being persuaded. Rather than inviting counterarguing or psychological reactance, narratives foster identification, transportation, and emotional engagement, reducing audience resistance by encouraging audiences to engage with characters, relationships, and narrative worlds rather than explicit environmental arguments (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010). The findings suggest that implicit integration operates in much the same way. Rather than presenting climate as an issue requiring audiences' attention, it embeds climate, nature, and sustainability within believable narrative worlds where sustainable behaviours appear as ordinary aspects of everyday life.

Practitioner accounts closely mirror the mechanisms described in narrative persuasion theory. Rather than confronting audiences with explicit environmental arguments, implicit integration appears to reduce the conditions under which psychological resistance emerges. Climate, nature, and sustainability are encountered through compelling characters and engaging narrative worlds, allowing audiences to remain immersed in the story rather than shifting into defensive evaluation

of explicit environmental arguments. This interpretation is consistent with research suggesting that identification with characters, parasocial relationships, and narrative transportation increase audience openness to new perspectives while lowering perceived persuasive intent (Brown, 2015; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Kennedy et al., 2011; Moyer-Gusé, 2008).

Beyond the effects of individual stories, the findings also point toward the cumulative influence of repeated implicit representation. By normalizing sustainable behaviours through everyday actions, background details, and production design, practitioners described gradually reshaping audience expectations about what contemporary life looks like on screen. This interpretation is consistent with cultivation theory, which suggests that repeated patterns of media representation influence audiences' perceptions of social reality over time (Gerbner, 2001). Similarly, Gaines' (1999) discussion of mimesis suggests that audiences do not simply observe on-screen behaviour but may come to emulate it, adopting practices and values encountered through narrative. The success of initiatives such as the Harvard Alcohol Project's Designated Driver campaign further illustrates how repeated, implicit representation across mainstream entertainment can contribute to shifts in social norms without relying on overt persuasion.

Read alongside Ghosh's (2016) argument that contemporary storytelling has often failed to represent climate as an ordinary feature of everyday life, these findings suggest that practitioners are doing more than finding subtler ways to communicate climate change. Rather than treating climate as the defining subject of exceptional stories, they are integrating it into the everyday worlds, relationships, and decisions of their characters. Climate, nature, and sustainability therefore become normalized as ordinary features of contemporary life, not because stories are about climate, but because climate becomes part of the worlds those stories already inhabit.

This shift has implications not only for creative practice but also for the ways climate storytelling is studied. Existing content analyses have consistently found that climate change is largely absent from mainstream film and television (Giaccardi et al., 2022; Schneider-Mayerson et al., 2025). The findings of this study do not challenge that conclusion. Rather, they suggest that as climate storytelling develops as a creative practice, the methods used to measure it may also need to evolve. Otherwise, research risks overlooking forms of climate integration that are intentionally implicit rather than explicit.

Existing approaches are designed to identify climate as an explicit topic. Giaccardi et al. (2022), for example, rely on keyword detection, while Schneider-Mayerson et al. (2025) assess whether climate change is recognizably present within a story world. Neither approach is intended to capture the forms of integration most consistently described by practitioners in this study. Should implicit integration become the dominant mode of climate storytelling, these existing approaches are unlikely to capture the full range of climate, nature, and sustainability representations appearing on screen. Future research may therefore need to move beyond keyword-based content analysis toward methods capable of identifying implicit representations embedded within character behaviour, world-building, production design, and narrative practices.

4.5 Institutionalization:

4.5.1 Findings

4.5.1.1 Climate storytelling as an emerging field of practice

Collectively, the findings suggest that climate storytelling is an emerging field of creative practice that has yet to become fully established within the screen industry. Participants

consistently described entering the discipline through personal passion, curiosity, or concern for environmental issues rather than through formal training or established industry pathways. While a growing number of frameworks and resources now exist to support climate storytellers, participants emphasized that at the outset, most relied on instinct, personal conviction, and trial and error for integrating climate, nature, and sustainability into scripted film and television.

Several participants described entering the field with no roadmap or formal training. One participant summarized:

> "It's still very much uncharted territory and we're all making it up as we go."

Another participant explained that they were entirely self-taught:

> "If you want a world where you have the luxury to write in, you need a world that's habitable. And at the time, there was almost nothing regarding storytelling."

This participant began organizing regular discussions with writers, directors of photography, directors, and producers to collectively examine research, share resources, and discuss emerging approaches to climate storytelling. Reflecting on this experience, they remarked:

> "And that was basically my training because there was no training at this time."

A participant who works as a producer, described a similar progression from self-directed learning to developing resources for others. Writers "found it frustrating that existing courses and workshops focused solely on the crisis...and provided no practical kind of experience or discussion for them to actually play out scenarios."

As the producer's understanding of climate storytelling grew through personal research and experience, they developed a framework to support the writers on their own series.

They explained that this effort was driven by a convergence of personal interest, increasing industry expectations, and broadcaster production sustainability initiatives, ultimately recognizing that climate considerations needed to extend "in front of the camera as well as behind the scenes. The producer explained:

> "You can't just say write sustainability or climate crisis. You have to actually give most people a toolbox. And they're still being created."

Participants characterized the field as highly collaborative. Rather than competing for knowledge, they described a culture of openness, shared learning, and collective problem-solving. Several participants reflected on the sense of isolation they initially experienced, followed by the emergence of a supportive community where ideas, research, and creative approaches are shared freely. As one participant explained:

> "For so long we've been in silos... you're passionate about your thing, you think, 'this is huge, this is a deal breaker,' and you're on your own obsessing over it. I think a lot of us have gone through months or even years on our own. Now, when we're like, 'Oh my God, there's several of us,' we're just so happy to meet, talk, and work together."

Participants further described climate storytelling as an inherently interdisciplinary practice. As one participant observed:

> "Unfortunately, climate is an intersectional problem, so you can pretty much find it in every story."

They emphasized that climate change intersects with all screen genres and virtually every aspect of society, requiring storytellers to draw upon knowledge spanning science, politics, economics, health, social justice, and creative practice, and that no individual could reasonably possess expertise across all these fields. Instead, they described collaboration and knowledge-sharing as essential features of climate storytelling practice, enabling practitioners with complementary expertise and knowledge to learn from one another.

One participant, reflecting on working with colleagues from different creative backgrounds, explained:

> "When you have other people to talk about it with, it's much easier... What you can't learn on your own, just make sure you know the people who might have that skill."

Collectively, these accounts portray climate storytelling as an emerging field of practice shaped through shared learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the gradual and ongoing development of collective expertise.

Read alongside the document analysis, these findings suggest that climate storytelling is evolving from an individual interest into a recognizable area of professional practice. While participants described learning through experimentation, peer networks, and self-directed inquiry, the document analysis identified a growing body of frameworks, guides, and practical resources designed to support this work. Together, these findings indicate that climate storytelling is beginning to develop the shared language, frameworks, and professional knowledge characteristic of an emerging field.

4.5.1.2 Climate Storytelling in Current Industry Practice

Participants distinguished between sustainability practices implemented behind the scenes during production and the integration of sustainability into on-screen storytelling. While sustainability practices such as carbon reporting and emissions reduction have become increasingly embedded within production workflows, participants described on-screen sustainability as remaining comparatively informal, dependent on organizational priorities, individual champions, and emerging institutional support.

Participants argued that behind the scenes sustainability initiatives alone were insufficient to realize the screen industry's broader potential to contribute to societal change. As one participant explained in relation to a National broadcaster, although production sustainability was actively promoted, "There's no official mandate" for climate storytelling. Reflecting on the limits of production-focused sustainability, they observed:

> "There's only so much recycling you can do. You can control consumption. You can try and rent electric vehicles... But are you able to actually get the story out there and encourage people to think differently and more positively and act?"

For this participant, the next frontier was not further improvements to production sustainability but embedding sustainability within the stories themselves. However, structures to support on-screen storytelling remain largely absent, leaving creative sustainability to depend on influential individuals and organizational initiatives rather than formal policy.

One participant described this distinction at a National broadcaster, where productions are required to calculate and report their carbon footprint as part of the funding and production

process. However, they noted that no comparable institutional expectations or formalized processes exist for considering climate, nature, and sustainability within on-screen storytelling. Instead, environmental narratives emerge through the influence of individual leaders. As they explained, climate storytelling was "not mandated in any way"; although executives were "very open to it" and encouraging, the participant attributed much of the organization's progress to the influence of a senior leader who is passionate about sustainability and who "weighs in on who gets renewed" and "is a big part of the decision-making team."

Another participant described how a streaming platform had long prioritized behind the scenes production sustainability, particularly reducing the carbon footprint of filming. However, when appointing an onscreen creative sustainability consultant was proposed, the team initially responded that sustainability consultants were already in place. The distinction, however, was that existing consultants focused on production rather than storytelling. As the participant explained:

> "You have consultants on technical facts and on production facts. You have absolutely no consultants regarding storytelling. And this is where everything begins. And this [is] the mindset that we have to start changing."

Participants emphasized that depending on individual champions within organizations made climate storytelling vulnerable to staff turnover and changing organizational priorities. As one participant observed, broadcaster priorities "change every six months," driven by mergers, new platforms, and rapidly shifting audience demands, while creative development often takes years. Although broadcasters were described as personally concerned about climate change,

participants suggested that changes in personnel and strategic priorities could quickly alter the level of organizational support for climate storytelling.

Participants also described the need to advocate for climate storytelling within organizations. Where environmental narratives were not already understood or prioritized, practitioners found themselves adapting how they framed projects when pitching commissioners, broadcasters, and creative executives. One participant described learning "how to speak with creative leads and massive execs" and how to make explicit environmental stories "attractive and sexy," observing that "the label, the way you sell these extremely important matters, it's half of the thing." Although participants expressed frustration that environmental stories required additional justification, they recognized that strategic framing was often necessary to gain institutional support.

Participants also described climate, nature, and sustainability storytelling as being constrained by the absence of clear institutional leadership and dedicated resources. Although support for climate storytelling was generally viewed as growing, participants emphasized that responsibility for advancing this work remained unclear. Writers, producers, broadcasters, and commissioners were each described as recognizing its importance, yet no single group was perceived as responsible for leading or funding its implementation. One participant reflected that climate storytelling often stalled because "it's not really... a priority," adding that "there's the question of who's paying for it." Participants also noted that funding decisions could be influenced by the wider political climate. Reflecting on the United States in 2026, one participant explained that people were "afraid of losing their jobs," adding that "you don't want to say you're working with climate change... because nobody's giving you any money or funding..." This suggested that, in

some contexts, political conditions shaped not only institutional priorities but also the willingness of funders to support explicitly climate-focused work. Another observed that responsibility was frequently displaced across the industry, recalling discussions in which "the producers [said] the broadcasters don't want any climate stories, the broadcasters [said] they don't get any good stories from writers... and everybody was kind of blaming everybody."

Participants also noted that organizations with dedicated resources were better positioned to integrate sustainability into storytelling. Discussing a large streaming platform, one participant explained that "what's great about it is that there's money," allowing the company to make the process "very frictionless." By contrast, many broadcasters lacked the resources to employ script consultants or develop creative sustainability expertise, limiting their capacity to support this work consistently.

Several participants suggested that institutional interest had begun to outpace institutional capacity. Broadcasters were described as increasingly aware of both the influence of popular culture and changing audience expectations, with one participant observing that they were "quite hungry for the work." However, participants also emphasized that climate storytelling remained "completely new" and was "not part of anybody's workflow." Until creative sustainability becomes embedded in routine institutional practice, progress will continue to depend on individual champions, organizational priorities, and dedicated resources.

4.5.1.3 Creative Decisions and Production Sustainability

Although climate storytelling and production sustainability are often treated as separate initiatives, the findings suggest they share a common point of origin: development. It is during

ideation and scriptwriting that decisions are made which shape both the cultural narratives presented on screen and many of the production practices required to realize them.

While only identified in one of the analyzed documents, a distinct insight relates to the role of storytelling decisions in shaping the environmental footprint of production, with an emphasis on choices made at the development and scriptwriting stages (EcoProd, n.d.).

Within this document, writing is positioned as a key intervention point, where decisions made at the script level function as instructions for production, influencing what is built, transported, powered, and resourced (EcoProd, n.d.).

The EcoProd (n.d.) framework suggests approaching these considerations not as limitations, but as creative constraints that can shape storytelling choices. Specific areas of focus include the number of locations, the use of daylight versus nighttime settings, the scale and spectacle of scenes, and the design of sets, props, and costumes (EcoProd, n.d.).

Implicit across this document is the assumption that creative decisions made early in the storytelling process can significantly influence a production's environmental footprint, positioning writers and creators as a driving force in reducing emissions through narrative design. One participant similarly emphasized the importance of development, observing that "this is where everything begins" and arguing that "this is the mindset that we have to start changing."

4.5.2 Discussion

The findings discussed suggest that practitioners in this study have independently developed a set of craft principles for integrating climate into mainstream storytelling - principles that align

closely with, and in some cases inform the recommendations found across the industry frameworks analyzed in this study. Yet participants consistently described the application of these principles as inconsistent, dependent on individual initiative rather than institutional practice. This finding reflects Brulle and Norgaard's (2019) argument that responding to climate change requires changes not only in individual behaviour, but also in the institutions and systems that shape everyday practice. In the screen industry, the creative knowledge and practical frameworks appear to be developing more quickly than the organizational structures needed to support them consistently.

Participants described a clear difference between how the industry has approached sustainable production and sustainable storytelling. Practices such as carbon reporting, emissions tracking, and sustainable production have become part of routine workflows and, in some cases, mandatory requirements. Climate storytelling, by contrast, remains largely voluntary. As one participant observed, although their organization actively promotes sustainable production, "there's no official mandate" for sustainability within the stories themselves. This suggests that the screen industry has been far more successful at embedding sustainability into production processes than into creative practice. Where sustainability can be measured and standardized, it has become part of routine practice. Where it depends on creative judgment, it continues to rely largely on individual initiative.

In the absence of formal mandates, participants described progress as relying heavily on individual champions whose personal commitment to sustainability shaped organizational priorities in ways that formal policies had not. One participant attributed much of their organization's progress to a senior leader who "weighs in on who gets renewed" and "is a big part

of the decision-making team," rather than to any institutionalized requirement. Participants pointed to a practical challenge. Broadcaster priorities can "change every six months" because of leadership changes, mergers, and shifting platforms, while developing a film or television project often takes years. When climate storytelling depends on individual champions instead of organizational support, that momentum can disappear long before a project reaches the screen. Participants further described responsibility for climate storytelling as shared but not clearly assigned. Writers, producers, broadcasters, and commissioners were all seen as recognizing its importance, yet no single group was responsible for leading or resourcing the work. As one participant recalled, "producers [said] the broadcasters don't want any climate stories, the broadcasters [said] they don't get any good stories from writers... everybody was kind of blaming everybody." In this case, because no one group clearly owns responsibility for climate storytelling, progress continues to depend on individual initiative rather than becoming part of routine industry practice.

This institutional lag was further complicated by political conditions external to the industry itself. Participants described funding decisions as increasingly shaped by political risk, particularly within the United States, where one participant noted that practitioners were reluctant to describe their work as climate-related for fear that "nobody's giving you any money or funding" as a result. This extends Moser and Dilling's (2011) description of the "perfect storm" complicating climate communication: political polarization was described by participants not only as a barrier to audience reception, but also as something that influences whether climate stories receive support.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the persistent gap between the creative potential of climate storytelling and its inconsistent use in practice is not primarily a lack of creative knowledge or skill. Participants demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of how to integrate climate into mainstream stories, often describing approaches that closely aligned with both academic theory and industry guidance. Instead, the findings point to an institutional gap: the absence of formal support, reliance on individual champions, unclear organizational responsibility, and funding decisions shaped by political risk. Addressing this gap will likely require changes to organizational structures and industry practices alongside continued investment in creative development and training.

While only one of the analyzed documents explicitly addressed the relationship between story development and production sustainability, the EcoProd framework (n.d.) offers a distinct way of conceptualizing sustainability within the screen industry. Rather than treating sustainability as something that begins once production is underway, it locates sustainability during ideation and scriptwriting, where creative decisions become production requirements. One participant similarly emphasized the importance of development, observing that "this is where everything begins" and arguing that "this is the mindset that we have to start changing."

Viewed through this lens, a writer who scripts a car chase is not only introducing a dramatic event but also committing the production to stunt vehicles, road closures, additional crew, and increased fuel use. Similarly, a script that moves between multiple locations generates transportation, accommodation, and logistical demands, while scenes written for nighttime require energy-intensive lighting and extended production hours. Even decisions about constructing elaborate sets or designing bespoke costumes originate as creative choices on the

page before becoming production activities. In this sense, the screenplay does more than tell a story. It establishes many of the conditions that ultimately determine a production's environmental footprint.

While participants consistently emphasized the importance of development as the place where storytelling begins, they also portrayed an industry in which sustainability has become institutionalized primarily within production. Carbon accounting, emissions reporting, and sustainable production practices were described as increasingly routine, while the creative decisions that generate many of those production demands remained largely outside formal sustainability processes. Read alongside the EcoProd framework, these findings suggest that the screen industry's sustainability efforts remain concentrated in production, even though many of the decisions that shape a production's environmental impact originate during development.

The EcoProd framework therefore extends the concept of sustainability beyond how productions are made to include the creative decisions that determine what productions require. The earlier the decision, the greater the leverage. A sustainability manager can reduce emissions from a ten-location shoot, but a writer could have written four locations instead of ten. A production can source an electric generator for a night shoot, but a writer could have written the scene during daylight. These examples illustrate that sustainability is not only a production consideration but also a creative one, with opportunities for environmental impact reduction beginning long before cameras roll.

The EcoProd framework suggests that the industry's understanding of sustainability itself may need to shift upstream into development. If development establishes both the cultural narratives presented on screen and many of the production practices required to realize them, sustainability

cannot be understood solely as a production concern. It is also a development concern. The findings therefore suggest that the next challenge is creating the institutional conditions that allow climate storytelling to become an ordinary part of screen storytelling practice.

4.6 Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. Participants were recruited through convenience and snowball sampling, drawing on professional networks, industry affiliations, and referrals. While this approach was appropriate for accessing practitioners with direct experience in climate storytelling, it likely resulted in a sample more familiar with, and engaged in, this work than the screen industry as a whole. As a result, the findings may not fully reflect the perspectives of practitioners who are less engaged with, or more skeptical of, climate storytelling.

The study's sample of 15 participants across five roundtables and two individual interviews is consistent with qualitative research designed to generate rich, in-depth insights, but it does not support statistical generalization across the wider screen industry. Similarly, the document analysis was limited to 20 publicly available or provided industry resources, primarily from North American, UK, and European contexts. The findings may therefore not reflect climate storytelling practices, frameworks, or challenges in other regions or media industries.

Finally, this study focused on practitioner perspectives during the development and scriptwriting stages of production. It did not examine audience responses directly. As a result, conclusions regarding the comparative persuasive potential of implicit and explicit climate storytelling, are

based on participants' professional experience interpreted alongside narrative persuasion theory, rather than on direct audience testing.

These limitations also point to several areas for further inquiry. While this study explored practitioners' perspectives, future research could examine how audiences respond to implicit and explicit forms of climate storytelling to determine whether the persuasive advantages described by participants are reflected in the audiences' experience. Finally, research examining commissioning, development, and production processes could explore how climate storytelling becomes embedded within organizational practice, addressing the institutional barriers identified in this study.

5. Conclusion:

Taken together, the findings suggest that climate storytelling succeeds not by making climate more visible, but by making it more ordinary. Across the practitioner roundtables and document analysis, climate was rarely positioned as the defining subject of stories. Instead, practitioners consistently described approaching climate as a creative lens through which character, conflict, world-building, and narrative could be developed, weaving climate, nature, and sustainability into the existing worlds, relationships, conflicts, and everyday decisions that audiences already recognize. Rather than asking audiences to enter a separate genre of "climate stories," effective climate storytelling normalizes climate as an ordinary condition of contemporary life.

Viewed collectively, the findings reveal a common underlying mechanism. Rather than attempting to persuade audiences through greater volumes of climate information or more explicit climate narratives, practitioners repeatedly described approaches that reduce barriers to engagement. Emotional connection reduces psychological distance; hope and agency reduce feelings of helplessness; relationships with place and nature reduce perceived separation between

people and the environment; and integrating climate, nature, and sustainability into the existing worlds, relationships, and everyday decisions of characters reduces audience resistance to environmental messaging. Climate storytelling therefore functions less by increasing the visibility of climate than by creating the conditions under which audiences become willing to engage with it.

The findings also suggest that the principal challenge facing climate storytelling is no longer primarily creative. Participants demonstrated remarkable consistency regarding the narrative practices they considered effective, while the document analysis revealed convergence across industry guidance. The remaining challenge lies in embedding these practices within the routines, structures, and development processes of the screen industry so that they become ordinary features of storytelling practice rather than the work of individual institutional champions.

Amitav Ghosh (2016) argues that contemporary storytelling has failed to represent climate change as an ordinary feature of everyday life, instead relegating it to exceptional narratives that fall outside the conventions of mainstream fiction. This study suggests that practitioners are actively responding to that challenge. Rather than advocating for more stories *about* climate change, the practitioners in this study described approaches that integrate climate, nature, and sustainability into the existing emotional worlds, relationships, and everyday decisions that already define contemporary storytelling. In doing so, they are not creating a new genre of climate stories. They are making climate an ordinary feature of the stories audiences are already watching.

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Appendix A: Documents Included in the Document Analysis

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Appendix B: Industry Roundtable Guide

Scripted Intro:

Welcome:

Hello everyone and thank you for joining me. My name is Anne Francis, and I'll be your facilitator with the help of (blank). Before we begin, a quick tech check, can everyone hear me ok?

If you are comfortable, please feel free to keep your cameras on, I find it helpful for feeling connected, but, no pressure either way. Also, please mute yourself when you're not speaking to reduce the bg noise. You can choose how you'd like to be identified in this group. If you prefer not to use your real name, you're welcome to change your Zoom display name to a pseudonym at any time. To do this, hover over your video window (or your name if your camera is off), click the three dots (…) in the corner, select "Rename", type the name you'd like to use, and click "OK". You can also do this from the Participants panel by clicking "More" next to your name and selecting "Rename".

Ok, before we get started, I'd like to take a minute to honour and acknowledge the First Peoples and the land that myself and (blank) work (study), play and live on. We're located in Toronto, which is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

This session is part of my graduate research on how themes of sustainability, nature, and climate can be woven meaningfully into scripted film and TV - even (and maybe especially) in stories

that aren't directly about the environment. The findings from this research will contribute to a major research paper for my master's degree in environmental studies at York University. The results may also be presented in academic or professional contexts, such as class presentations, conferences, or written publications.

In this focus group, I'm interested in surfacing the insights, instincts, and creative processes you use to bring these themes into your work and the barriers you face, both institutionally and creatively. I'm here to listen and learn from you.

The session will run for about 90 minutes. It's meant to be casual and conversational - there are no right or wrong answers and I'm not looking for consensus. I'm most interested in your perspective, experience, and instincts as storytellers. I have a series of open-ended questions prepared to guide us through the session, but we can follow the conversation wherever it takes us.

I want to assure you that everything you share will be treated confidentially. I may use quotes in my research outputs, but they'll be anonymized - your name or any identifying details won't be linked to anything you say unless you give explicit permission. I also want to remind you that your participation is entirely voluntary, you're free to skip any questions or step away at any time.

With your consent, I'll be recording this session for research purposes. It will help with the transcription and analysis that I'll be conducting later in the process. A show of hands if I have your consent.

A couple of Zoom friendly reminders:

- Please try to speak one at a time (Zoom can get noise cancelly). Use the chat if you'd like to comment or respond without interrupting.
- As I said earlier, please stay muted unless you are speaking.
- And finally, a reminder to everyone, everything shared here should stay in this group

Introduction:

To get us started, let's go around and share:

- Your name (or your pseudonym if you'd prefer)
- Where you are joining from
- And a sentence or two about the kind of storytelling you're passionate about or currently working on.

Thank you for sharing. Let's get into it:

Discussion Starter Question:

I'm wondering if each of you share a standout example (not your own) of climate or nature storytelling on screen that resonated with you? The environmental themes could be either implicit or explicit. What, in your opinion did it get right?

Questions:

Creative Process

1. In terms of your own work, can you share an example of where you have included nature or climate themes? For each of you, how did your ideas emerge in your story?

   Probes: Was it intentional, or more background texture?"

   Did the idea come from you, the network, or somewhere else?

2. Thinking beyond specific examples, what strategies or creative techniques do you return to when integrating environmental themes?

   Probes: Do you tend to build these themes in through character, setting, or story arc?

   Do you also explore these themes visually - through landscapes, props, or production design?

Authenticity & Integration

3. What do you think helps climate, nature and sustainability themes feel authentic and deeply integrated rather than obvious, heavy-handed or didactic even?

   Probes: Does it feel more natural in certain characters?

   What helps it feel like part of the world, not just added on?

4. Are there certain genres or formats where you feel these themes are harder (or easier) to include?

   Probes: Have you ever felt a story space was "off-limits" for nature or climate themes?

   Are there any genres you think are underused for this kind of storytelling?

5. Setting genre aside, are there story spaces or subject matter that you think might be considered too sensitive or controversial for audiences, networks, or producers?

   Probes: Can you share an example where you or someone you know pulled back on a theme because it felt too risky?

   Can you explain the risk? Funding, decision makers, audience?

Support and Feedback

6. Have you received any feedback from executives, networks, or audiences that influenced how you approach integrating climate, nature, or sustainability themes in your work?

   Probes: Was the feedback encouraging, critical, or surprising in any way?

   Did it shift your strategy or give you confidence to go further (or pull back)?

   Have you found constraints around budget or creative freedom?

7. What would support you personally to take more action and what are the roadblocks?

Probes: Are the roadblocks more about industry factors (like funding, or network direction) or creative ones (like tone, audience fit, or personal bandwidth)?

Can you think of a specific moment when you wanted to go further with environmental themes but didn't? What would have made it possible?

8. Have you ever used anything like the Good Energy Playbook, Albert's Climate Content Guide, or other story-based resources designed to support climate storytelling?

Probes: Do these kinds of tools interest you - or do you tend to rely on your own instincts?

What would make them more accessible or useful?

Vision + Big Picture

9. What do you see as systemic or industry wide obstacles to having more environmental themes on screen and what are the solutions? What would you like to see change?

Probes: Do you think the obstacles are structural (like funding models, commissioning priorities), cultural (as in audience expectations), or creative (like fitting themes into story)?

Can you share a specific example of where you've encountered an obstacle?

What kinds of changes, either at the network, production, or storytelling level, would help overcome these barriers?

Wrap up:

10. Is there anything I haven't asked that you'd like to share?"

Sign off:

This has been truly informative, thank you. I want to summarize a few key points that I'm taking away from today: (fill in)

Thank you so much for sharing your time, creative insight, and expertise with me today. Your perspectives are invaluable to my research, and I'm truly grateful for your contributions.
Just a reminder: everything you've shared today will remain confidential and anonymized. If you'd like to follow up or withdraw any comments later, please let me know.

One of the intended outcomes of this research is the creation of a generative storytelling tool, both a framework and a set of storytelling prompts, designed to help creatives explore how nature, sustainability and climate themes might show up in their work, either implicitly or explicitly. I recognize that you're already working at a high level, but since you're part of the conversation shaping this, I'd be happy to share it with you once it's ready, in case it's of interest or useful to you.

General Probes

For individuals:

Could you please tell me more about…

I'm not quite sure I understood …Could you explain or elaborate?

Could you give me some examples?

Could you explain your thinking on that?

For the group:

Does anyone else agree/have a similar experience?

Does anyone else disagree/have a different experience?

Does anyone else have anything to add to that?

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Scripted Intro:

Thanks so much for making time to speak with me today. I'm really looking forward to hearing your perspective on how nature, sustainability, and climate themes can show up meaningfully in scripted film and television - especially in stories that aren't explicitly about the environment. I do have a few areas I'd love to explore with you today, but feel free to take the conversation wherever it makes sense from your perspective.

(If virtual: Before we begin, a quick tech check, is our audio ok for you?)

I want to assure you that everything you share will be treated confidentially. I may use quotes in my research outputs, but they'll be anonymized - your name or any identifying details won't be linked to anything you say unless you give explicit permission. I also want to remind you that your participation is entirely voluntary, you're free to skip any questions that you don't want to answer.

With your consent, I'll be recording this session for research purposes. It will help with the transcription and analysis that I'll be conducting later in the process.

As you are aware, I'm interviewing as part of my graduate research on how themes of sustainability, nature, and climate can be woven meaningfully into scripted film and TV – even (and maybe especially) in stories that aren't directly about the environment. The findings from this research will contribute to a major research paper for my master's degree in environmental studies at York University. The results may also be presented in academic or professional contexts, such as class presentations, conferences, or written publications.

For the purposes of this interview, I'm interested in surfacing the insights, instincts, and creative processes you use to bring these themes into your work and the barriers you face, both institutionally and creatively.

Questions

Discussion Starter Question:

Could you share a standout example (not your own) of climate or nature storytelling on screen that resonated with you? The environmental themes could be either implicit or explicit. What, in your opinion did it get right?

Creative Process

1. In terms of your own work, can you share an example of where you have included nature, sustainability or climate themes? And how did your ideas emerge in your story?

   Follow up Qs:

   - *Was the inclusion intentional, or more background texture?"*
   - *Did the idea come from you, the network, or somewhere else?*

2. Thinking beyond specific examples, what strategies or creative techniques do you return to when integrating environmental themes?

   Follow up Qs:

   - *Do you tend to build these themes through character, setting, or story arc?*

- *Do you also explore these themes visually - through landscapes, props, or production design?*

Authenticity & Integration

3. What do you think helps climate, nature and sustainability themes feel authentic and deeply integrated rather than obvious, heavy-handed or didactic even?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Does it feel more natural in certain characters?
   - What helps it feel like part of the world, not just added on?

4. Are there certain genres or formats where you feel these themes are harder (or easier) to include?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Have you ever felt a story space was “off-limits” for nature or climate themes?
   - Are there any genres you think are underused for this kind of storytelling?

5. Setting genre aside, are there story spaces or subject matter that you think might be considered too sensitive or controversial for audiences, networks, or producers?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Can you share an example where you or someone you know pulled back on a theme because it felt too risky?

- Can you explain the risk? Funding, decision makers, audience?

Support & Feedback

6. Have you received any feedback from executives, networks, or audiences that influenced how you approach integrating climate, nature, or sustainability themes in your work?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Was the feedback encouraging, critical, or surprising in any way?
   - Did it shift your strategy or give you confidence to go further (or pull back)?
   - Have you ever found there to be constraints around budget or creative freedom?

7. What would support you personally to take more action and what are the roadblocks?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Are the roadblocks more about industry factors (like funding, or network direction) or creative ones (like tone, audience fit, or personal bandwidth)?
   - Can you think of a specific moment when you wanted to go further with environmental themes but didn't? What would have made it possible?

8. Have you ever used anything like the Good Energy Playbook, Albert's Climate Content Guide, or other story-based resources designed to support climate storytelling?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Do these kinds of tools interest you - or do you tend to rely on your own instincts?

- What would make them more accessible or useful?

Vision + Big-Picture

9. What do you see as systemic or industry wide obstacles to having more environmental themes on screen and what are the solutions? What would you like to see change?

   Follow up Qs:

   - Do you think the obstacles are structural (like funding models, commissioning priorities), cultural (as in audience expectations), or creative (like fitting themes into story)?
   - Can you share a specific example of where you've encountered an obstacle?

Wrap-Up

10. Thank you for being so generous with your time, creative insight and expertise. Your perspective is invaluable to my research. Is there anything you feel I've missed, or that you want to add?

Just a reminder: everything you've shared today will remain confidential and anonymized. If you'd like to follow up or withdraw any comments later, please let me know.

One of the intended outcomes of this research is the creation of a generative storytelling tool, both a framework and a set of storytelling prompts, designed to help creatives explore how nature, sustainability and climate themes might show up in their work, either implicitly or explicitly. I recognize that you're already working at a high level, but since you're part of the conversation shaping this, I'd be happy to share it with you once it's ready, in case it's of interest or useful to you.

Appendix D: Participant Characteristics

Participant Code	Primary Role	Sector	Country	Data Source
CR1 - P1	Executive Producer	YouTube/TV	Canada	Roundtable
CR1 - P2	Producer	Film/TV	US	Roundtable
CR1 - P3	Writer	Film & Television	Canada	Roundtable
CR1 - P4	Producer	YouTube/TV	Canada	Roundtable
CR1 - P5	Writer	Television	Canada	Roundtable
CR2 – P1	Executive Producer	Television	Canada	Roundtable
CR2 – P2	Writer	Film/TV	Canada	Roundtable
CR3 – P1	Writer	Film	Spain	Roundtable
CR3 – P2	Story consultant	Film/TV	Portugal	Roundtable
CR3 – P3	Script Editor/Educator	Film/TV	Canada	Roundtable
CR4 – P1	Script Consultant	Film/TV	SA	Roundtable
CR4 – P2	Script Editor/Educator	Film/TV	Germany	Roundtable
CR4 – P3	Writer	Film/TV.	UK	Roundtable
I1 – P1	Story Consultant	Film/TV	Switzerland	Interview
I2 – P1	Writer/educator	Film/TV	France	Interview

Appendix E. Sustainability Storytelling Prompts Shared by a Participating Producer

22 Minutes Season 33

Sustainability Ideas, Nudges and Practices

People want to find ways to deal with the climate crisis and 22 Minutes can be effective in helping our audience find those methods as well as raising climate consciousness and encouraging people to act on behalf of the planet. By creating content that does things like making climate action normal or confronting the paradigm that has created this crisis, 22 Minutes can address the biggest challenge everyone on the planet is facing.

These suggestions are not intended to necessarily be the central focus or a main plot point of a sketch but instead could be an activity that is taking place in the background or a "random" action by performers or simply something on the set. Or a sustainability measure might be represented in a way rather than directly actioned. For example, changing filters in pretty much any piece of equipment (from heat pumps to vacuums) makes that equipment more energy efficient and likely extends its life span. This can be represented by someone buying the filter in a hardware store or mentioning they need to do it rather than showing it actually happening.

Perhaps this list simply helps to unlock some new ideas or encourages one to think more about sustainability and find ways to naturally incorporate it in production.

If you do end up taking some inspiration from them to develop a storyline, dress a set or make a more sustainable choice in your work, all the better.

ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Going Green

This is about exploring the natural world, as well as activities that help protect and conserve it. It's also about bringing nature indoors to where we live and work.

• Planting seeds, gardening and tree planting

• Filling a planter and watering plants – use a sustainable watering can, use water from a rain barrel or rain collection system

• Use of a grey water system

• Birdwatching

• Mindful stargazing

• Nature photography

• Foraging – picking wild berries, mushrooms, greens and other edible plants

• Community, beach or highway clean-up

• Children playing outside

• Nature walks and forest bathing

• Talking about buying eco-conscious brands, saving money, supporting local businesses and farmers, eating fresher food and other sustainable topics

• Plogging – picking up garbage as you jog

• Returning medication to the pharmacy rather than flushing down the toilet

• Camping with sustainable gear

• Human powered recreation – paddling, snowshoeing, swimming, biking, climbing, hiking, skating, surfing, skateboarding

• Practicing sustainable tourism

• Building a snowman and playing in the snow

Energy

Energy includes electricity as well as fuels – renewable energy, fossil fuels, nuclear – along with technology and ways to limit energy use.

• Charging an electric / hybrid vehicle

• Using solar powered devices – connecting or disconnecting a device from a solar powered charging station and power banks, solar lanterns, solar-powered flashlight, outdoor lighting, etc.

• Hanging clothes to dry – indoors on racks or outside on a clothesline

• Using a non-electric scooter or a skateboard

• Unplug electrical devices to reduce phantom power

• Recharge batteries

• Check the air in vehicle tires

• Replace filters to ensure efficient performance in a multitude of items and equipment: heat pumps, air conditioners, vacuums, microwaves, range hoods, etc.

• Improving efficiency in home with insulation and preventing air leaks

• Using smart products that promote energy efficiency

• Show lights being turned off

• Turning on motion-activated lighting

• Unplug your charger when you unplug your phone

• Tripchaining – run multiple errands in one trip

• Hybrid meetings

• Buy carbon offsets, especially if traveling by air

• Take the stairs rather than the elevator

Consumption, Waste and the Circular Economy

These activities reflect ways to limit consumption and the waste that comes with overconsumption, as well as participating in the circular economy (an economic system designed

to keep products, materials, and resources in use for as long as possible, minimizing waste through practices like repair, reuse, and recycling – think access rather than ownership).

• Thrifting or participating in swap meets

• Replacing, repairing, refurbishing and maintaining items – sewing and mending, small appliance repair, fixing leaky toilets or dripping taps, repairing a bike, replacing a showerhead and faucets with low flow model, repainting and reclaiming furniture, etc.

• Rent – a costume or special occasion wardrobe (tuxes and dresses both) or a bike or a hybrid car or power tools or party supplies or recreational gear / sports equipment or anything else you can rent!

• Buying products made from recycled materials – paper, clothing, footwear, furniture, garden supplies, etc. - and that is labeled as such

• Donating items for re-sale and reuse

• Putting compost or recycling in a bin

• Buy products in paper packaging instead of plastic

• Making eco-friendly cleaning products

• Making coffee at home instead of buying from a coffee shop

• Use a dishwasher instead of handwashing – just make sure it's full and running during off-peak hours

• Motion activated water faucets

• Turning off the water when brushing your teeth or washing your face

• Borrowing from the library

• Borrowing items from a friend or neighbour – clothes, home goods, tools

• Owning a capsule wardrobe

• Refill products to reduce packaging

• Upcycling

• Antiquing

• Declining single use cutlery

• Bringing reusable containers for take-out food

• Sweeping rather than washing sidewalks or similar

• Making and giving a homemade gift

• Giving people experiences, not things

• Shaving with a safety razor (replaceable blades)

• Baking pet treats

• Shopping online marketplaces for secondhand goods

Food

How to be more sustainable in buying and consuming food

• Preparing / ordering / eating a vegetarian or vegan meal

• Making a grocery list and planning your shopping to limit food waste

• Properly storing food so it lasts longer

• Buying bulk produce and other grocery items

• Shopping with reusable containers

• Buying loose fruit and vegetables rather than packaged - bring reusable bags to carry the items

• Practicing food preservation like canning, freezing, pickling or fermenting

• Growing herbs

• Grocery store donating leftover produce

• Putting leftovers in the fridge

SUSTAINABLE LOCATIONS

Green the 22 Minutes' worlds by visiting nature or by bringing nature indoors. It's also about places that practice smart energy, conservation and respect for the environment. Other locations are more practical and reflect sustainable choices like public transportation stops or shopping local or for secondhand goods.

Remember – for some exteriors, these can be establishing shots that are purchased as still images or footage.

• Highlight natural settings – woods, fields and forests, beaches, lakes and ocean, mountains, public parks, trails and green spaces, gardens – backyard, community and pollinator

• Show off some wildlife – both the flora and the fauna

• Picnic in a park

• Shop the organic section, fruit and vegetable area and identified "local produce" displays in the supermarket

• Visit the farmer's market

• House or business with solar panels or other renewable power sources

• House with some biophilic design

• Building with rain collection system

• Have plants in homes, shops and offices

• Secondhand and consignment clothing stores

• Secondhand home goods store

• Public transportation - bus stops and ferry terminals, cycling and walking paths

• Carpools, ride shares

• Repair shop for household items

• Flea markets, yard sales and swaps

• Lawn converted to no-mow

• Property with native plants

• Property with xeriscaping (drought resistant plants)

• Solar powered lights

• Natural light – drapes open on windows, skylights, etc. instead of electric lighting

• Open windows instead of A/C

• Wind turbines, windmills and hydropower in the background

SUSTAINABLE ITEMS

Put them on the screen, please! This is all about dressing the studio sets as well as upping the green factor on location. These can often simply be in the BG or could play a more relevant role in the story. The list below is a mishmash and there are a lot more objects that can be added.

• Stainless steel compost bin (rather than plastic)

• Recycling bins

• Reusable water bottles and coffee cups

• Reusable shopping bags including ones for fruit and vegetable produce

• Reusable containers

• Signage that encourages sustainable behaviour – recycle, repair, buy local, walk/cycle/public transit, no littering, stop ocean pollution, protect biodiversity, educational posters, promote seasonal eating, limits lawn cutting to feed the bees, fair trade and a million other signs or posters that can be posted on some sets such as offices, businesses, public spaces, etc.

• Backyard bee hives

• Rain barrels

• Birdbaths and wildlife ponds

• Programmable thermostat

• Heat pump

• Leftover materials from projects or sales (fabric remnants, stone remnants, reclaimed wood)

• Pre-loved fashion items

• EVs and e-bikes

• Bar soap instead of liquid soap in a bottle

• Shampoo bars instead of bottled

• Washable cloths instead of paper towels

• Cloth napkins instead of paper

• Reusable make-up remover pads

• Cloth diapers

• Wearing clothing and accessories with green messaging

• “No Junk Mail” sign on mailbox

• “Donation” box in home or office

• Pressure cooker sitting on a kitchen counter

• Sewing kit

• LED lightbulbs

• Eco friendly trash cans

• Plants

• Washable metal straws

• Induction cook top

• Stainless steel, glass or ceramic pans, pots and baking sheets

• Wood, metal, bamboo cooking utensils

• Dryer balls

• Organic shower scrubs

• Shelf or cupboard with baking soda, vinegar, lemons, Borax, castile soap as natural cleaning ingredients

• Beeswax food wraps

• Natural brushes for dishes instead of sponges

• String mop

• Pollinator lawn sign

• Rechargeable batteries

• Eco-friendly hairbrushes - wooden or bamboo

• Menstrual cup

• Battery operated shop and garden tools rather than gas-powered

• Mineral sunscreen

• Dry erase board in office

• E-waste bin

• Little free library

• Reusable straws and cutlery

• Sustainable flooring

• Dry erase board

• Reusable food storage bags and containers and waxed cloth wraps

• Swedish dish cloths

• Eco-friendly linens (bath, bedroom, kitchen, windows)

• Energy efficient power strips / bars

• Dishwashing soap bar and brush

• Stainless steel clothes pins

• Reusable baking mats

• Shave soap and brush

• Coir brushes

• Reusable ice / heat pack

• Tea infuser rather than bags

• Metal coffee filters

• Reusable floor wipes, lint rollers, cleaning cloths, baskets, lunch bags, muffin molds, popcorn popper / bucket, ice cubes,

• Canning jars

• Reusable party decorations

• Worm compost tower

Things to Keep in Mind

• _Limit plastics of all kinds

• _Focus on clean, renewable energy