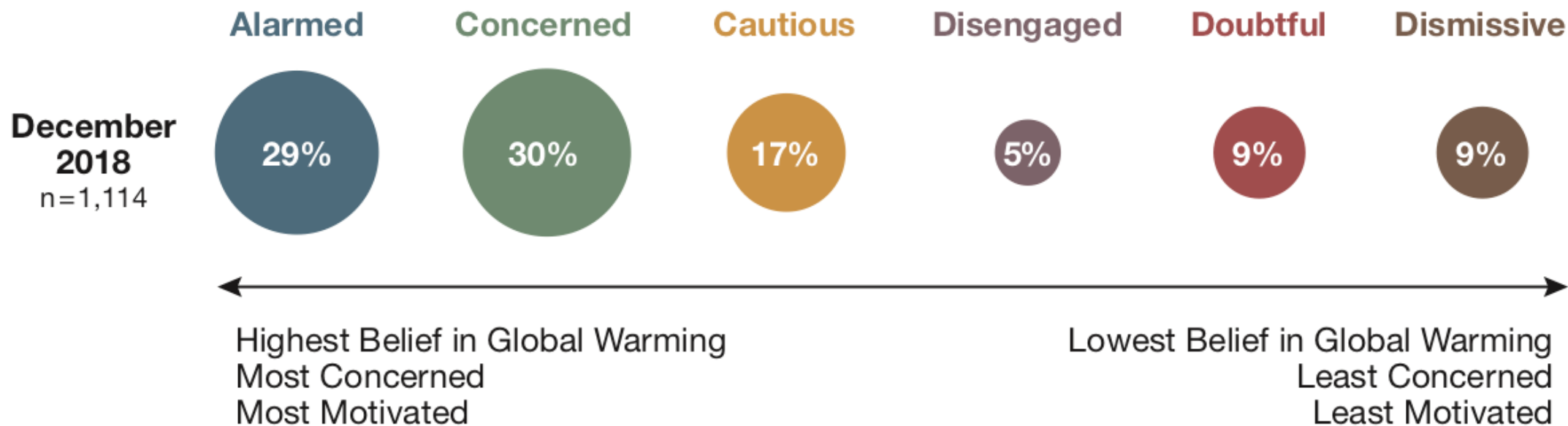# Climate Change Communications

MVP Vendor Training

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Know Your Audience As Best You Can
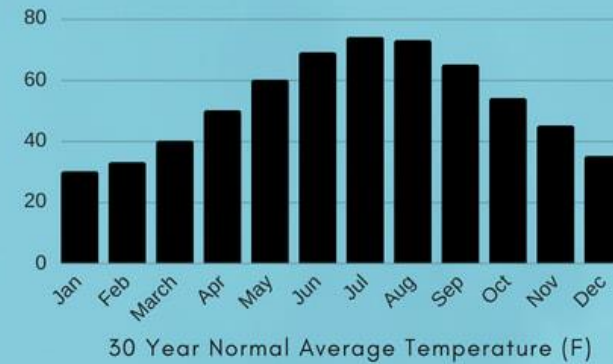
Core Concept: Weather vs. Climate

How Does Climate Change Work?
The heat-trapping blanket metaphor

- The atmosphere is like a blanket that surrounds the earth.

- When we burn fossil fuels like coal and oil for energy, we add too much carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, which is like making the blanket thicker.

- The blanket has become too thick. It's trapping in too much heat, and the planet is warming up too fast.

Isn't Carbon Dioxide Normal?
A metaphor for anthropogenic carbon dioxide

Explanatory Metaphor

Regular and Rampant CO₂

A metaphor for anthropogenic carbon dioxide

- Plants grow by using the regular carbon dioxide that animals exhale, and so some CO2 is part of normal life processes.

- But we are also adding carbon dioxide to the air when we burn oil, coal, and natural gas.

- We can call this **"Rampant CO2"** because there's **too much** of it.

- Rampant carbon dioxide builds up in the atmosphere and ocean where it **causes problems** for the **earth's climate and ecosystems**.

Observed Change: Temperature
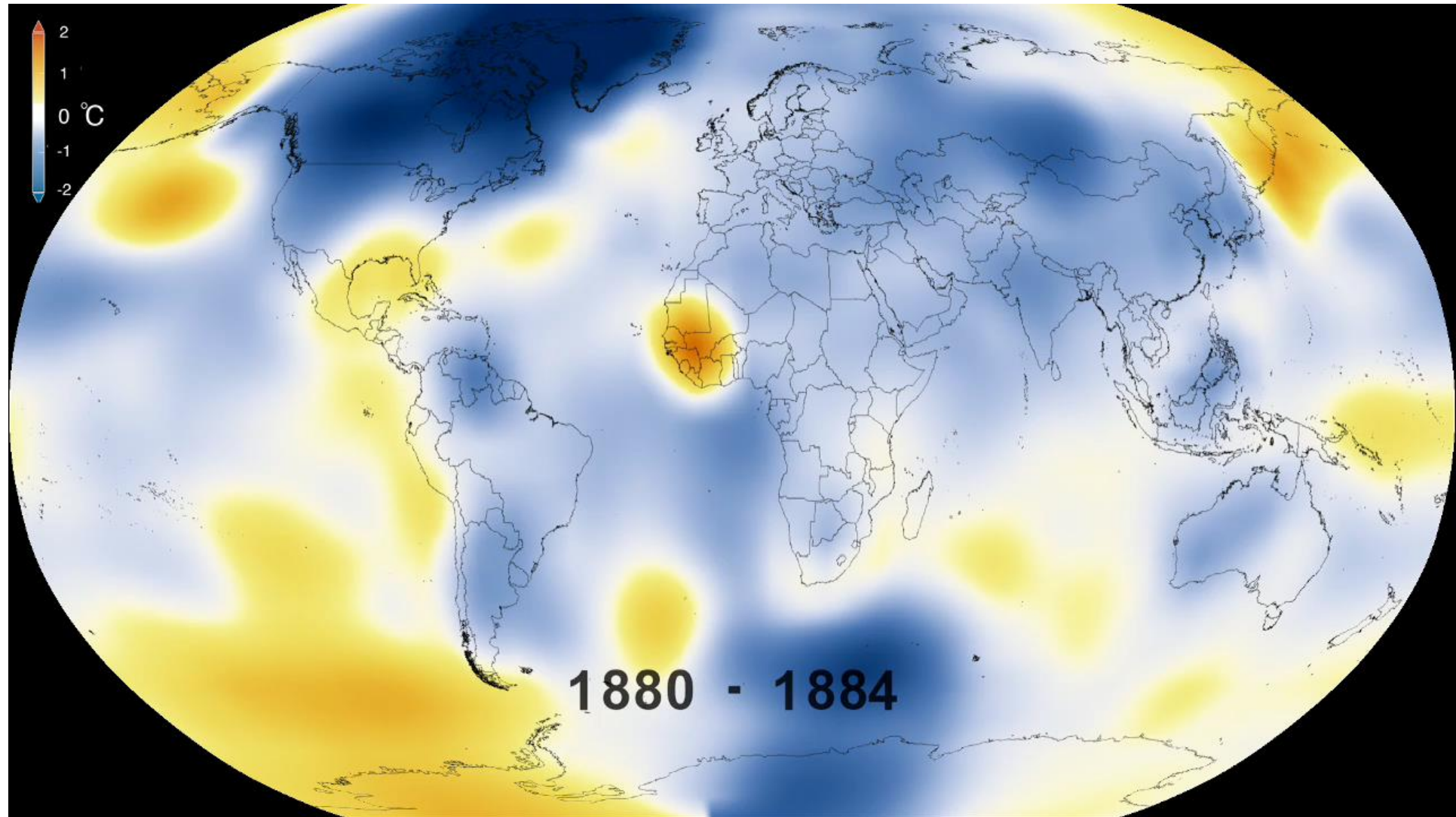
Animation of Global Surface Temperature Anomalies from 1880-2015. Source: NASA/GSFC Scientific Visualization Studio

Visualizing Climate Change
Place-Based, Clear Data, Local Impacts

• *Example 1:*

March 2018 Nor'Easters

• *Example 2:*

Flooding Summer 2010

• *Example 3:*

Drought Summer 2016

Framing Climate Change

Framing for Values

- Protection Value
- Responsible Management Value
  - Why does it matter?
  - What is at stake?

- **The story**: We must protect people and places from being harmed by the challenges facing our environment

Framing for Solutions

- Fosters hope and instils a sense of agency & efficacy

- **The story:** Concern for our climate is normal and action on climate change is happening all around us.

- We can come together as citizens to address climate change impacts in our community & create meaningful change.

Source: NNOCCI

Framing Climate Change

- **Protect** our natural resources for *future generations* and *public health*.

- **Responsibly manage** our natural and fiscal resources.

- **Sense of place** encourages people to invest locally and overcome challenges.

Preparing for climate change through nature-based solutions satisfies each of those values.

Best Practices for a General Audience

1. Find common ground and **meet people where they are** on climate change

2. Emphasize how climate change affects us **here and now**, in our everyday lives

3. Focus on how building resilience to climate change ultimately makes their **lives and livelihoods better**

4. Find **common ground** on climate change through **shared values**

5. Keep discussions **place-based** and as **local** as possible

A small group of stakeholders participating in the MVP process in Winthrop, MA