



# REPORTING CLIMATE CHANGE

AN ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM  
FOR INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS

COPEAM

 UNIVERSITÀ TELEMATICA  
INTERNAZIONALE UNINETTUNO

WITH THE  
SUPPORT OF

 European  
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*Format: Short Learning Programme - SLP  
(according to the European Higher Education standards).  
Languages: English and Arabic.  
Final certificate.*

## **PART I - What is climate change**

**(5 video lessons + didactic material)**

**by Dr. AHMED KANDIL**

*Senior research fellow & Head of Energy Studies Program at al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies (Cairo) and a journalist at Al Ahram newspaper. He has experience as commentator in many TV channels such BBC (Arabic service), Sky News, and the Egyptian TV. He is an expert in energy transition and climate change, publishing a variety of articles on the global energy governance, Arab – Asian energy cooperation, Africa's energy integration projects, and the dynamics of natural gas discoveries in East Mediterranean Sea and others.*

### **Objectives**

This e-learning module on climate change and environmental sustainability aims at developing journalists' skills to better understand and adequately tackle a wide range of diverse issues related to climate change in MENA and Balkans regions. Climate change extreme and slow onset events are posing serious threats to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in both regions, where most of the climate vulnerable people live, and where adverse climate impacts are deemed highest, according to the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCCC), the most authoritative voice of climate science.

Thus, a solid understanding of climate change impacts, policies and actions is imperative to ensure mainstreaming and better aligning climate action in terms of both, resilience building, climate disaster risk reduction, and emission reduction across policies, programs, and socio-economic sectors.

**This module is structured in five video lessons, providing the international state of the art in climate science, climate policies, and practical experience gained on the ground.**

### [Video-lesson 1 - Introduction](#)

This **lesson** provides participants with a sound understanding of the scientific basis of climate change, climate change impacts, and relevant policies. This lesson provides an introduction into climate change in its physical dimensions, including an overview on the latest trends and figures, and reliable sources for more climate data . The first video lesson lays the fundament for the entire course.

#### Key Contents

- What is climate change?
- How can we stop climate change?
- Who is capable of stopping climate change?
  - States
  - Corporations
  - Individuals

### [Video-lesson 2 - The UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement](#)

This lesson provides participants with the basic knowledge about the history and milestones of UNFCCC figuring out the conflicting interests of country groupings.

#### Key Contents

- The history and milestones of UNFCCC
- Kyoto Protocol Versus the Paris Agreement
- UNFCCC Parties, Country Groups, and Observers
- UNFCCC Events, Submissions, Meeting Formats
- The main elements of the Paris Agreement
  - Mitigation: reducing emissions
  - Adaptation
  - Loss and damage
  - Support
- Katowice rulebook

- The Way Ahead

### Video-lesson 3 - Climate finance

This lesson provides a basic understanding on the nature of climate finance, sources, governance, priorities and recipients at the international level.

#### Key Contents

- What is climate finance?
- What are the main characteristics of climate finance today?
- Is climate finance effective enough today?
- How could it become more effective?
- International climate finance commitments under the PA
- The Global Environment Facility (GEF)
  - The Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)
  - The Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)
- Green Climate Fund (GCF)
- UN Adaptation Fund
- International & national climate finance - main challenges

### Video-lesson 4 – Climate Change in the Mediterranean Region

This lesson shows the main facts of climate change in in the Mediterranean region and its consequences on people's lives.

#### Key Contents

- What are the main facts of climate change in the Mediterranean region?
  - Air temperature
  - Precipitation
  - Sea temperature
  - Sea level
- How is climate change likely to impact this region?
  - Water resources
  - Food resources
  - Land ecosystems
  - Marine ecosystems
  - Human health
  - Human security
- What should be done?

## Video-lesson 5 – Climate Change in the Mediterranean Region: Challenges and Lessons Learned

This lesson show the current challenges in the Mediterranean region regarding the climate change issues and the lessons learned for the future.

### Key Contents

- Why don't we care more about climate change in the Mediterranean region?
  - Today's lifestyle
  - Climate change is a slow-moving threat
  - Political challenges
  - Shortage of financial allocations .
  - How the news media represent climate change
- What to do about the lack of awareness about climate change in the Mediterranean region?
  - Winning Hearts and Minds
  - Explain the science of climate change in a simple way
    - Use metaphors to explain difficult concepts
    - Use metaphors to explain difficult concepts
    - Use real-world analogies
    - Use plain language
    - Be wary of uncertainty
    - Explain that scientists agree about climate change
    - Don't repeat the language of climate deniers

## **PART II - Reporting climate change**

**(5 video lessons + didactic material)**

**by KEVIN BURDEN**

*A journalism trainer and consultant working with media organisations worldwide, and a former environment correspondent for the BBC, Kevin Burden graduated in politics and languages, specialising in the language of the media, reporting of science and technology, and the role of the media in political advocacy. He joined the BBC in 1989 and covered energy, environment and countryside issues for several years before taking on leadership and training roles, most recently as the Head of Training at the BBC's global development charity. He now works with media houses, government and international bodies and civil society organisations to improve reporting of human rights, environmental and social issues.*

## Objectives

As the previous module has shown, it is important for those reporting on climate change to have a solid understanding of climate change impacts, policies and actions. However, it is not in itself sufficient. Those journalists who wish to report on global climate change face many barriers, not least the resistance of their own editors and managers. Often humanities graduates, they may lack the skills to interpret scientific data and engage constructively with scientists. This may lead to climate change being reported in party-political terms, or even as a matter of faith: do you believe in climate change or not?

This module therefore sets out the opportunities for climate change journalism; seeks to identify many of the obstacles, and to provide journalists with ways to overcome them so that they may report more effectively on the most critical global issue of our time.

**This module is delivered across five video lessons. The first looks at how climate change pervades all aspects of the news. The second explores the challenges of reporting and proposes some tactics to overcome them. The third lesson explores the opportunities for journalists choosing to focus on reporting climate change. Lesson four seeks to explain the differences between news and science and aims to help journalists communicate more effectively with scientists. The fifth and final lesson leaves journalists with some concrete tips to help them report more effectively on climate change.**

### [Video lesson 1 – Climate change in the news](#)

Many journalists still feel that climate change is a remote and academic issue that ill fits in everyday news coverage. That is, of course, changing, so this first lesson explores how climate change is making its way into every corner of news reporting – because it has an impact in all parts of life.

Key contents:

- The physical environment
- Business and industry
- Politics, people and protest

### [Video lesson 2 – Why aren't you reporting on climate change?](#)

Asked why they do not report more on climate change, reporters will often give familiar answers: It is unfamiliar. It is complicated. It is difficult to explain. The scientists disagree. My editor thinks our readers are not interested. Some of these are true, and some are myths. In this lesson, we look at each of the most common obstacles and try to address each of them in turn, proposing some tactics to overcome them.

## Key contents

- What's stopping you reporting on climate change?
- Reasons that you should report on climate change

## [Video lesson 3 – Choosing to report on climate change](#)

All reporters are, to some extent, generalists: they must be prepared to turn their hand to any story. But many find there is reward in specialising in a subject area, whether it is crime, politics, health – or the environment. In this lesson we explore the opportunities and benefits for journalists choosing to focus on reporting climate change.

## Key contents

- Commodification vs. specialisation
- Why specialise – and why not
- What skills does a climate change reporter need?
- How to acquire those skills
- Getting started

## [Video lesson 4 – How to understand science and scientists](#)

Scientists and journalists typically come through different education routes and see the world in different ways. It can be hard for them to understand each other, let alone find a meaningful way to communicate. This harms coverage of climate change as it does other areas of science. Therefore this lesson seeks to explore the differences between news and science and aims to help journalists and scientists communicate more effectively.

## Key contents

- Why scientists and journalists have difficulties communicating with each other
- What is science?
- How science works
- Communicating risk

## [Video lesson 5 – Reporting better on climate change?](#)

Despite the difficulties, many journalists are reporting well on climate change. In this module we look at what they are doing, and seek to draw out some broader lessons for all those who wish to report more effectively on climate change.

## Key contents

- Explaining

- Illustrating
- Contextualising
- Creating

## **PART III – Experiences and case studies**

### **“THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION”**

by Prof. ENRICA DE CIAN (ITALY), associate professor in environmental economics at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice (Italy) and research scientist at Fondazione CMCC

### **“THE STATE OF RESEARCH INTO CLIMATE JOURNALISM PRACTICES AND ROUTINES”**

by JAMES PAINTER (UK), Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, and School of Geography, Oxford University

### **“BEING A SCIENCE JOURNALIST”**

by MILICA MOMČILOVIĆ, scientific journalist and president of the World Federation of Science Journalists (WFSJ)

### **“THE SOUND OF CLIMATE JUSTICE”**

by MARCO MOTTA (ITALY) – journalist and presenter Radio 3 Scienza

### **EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK & CLIMATE CHANGE:**

- **How can projects help climate action in the Mediterranean:** the “Noor” solar power plant in Ouarzazate (Morocco) and the “Wadi Al-Arab Water System II” in Jordan

- **How does coronavirus impact climate action?**

Article & podcast by Matt Rees, editor at EIB

- **“Climate solutions”**, an EIB podcast series about 9 different key-topics

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