

## Engagement Strategy: Executive Summary

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Climate change will impact New Zealand and New Zealanders in many ways, and good decision-making, from an individual to a national scale, will require knowledge of these expected impacts. Research supported by the Deep South Challenge (DSC) will improve our understanding of climate change science and its impacts on, and implications for, New Zealand over the next 100 years. It will also enhance our ability to make decisions informed by climate change research.

### Engagement Goal and Objectives

The goal of the DSC Engagement programme is to contribute to improving New Zealanders' ability and capacity to make decisions informed by DSC-related research.<sup>1</sup> This will be delivered by focusing on six engagement objectives:

1. Ensuring that DSC research responds to the needs of New Zealanders;
2. Strengthening channels with key audiences and sectors with regard to DSC-related climate change research to build sector-specific interest in, and capacity to understand and use, this information to enable more informed decision-making;
3. Establishing broad public communication and two-way engagement about DSC-related climate change research to increase New Zealanders' awareness of, and ability to access and use, DSC research outcomes such that they inform climate-related decisions;
4. Maintaining communication of DSC progress (to the public, key stakeholders, and funders, DSC researchers and committees);
5. Building capability for engagement about climate change among experts and intermediaries (especially related to modelling, impacts and implications, and adaptation), and contributing expertise to engagement led by external partners, to ensure effective communication and dialogue through and beyond the duration of the DSC;
6. Evaluating the DSC engagement programme to ensure that the programme delivers on its goal and contributing to academic literature through research on factors enhancing the effectiveness of climate-change engagement.

Four workstreams have been established to deliver the engagement objectives:

#### **Workstream 1:** Tailored Engagement (Objectives 1 & 2)

**Target Audience:** People who can drive improvements in decision making in key climate-sensitive sectors, including finance, infrastructure and natural resources; marginalised or low-income communities; and sectors where New Zealand's competitive advantage may be eroded.

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<sup>1</sup> DSC research includes enhanced modelling capacity, improved predictions of future climate and its impacts and implications, and new understanding of Antarctic and Southern Ocean processes.

**Workstream 2:** Broad public and internal Engagement (Objectives 3 & 4)

**Target Audience:** Members of the public who make decisions that could be influenced by an understanding about climate change research. This is a wide scale, which spans individuals who may not currently take climate into consideration in any decisions, to individuals who might use climate data to make a specific decision. (This does not include school-children as a primary target audience but does include family-focused engagement and young adults.)

**Workstream 3:** Capacity-building for engagement (Objective 5)

**Target audience:** DSC researchers and other professionals with climate information expertise; stakeholders and thought-leaders who can act as facilitators of engagement and information-sharing with key sectors; and engagement and communication professionals.

**Workstream 4:** Evaluation and Research (Objective 6)

**Target audience:** DSC leadership, including Science Leadership Team, Independent Science Panel, and Board; DSC funders, particularly MBIE; and the international research community in public engagement with science and climate change communication.

Implementation of the engagement strategy is the responsibility of the Science Lead (Engagement), in close cooperation with the Science Leadership Team (SLT), the Technical Advisory Committee for Engagement (TACE) and a Representative User Group (RUG).

## Key Messages

Key messages of the Deep South Challenge follow. These are aligned with each programme. The selection of these messages, and their framing, will vary for different events, activities, and audiences. Information provided in parentheses is supplementary.

- Climate change is happening
- People need reliable climate information in order to be able to make important decisions about their future [Engagement]
- The main areas of change will be related to more extreme weather events, droughts, shifts in typical weather patterns, and sea level rise [Impacts & Implications]
- Given diverse living arrangements and climate-sensitivities across Māori society, there is a growing need to know more about the specific implications (*includes opportunities and risks*) of a changing climate for iwi/hapū/whānau and Māori business. [Vision Matauranga]
- In order to make more accurate predictions of future climate in New Zealand, we need to develop the New Zealand Earth System Model [Earth System Modelling and Prediction]
- Research in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is important to better understand key (*high-latitude*) processes (*and to represent them appropriately*) in the New Zealand Earth System Model [Processes and Observations]

## Funding

Funding for projects and activities that deliver on the Engagement Programme Goal and Objectives is available through three channels: (i) commissioned work funded directly by the Engagement Programme; (ii) projects proposed by external partners that are funded by the Engagement programme following an application process (see [http://www.deepsouthchallenge.co.nz/for details](http://www.deepsouthchallenge.co.nz/for%20details)); and (iii) through the DSC Contestable funding process (open for projects that deliver on any or several DSC programmes, including Engagement). Funding from the Engagement Programme can be used to support time and costs for development, coordination and reporting/evaluation of an activity.