USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences | PUBLIC EXCHANGE | UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION

GRAPH DESIGN CHECK-LIST

KEY MESSAGE

- [ ] Is there at most *one* key message shown in each graph?
- [ ] Is the one key message relevant to policy makers?
- [ ] Can the one key message be learned from the graph without reading the caption?
- [ ] Are all details in the graph needed to understand the one key message?
- [ ] Has serious consideration been given to moving details to the main text?

TITLES AND CAPTIONS

- [ ] Is the one key message stated in the title and reiterated in the caption?
- [ ] Are all parts of the graph explained in understandable wording?
- [ ] Are variables referred to in the same wording throughout the title, caption, and legend?
- [ ] Are jargon and acronyms avoided or clearly explained?

GRAPH

- [ ] Are the colors easy to distinguish?
- [ ] Are the font sizes large enough?
- [ ] Are all axes labeled in understandable units and wording?
- [ ] Are all colors in the legend?
- [ ] Are all parts of the graphs labeled and explained in understandable wording?

INPUT

- [ ] Were members of the target audience consulted?
- [ ] Was the graph design literature consulted?

Note

This graph design check-list reflects comments on climate change visualizations from practitioners and policy makers as well as the graph design literature (Garcia-Retamero et al. Human Factors 2017; Harold et al. Nature Climate change 2016; Hill & Millner Accounting Education 2003; Kause et al. Sustainability 2020)

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