



Bonne Pioche's *For a Few Degrees Less* will air in France in advance of the U.N.'s International Climate Change conference in Paris.

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Lucinda Axelsson, a science and natural history commissioning executive at the BBC, explained during a panel on climate change docs during the Sunny Side of the Doc conference in La Rochelle, France last June. "That's how you get the message across. Talk about things they love."

Axelsson called the BBC's approach "climate change by stealth." Rather than create programs expressly about climate change – which she said do not rate well – the pubcaster has covered the issue through blue-chip wildlife series such as *Frozen Planet* and *Africa*.

"Climate change is not something we do in isolation... We're finding different ways of tackling it," she explained, adding that shows labeled as climate change docs tend to attract those who already believe it is a problem. "It's got to read differently."

One such program was BBC4's *Climate Change By Numbers*, in which three mathematicians who have nothing to do with the issue look at the math behind three figures from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Meanwhile, Australia's Unboxed Media is prepping the multi-platform

Youth4Planet. Set to be shot in September and airing in December, the series is described as "*The Apprentice* meets *Man vs Wild*" and takes a group of young people, aged 16 to 21, with big social media followings and sends them to the Arctic to witness the effects of climate change first-hand.

In the run up to Paris, French network ARTE will air *For A Few Degrees Less*, a feature doc about climate change negotiator Jeffrey Sachs, and *Climate Ops*, a doc based on a multi-platform campaign running through the summer that asks viewers to submit video messages to UN negotiators.

Due to premiere on ARTE on October 28, *For A Few Degrees Less* follows the efforts of Sachs, an American economist and director of The Earth Institute, to persuade countries to cut CO2 emissions in half by 2050. Producers are delivering a one-hour international version that emphasizes the science angle (and thus, has a longer shelf life) as well as a character-driven, current affairs-oriented feature version.

"The aim of the film is to raise awareness and create expectations so the audience can make up their own minds if the Climate Summit has been useful or not,"

says Robert Salvestrin, COO at Lucky You, the distribution arm of producer Bonne Pioche. "It takes a 'Yes we can' approach: here is the technology, the know-how and knowledge that makes climate change avoidable."

The doc has been picked up by networks in Switzerland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Canada and in the U.S. by digital platform CuriosityStream, but it has yet to find an American broadcast partner.

In the U.S., cable networks Discovery Channel and National Geographic Channel have increasingly shifted their focus from reality programming back to core mandates of science and natural history. While that is good news for docmakers, commissioners still want entertaining approaches to subjects, including climate change and conservation.

On December 2, Discovery will globally air *The Cove* filmmaker Louis Psihoyos' doc *Racing Extinction*, which takes a spy thriller approach to the topic of mass extinction. Psihoyos has spent two years working with social impact producer Vulcan Productions to research the effectiveness of climate change and conservation messaging.

"We researched not only all the elements of the film and the style, but even down to the title because it's really important that you're luring them in," says Vulcan's vice president Carol Tomko. "If you said 'climate change' and 'greenhouse gas emissions' people just completely tuned that out. They don't want to see massive graphs showing how the Earth is getting warmer. They're like, 'I can't watch it anymore so give me a piece of information that is relevant to my daily life.'"

To overcome the perception that tackling climate change is heavy-handed and ultimately an insurmountable task, Psihoyos focused on mass extinction and the plight of