

Rethinking Communication on the Ecosocial Transition: From Diagnosis to Antidotes

REPENSAR LA COMUNICACIÓN EN LA TRANSICIÓN ECOSOCIAL:
DEL DIAGNÓSTICO AL ANTÍDOTO

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Abstract: This study adopts a pragmatic perspective to examine how communication theory and practice can engage with Ecosocial Transition (ET), understood as a framework that integrates social and economic justice with the rights of animals and nature. Its main objective is to develop the Antidote-Communication Model Supporting the Ecosocial Transition (IMRESCOM Model), designed to analyse prevailing narratives around ET and contribute to the construction of social imaginaries. The study applies the Delphi method to validate the variables that define the model's conceptual architecture and generate analytical categories later used to interpret an interpretive sample of audiovisual content. The resulting model is structured around three interrelated dimensions: the cognitive-contextual process, the antidote narrative perspective, and social responsibility. Ultimately, the model seeks to stimulate public debate and foster constructive and civic engagement.

Keywords: Antidote Communication; Diagnostic Information; Ecosocial Transition; Social Transformation; Environmental Justice.

Resumen: Este estudio adopta una perspectiva pragmática para examinar cómo la teoría y la práctica de la comunicación pueden contribuir a la Transición Ecosocial (TE), entendida como un marco que integra la justicia social y económica con los derechos de los animales y la naturaleza. Su objetivo principal es desarrollar el Modelo de Comunicación-Antídoto para la Transición Ecosocial (IMRESCOM), diseñado para analizar las narrativas dominantes sobre la TE y contribuir a la construcción de imaginarios sociales. La investigación aplica el método Delphi para validar las variables que definen la arquitectura conceptual del modelo y generar categorías analíticas empleadas posteriormente en la interpretación de una muestra de contenidos audiovisuales. El modelo resultante se articula en torno a tres dimensiones interrelacionadas: proceso cognitivo-contextual, perspectiva narrativa antídoto y responsabilidad social y busca promover el debate público y el compromiso cívico-constructivo.

Palabras clave: comunicación antídoto; información diagnóstico; transición ecosocial; transformación social; justicia ambiental.



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1. Introduction

Recent debates in socio-environmental and political communication have increasingly emphasized the need for narrative frameworks capable of addressing interconnected ecological, social, and democratic crises. Within this context, the concept of Ecosocial Transition (ET) has emerged as a significant analytical and normative framework across multiple disciplinary perspectives, highlighting the interdependence of economic, environmental, and social dimensions (Matthies, 2017; Rambaree et al., 2019; Svampa, 2022). ET also offers a valuable lens through which to examine how communication practices can contribute to more just and environmentally responsible futures (Escobar & Chaparro, 2020).

However, despite growing interest in climate communication, constructive journalism, and transformative media practices, the communicative dimensions of ET remain underdeveloped in communication scholarship. This article addresses this gap by developing the IMRESCoM Model (Antidote-Communication Model Supporting the Ecosocial Transition), a framework designed to analyse how communication can foster critical awareness, civic engagement, and alternative social imaginaries.

In this study, Ecosocial Transition (ET) is understood as a communicative and socio-political framework aimed at promoting social and environmental justice, the rights of nature and animals, and alternative models of collective well-being. From a communication perspective, ET involves media and narrative practices oriented toward critical awareness, democratic participation, and the transformation of dominant imaginaries (Peralta, 2026). This perspective draws on contributions from Ecofeminism (Herrero, 2016; Peralta, Chaparro & Espinar, 2020; Puleo, 2019; Tapia, 2020); Degrowth (Latouche, 2008, 2009), Buen Vivir (Escobar, 2014; Gudynas, 2011), and decolonial thought (Acosta, 2010; Escobar & Mignolo, 2010; Torrico, 2018), all of which question extractivist, productivist, and anthropocentric models of development. Many scholars argue that the systemic transformations required for meaningful change cannot occur without a decolonial process that critically interrogates the dominant Western imaginaries rooted in the Global North (Gudynas, 2011; Segato, 2016; Rivera, 2002; Torrico, Castro & Osorio, 2017; Dutta, 2015).

This approach is closely linked to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through its systemic understanding of contemporary challenges. However, Ecosocial Transition also requires a critical perspective on the SDGs, since they may reproduce forms of inequality tied to economic

growth. Arturo Escobar and Chaparro (2020) argue that sustainability is incompatible with capitalist growth models, while Hidalgo, García, and Cubillo (2018) propose a “transdevelopment” agenda that addresses the structural causes of unsustainability beyond the SDGs.

More recent research in environmental communication has increasingly focused on the role of emotions, digital narratives, climate imaginaries, and participatory media practices in shaping public engagement with ecological crises. Studies on climate communication have highlighted the limitations of fear-based messaging and emphasized the relevance of constructive, solutions-oriented, and justice-centered narratives capable of fostering efficacy and collective agency (Ndubuisi et al., 2025; Weder & Weaver, 2025).

Similarly, emerging scholarship on regenerative communication, climate storytelling, and transformative media has stressed the importance of developing narratives that connect ecological transition with everyday experience, democratic participation, and social imagination (Coren & Wan, 2024; San Cornelio et al., 2021). At the same time, recent studies in political communication and media studies have examined how digital platforms, affective polarization, and algorithmic logics shape public understandings of social and climate justice and sustainability transitions, revealing tensions between visibility, engagement, and depoliticization (Galaz et al., 2025; Horn & Felt, 2026).

Critical pragmatism provides a useful framework for analysing communication practices oriented toward social transformation because it combines contextual inquiry, democratic participation, and ethical reflection (West, 1989; Bohman, 1999; Bergman, 2016). Within communication studies, this perspective has been applied to examine how discourse, public engagement, and media practices can contribute to addressing ecological and social crises without reproducing technocratic or purely moralizing approaches.

Among critical pragmatists, Nancy Fraser (2010) develops a theory of justice based on redistribution, recognition, and representation, emphasizing that communication should challenge economic, cultural, and political inequalities by ensuring the inclusion of marginalized voices. Complementing this view, Hans Joas (1997) conceives action as creative and value-driven, arguing that meanings and values emerge through embodied, emotional, and context-specific experiences. Together, these perspectives frame communication as a participatory and transformative process of co-creating meaning and social change.

Alternative scholarly approaches have expanded critical pragmatism in communication studies by emphasizing ethically grounded and future-oriented

responses to systemic crises. Lopez Bunyasi and Smith (2018) propose “pragmatic utopianism” to explain how activists sustain hopeful yet realistic narratives, while Drummond & Orbe (2010) and Cloud (2018) stress the need to acknowledge conflict and ambivalence to avoid depoliticizing struggle. In environmental communication, Cox (2012) connects everyday discourse with broader ecological and civic action.

Critical pragmatism shares important common ground with solutions journalism, particularly in its emphasis on ethically grounded and future-oriented responses to systemic crises (Alarcón & Coronel, 2019; Bonilla, 2018), constructive journalism (Casares, 2021; Alzaga, 2020) and positive journalism (Díaz, 2021), because all emphasize practical, context-sensitive approaches that foster active participation, critical reflection, and the pursuit of constructive, transformative responses to social issues. Additionally, Schäfer et al. (2022) highlight the importance of restorative narratives and advocate for reporting that prioritizes resilience and recovery.

The study should clarify that, although the empirical fieldwork primarily examines informational, media, and cinematic practices, the broader normative and theoretical horizon of the research is fundamentally communicative in nature. From this perspective, communication is not reduced to journalism or the mere transmission of information; rather, it is understood as a dialogical, participatory, and bidirectional process that fosters interaction, mutual understanding, and democratic engagement. Accordingly, information constitutes the primary object of analysis in the empirical fieldwork, while communication functions as the wider conceptual and normative framework guiding the study.

This article contributes to debates in socio-environmental and political communication by proposing the IMRESCoM Model, an integrated ecosocial communication framework that combines critical pragmatism, constructive communication, and ecosocial perspectives to analyse and promote narratives oriented toward democratic participation, social justice, and ecological transition. The study addresses three gaps in the literature: the limited theorization of Ecosocial Transition in communication studies, the disconnection between normative ecosocial approaches and empirical research, and the lack of integrative models linking narratives, public engagement, and social responsibility.

The originality of the IMRESCoM model does not lie in creating entirely new categories, but in articulating existing approaches—such as solution-oriented communication, constructive narratives, and communicative justice—within a unified framework specifically focused on Ecosocial Transition. In

this context, “antidote communication” is proposed as an analytical and normative framework connecting cognitive-contextual processes, narrative strategies, and social responsibility to foster transformative public imaginaries and civic engagement.

2. Methodology and Sample

The primary goal of this study is to develop an innovative communication model (IMRESCom) that advances theoretical reflection on the core principles of Ecosocial Transition (ET) while also providing practical guidance for the production of content grounded in an ecosocial perspective. To achieve this aim, the study pursues three specific objectives: (SO1) to construct a robust theoretical foundation integrating the notions of diagnostic and antidote communication into the fields of critical pragmatism and constructive journalism; (SO2) to validate the model’s key dimensions and variables through expert consensus; and (SO3) to illustrate the operational applicability of the model through selected cinematic, audiovisual, and media cases.

To address these objectives, the study adopts a qualitative and sequential research design structured in three interconnected phases. First, a documentary and theoretical review was conducted based on the book *Guía de transición ecosocial y principios éticos para nuestros medios* (2021), complemented by the analysis of communication models, editorial guidelines, style guides, ethical codes, and practical manuals related to environmental and public-interest communication. This phase enabled the identification of an initial set of analytical variables that informed the preliminary structure of the IMRESCom model. The construction of the model was guided by four criteria: (1) the integration of ecosocial theoretical perspectives such as Ecofeminism, Degrowth, and Buen Vivir; (2) the incorporation of practical strategies derived from critical pragmatism and constructive journalism; (3) the principle of transversality, according to which ecosocial perspectives should permeate all communicative genres and formats; and (4) the adaptation of the concepts of “diagnosis” and “antidote” from psychology and medicine into a communicative framework capable of analysing narrative responses to ecosocial crises. Additionally, the proposal draws on the structural logic of the Social Empathy Index developed by Segal, Wagaman, and Gerdes (2012), reformulating it within a communicative and ecosocial framework.

Second, the preliminary variables and dimensions identified during the documentary phase were subjected to a Delphi validation process involving ten experts specializing in communication, sustainability, ecosocial transition, and

related fields. The Delphi process was conducted between June and July 2025 and included participants from Spain, Latin America, and the United States, thereby incorporating diverse academic and cultural perspectives. Two iterative rounds were completed in order to refine, evaluate, and prioritize the proposed variables. Consensus was established through two complementary criteria: an interquartile range (IQR) of ≤ 1 , indicating low dispersion among expert assessments, and a minimum agreement threshold of 70% for each variable. The Delphi process therefore fulfilled a central methodological role by validating the conceptual architecture of the IMRESCom model and establishing the analytical dimensions later used to interpret the audiovisual sample.

Third, and in direct articulation with the Delphi phase, an illustrative purposive sample of audiovisual and media productions was selected in order to operationalize and exemplify the validated categories of diagnostic and antidote communication. In methodological terms, the audiovisual corpus does not function as an independent empirical dataset detached from the Delphi process; rather, it constitutes an applied analytical stage derived from the expert-validated framework. Thus, the categories refined and validated through the Delphi method served as interpretive criteria for selecting and analysing the audiovisual cases. The sample was therefore designed to illustrate how the theoretical dimensions identified by the experts become concretely manifested in communicative narratives, discursive strategies, and representational practices.

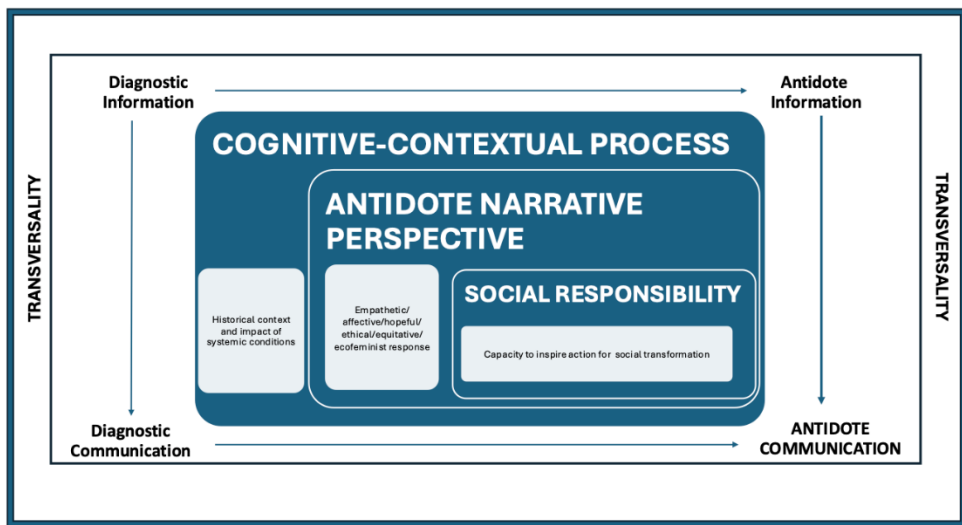
The selection process combined theoretical and deliberative sampling criteria. The two authors jointly selected cases that were especially relevant for illustrating the conceptual distinctions central to the IMRESCom model and with which both researchers had sufficient familiarity to enable in-depth interpretive analysis. Additional criteria included: (1) international diversity; (2) the inclusion of productions linked to public service media; and (3) films or documentaries recognized through international awards or critical acclaim, under the assumption that such visibility enhances their communicative and cultural relevance. Although the sample is not statistically representative, this limitation is consistent with the exploratory and interpretive nature of the study. The aim is not generalization, but rather analytical transferability: namely, demonstrating how the validated dimensions of the IMRESCom model can be identified and applied across concrete communicative contexts. In this sense, the audiovisual sample serves both an illustrative and heuristic function, bridging theoretical construction, expert validation, and practical application within a coherent methodological design.

3. Results

3.1. Structure and Validated Dimensions of the IMRESCom Model

This section presents the results of the Delphi validation and theoretical integration process, which yielded a structured set of analytical dimensions composing the IMRESCom Antidote Communication Model Supporting the Ecosocial Transition, which integrates three main elements: a) the cognitive-contextual process; b) the antidote narrative perspective; c) the social responsibility. This operational framework is based on the concepts of Diagnostic information and Antidote information and understands the Antidote Communication as the achievable ideal. Furthermore, the Model considers the transversality of the ecosocial perspective to facilitate a holistic, systemic, and integrative transformation (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *IMRESCom Antidote Communication Model Supporting the Ecosocial Transition*



Source: own elaboration.

3.1.1. Information-to-Communication Shift as a Validated Analytical Dimension:

Assuming the desirability of information media acting as agents capable of illuminating debates and pathways to address challenges and foster *phronesis*, a

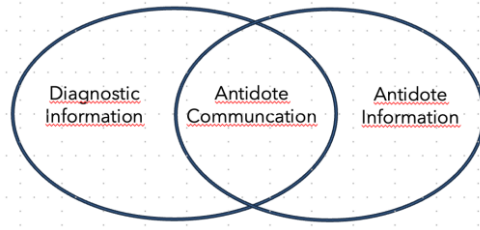
philosophical concept translated as «practical wisdom», «prudence», or «common sense». The IMRESCOM model is underpinned by the concepts of diagnostic information (D.I.), diagnostic communication (D.C.), antidote information (A.I.) and antidote communication (A.C.).

We differentiate between information as a unidirectional process that does not require feedback from the recipient to exist, as is typical in traditional media, and communication as a bidirectional process that allows for feedback (Luhmann, 1992). The goal is not simply informational, but communicative. Communication is visceral; it is an agora that doesn't require technological additions, although community-based media can support communication when they are truly participatory, transcending mere information to become bidirectional. The role of these media in generating collective action is crucial, as they nourish the ecosystem of local intervention.

Within the framework of the Ecosocial Transition, the Diagnostic Information (D.I.) focuses on the identification and characterization of specific environmental and social issues. Its aim is to make visible the most evident manifestations of these problems, their immediate effects, and their direct causes. Robust diagnostic communication provides an accurate, nuanced understanding of complex social and environmental issues while opening pathways for action and collective agency -functioning as a bridge towards an antidote.

Antidote Information (A.I.) is grounded in an accurate diagnosis and goes beyond merely outlining the causes of problems to offer concrete, practical solutions, including the presentation of existing and ongoing experiences. A.I. provides insights into the importance of taking action, focusing on the benefits of embracing the ET in its many forms and possibilities. By highlighting solutions and successful case studies, it serves as a counterbalance to the often overwhelming and pessimistic narratives surrounding ecological and social crises. It empowers individuals and communities to take part in the transition by fostering a sense of hope and agency. In this sense, Antidote Information plays a critical role in creating the momentum needed for broad societal transformation.

Diagnostic Information (D.I.) and Antidote Information (A.I.) can serve as precursors to Antidote Communication (A.C.), which is fostered through social debate. The formula $D.I. + A.I. = A.C.$ generates a feedback loop by fostering a dialogical process (see Fig. 2). To achieve Antidote Communication, dialogue, mediation, and consensus are fundamental, as is stimulating a social conversation that includes diverse voices.

Figure 2. *A.C. at the Intersection of D.I. and A.I.*

Source: own elaboration

3.1.2. Diagnostic Distortion: Narrative Noise as a Limiting Condition of Communicative Systems:

A proper, truthful, balanced, and compelling diagnosis is an essential tool for understanding the complexity of social, political, and ecological phenomena. In the post-truth era, however, media narratives often distort the contextual function of diagnosis through multiple mechanisms, outlined in Table 1, that can hinder diagnostic information from fulfilling its genuine purpose: providing a space for causal understanding grounded in critical perspective. In practical terms, the IM-RESCOM Model advocates for systematically verifying that content production consciously avoids reproducing these mechanisms of misdiagnosis.

Table 1. *Misdiagnosis Mechanisms*

Misdiagnosis	Examples
Overabundance, Exclusivity, or Imbalance of Diagnostic Information	<i>Climate Change: The Facts</i> (Serena Davis, 2019, United Kingdom) <i>It Will Be Chaos</i> (Lorena Luciano and Filippo Piscopo, 2018, produced by HBO)
Diagnosing Through a Victimized, Paternalistic, or Criminalizing Lens	<i>Asylum Monologues</i> (2013)
Encouraging a Dystopian Diagnosis	<i>Don't Look Up</i> (McKay, 2021) <i>The Day After Tomorrow</i> (Emmerich, 2004)
Constructing an Ambiguous, Ambivalent, or Superficial Diagnosis	<i>MasterChef Australia</i> (Season 16, 2024) "Sustainable" Palm Oil campaigns broadcast (BBC World News, CNN International) <i>Mobility City</i> (RNE 5, Spain)

Source: prepared by the author

Program introductions, summaries, or synopses often act as self-presentations. It is commonly observed that there is an overabundance—or even an exclusive emphasis—on diagnostic terminology. This is evident in the synopsis of the documentary *Climate Change: The Facts* (Serena Davis, 2019, United Kingdom), which demonstrates a heavy reliance on diagnostic language:

We are altering the climate so rapidly that, for the first time in history, people can directly witness its effects. More intense storms, widespread flooding, hotter heatwaves, and dramatic sea-level rise—these changes are happening much faster than scientists once thought possible. Researchers around the world agree: if the current pace of warming continues, we risk a devastating future (*RTVEPlay*, 2021).

In the previous example, no space is given to the antidote, which is discouraging; while urgent actions are mentioned, they lack concrete proposals. Diagnostic signifiers often evoke feelings of danger, extremity, distress, or finality—concepts and scenarios that people instinctively wish to avoid. In contrast, antidote signifiers convey more positive, hopeful, and empowering messages. Given the power of language in shaping collective imaginations, it is essential for an effective communication model to adopt a propositional role, one that foregrounds solutions to problems.

To illustrate how misdiagnosis can manifest within a major social issue such as migration processes, we can examine *It Will Be Chaos* (2018) — an HBO documentary directed by Lorena Luciano and Filippo Piscopo that explores the European migration crisis. Its narrative structure clearly reflects an overabundance of diagnostic information, as what we see within the first ten minutes of the film is certainly an atmosphere that lives up to the film's title. The film opens as coffins are being transported to a seaport in Lampedusa, after a shipwreck occurred in 2013, killing 368 asylum seekers from Eritrea and Somalia. Surviving family members are seen crying over coffins, while others anxiously hope their loved ones' bodies will surface or be identified (Fowlie, 2018). Risky migration documentaries often immerse the audience in a densely layered account that repeatedly depicts tragedies, perilous routes, local conflicts, and the surge of anti-immigrant populism, yet without offering a balanced transition toward concrete solutions or practical pathways for engagement.

In addition, framing the affected subject as a victim does not offer an effective antidote. Whether addressing women, migrants, people with disabilities, or any other vulnerable group, victimization, paternalism, or criminalization distorts the message. Singer (2022) illustrates this through her analysis of violence against Indigenous women and their criminalization as political figures

due to their leadership in resisting extractivism. Similarly, Žižek (2008) argues that excessive compassion for victims often serves to distance the person, rendering them «other» or «distant».

A clear illustration of how a victimizing, paternalistic, or criminalizing lens can distort diagnostic communication in migration narratives emerges from a variety of international media examples. For instance, *Asylum Monologues* (2013), a documentary theatre piece developed in Germany, portrays refugees predominantly as passive sufferers, dependent on the empathy and rescue of Western audiences and activists, thus reinforcing a paternalistic divide between «us» and «them». As Saskia Sassen notes (2014), the discourse of a refugee crisis, to be met with closed borders or open arms, neither helps those who benefit from the system to feel responsible for its depredations, nor does its short-term focus help to envision sustainable, diverse, and economically equitable societies. Similarly, recent studies by the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative reveal that mainstream U.S. television frequently criminalizes immigrant characters, with 22% depicted in connection with illegal activities, further stigmatizing migrant communities and framing migration as a security threat rather than a complex socio-economic process (Chalaby, 2022).

Regarding dystopian scenarios, these are frequently used as a narrative tool to emphasize the consequences of the diagnostic phase. This strategy is not confined to fictional series; it also appears in a wide range of informational and educational programs. As Rodríguez insightfully points out, «When a topic is universalized through images that lie outside our sphere of influence, it leads to a process of de-ideologization, and the fascination with these images paralyzes us from taking action» (2003, 43). In the context of the ET, this paralysis may be triggered by information that presents a solely pessimistic future, a point of no return, a «we are too late» narrative, or visions of extreme suffering, among other scenarios. While these depictions underscore the gravity of the crisis, they can also overwhelm audiences, potentially leading to a sense of helplessness that undermines the motivation to seek out and implement practical solutions.

Dystopian diagnosis narratives are evident in numerous productions that explore the potential, often catastrophic, effects of climate change, including apocalyptic blockbusters like *Don't Look Up* (McKay, 2021) and *The Day After Tomorrow* (Emmerich, 2004), both of them reflecting problems that appear insurmountable. Heigeartaigh (2014) argues that such films provide ammunition for climate change deniers when reality diverges from the rapid narratives of Hollywood, leading to a biased view of potential futures.

Another significant risk to the effectiveness of Diagnostic Information occurs when the diagnosis is presented in an ambiguous, inconsistent, ambivalent, partial, or superficial way. This often happens when the information lacks a systemic understanding of the issue and, more crucially, fails to include a self-critical perspective—particularly when it is not outright false, but rather incomplete or misleading. In some cases, external interests, especially those driven by corporate or financial pressures, may shape the D.I. When the diagnosis is unclear or partial, it fails to offer the clarity and depth necessary to drive meaningful change, thereby hindering an honest and thorough understanding of the issue and obstructing the implementation of long-term solutions.

Greenwashing poses a serious threat to the integrity of diagnostic information, as it constructs narratives that appear environmentally or socially responsible while in fact serving to preserve the extractivist, consumerist, patriarchal, classist, and racist structures of capitalist society—structures at the root of our current civilizational and ethical crisis.

Mainstream television can unwittingly normalize misleading green narratives, perpetuating corporate greenwashing. *MasterChef Australia* (Season 16, 2024) faced strong backlash for partnering with gas industry sponsors such as Australian Gas Network and Jemena. Environmental groups warned that this collaboration, presented as a showcase for ‘renewable gas,’ misleadingly portrayed biomethane and hydrogen as clean alternatives to conventional methane gas—an example of subtle greenwashing embedded in entertainment programming (*The Guardian*, 2024). The content itself may be regarded as problematic, as it promotes a culinary culture that overlooks principles such as zero-kilometre sourcing, the use of organic products, vegan and vegetarian traditions, and respect for animals. Furthermore, it operates as a franchise program that disseminates this model globally.

Within this paradigm, we find programs that align thematically with the ecosocial perspective, such as *Mobility City* (RNE 5, a Spanish public radio station), yet still operate under the assumption that “growth” can continue through new technologies or more intensive exploitation of natural resources; rather than advocating for the reduction or limitation of consumption, a core principle championed by Degrowth, which would be a more desirable approach.

3.1.3. Cognitive-Contextual Conditions Shaping Meaning Production (Validated Systemic Dimension):

The cognitive process is grounded in the historical context and the impact of systemic conditions on the communicative object. Achieving the ET requires

navigating complex political and cultural contexts, where the role of governments, policymakers, legal systems, and organizations is crucial. Without their cooperation, citizens—often constrained by existing laws and institutional frameworks—face significant barriers to change and risk social exclusion if they act alone. In this landscape, our focus is on communication as a cross-cutting catalyst that connects, informs, and mobilizes all stakeholders, making transformative processes more inclusive and achievable. If citizens become increasingly aware that a transition must happen, and we assume that media might help in the process, they could vote for parties with the same awareness and, thus, influence politics toward transition processes, at least in democratic societies. Challenges are huge, because this is not the case worldwide. Many powerful people are still in preventing the system from changing, because they profit from it. So, contextual factors such as the political systems need to be considered within any the theoretical model based on the idea of journalistic or cultural communication using positive psychology strategies, as we defend, recognizing that context is essential in all forms of information to fully understand the complexities of the communicative subject.

Although the IMRESCoM model aspires to be universal and applicable to various forms of communication, this contextual dimension requires considering, for example, that individual predispositions significantly influence how messages are received, processed, and acted upon. Moreover, factors such as media platforms, specific issues, and national contexts can also shape communicative outcomes in important ways.

3.1.4. The Antidote Narrative Dimension: Constructive and Transformative Communication Patterns

The second key element of the IMRESCoM communication model is the Antidote-Narrative perspective, which is gained through an empathetic, affective, hopeful, ethical, equitable and ecofeminist response, among other possible criteria. To ensure that content aligns with the principles of Antidote Communication, the following narrative strategies might be considered.

Table 2. *The Antidote-Narrative Perspective*

Critical Approach: Context & Diagnosis
Sufficient context and nuance are provided to deepen understanding of the content
A robust, accurate and balanced diagnostic is done, avoiding any kind of misdiagnosis

Ethical dilemmas and structural conflicts behind the facts (extractivism, inequality, consumerism...) are made visible
An intersectional approach is adopted, highlighting the interdependence between climate, health, economy, gender, biodiversity, and social justice
Positive/Solution-Focus Approach: Empathy, hope and identification
Stories of real transformation are incorporated, with verifiable data, replicable experiences, or solutions that respect an eco-social perspective
A hopeful approach is used, with emotions intended to foster empathy for the common good (<i>sentipensar</i> or emotional-intellectual integration)
The content fosters identification with the story and its protagonists, generating a sense of well-being and satisfaction through meaningful personal experiences
Representational, epistemological & ethical criteria
Ecofeminism, Degrowth, Good Living, and other post-development principles are taught, prioritizing the public interest and the rights of humans, nature, animals, and future generations
A diversity of voices, especially from vulnerable groups, local knowledge, and affected communities are promoted, diversifying the roles of voices so as not to rely solely on official sources or traditional experts
Inclusive, non-anthropocentric, non-extractive language is used, respecting cultural, gender, and territorial differences
Social Responsibility
Information is provided on how citizens can get involved in social transformation
Contacts and information are provided on associations, individuals, networks and organizations linked to the T.E.

Source: prepared by the author

These additive and non-exclusive criteria serve as a practical tool to assess whether information not only accurately diagnoses problems but also empowers audiences, fosters hope, and inspires meaningful action. The following examples illustrate the antidote narrative perspective: some combine multiple criteria, while others stand out due to the strong presence of a single one. Future research should aim to identify and build consensus around the values with the greatest potential to drive social transformation and lasting changes in habits or attitudes.

As far as the critical approach is concerned, the importance of context and nuanced understanding is powerfully illustrated in the documentary *The Salt of*

the Earth (Wim Wenders and Juliano Ribeiro Salgado, 2014). The film underscores the need for change, in part by chronicling the life and work of photographer Sebastião Salgado. It presents a stark critique of human atrocities—providing a compelling diagnosis of the issues—yet ultimately conveys a hopeful message, emphasizing the restoration of nature and a reconnection with our natural roots as a path to healing. Through such narratives and approaches, we are invited to reflect on how and where to direct our focus when diagnosing in order to reveal the antidotes.

Striking a balance between diagnosis and remedy, *Life on Wheels: Transport for a New Urban Century* (David Hodge & Hi-Jin Kang Hodge, 2020) critically examines how car-centered urban design has caused deaths, pollution, and congestion. Yet, it moves beyond problem identification by showcasing real-world solutions such as Barcelona's superblocks and Paris's pedestrianized city center, which prioritize people over cars. The film advocates for a human-centered urban model where public transport, cycling, and pedestrian spaces take precedence. It also raises the important question of whether cities should adapt to technology or to genuine human needs.

Regarding the positive/solution-focused approach, the documentary *Tomorrow* (*Mañana*, Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent, France, 2015) stands out as a compelling example of narrative that raises solution-oriented questions and showcases transformative experiences, as highlighted in its synopsis:

What if showcasing solutions or telling stories of positive change were the most effective way to address ecological, economic, and social challenges? The voiceover in the documentary emphasizes one of its core objectives: we traveled the world searching for men and women offering creative alternatives; we aimed to bring them together like new pieces of an old puzzle to create a new narrative—one that could inspire people to build a different world (Filmaffinity, 2015).

A recent and innovative contribution by Spanish Public Television (RTVE) to stories of real transformation is the web series *Hope! We Are Still on Time* (Javier Peña, 2025). Featuring leading environmental experts from around the world and filmed across 17 countries, the series highlights concrete, actionable solutions to address the global ecological crisis. Produced with a clear antidote-communication approach, the series convincingly brings together the core elements pursued in this study, which we have identified as essential for ET communication: a holistic and integrative vision, an effective diagnosis, and above all, a proactive and hopeful outlook that fosters social

transformation. In addition, it has become a television phenomenon attracting millions of viewers (RTVE, 2025).¹

To illustrate an empathetic response, we can also look at the news coverage on Tele5, a private national Spanish TV channel, broadcast on September 22, 2024. The program reported that over 500 people had arrived on Spain's islands in small boats over a single weekend, focusing on the humanitarian aid efforts. In another segment, it highlighted successful examples of integration and coexistence in Guissona, one of Catalonia's most migrant-populated towns: «More than half of its 7,500 inhabitants are immigrants who have managed to make it there, reunite their families, and fill the schools with children. Together, migrants and locals have proven that coexistence is not only possible, but also beneficial (09/22/2024)».

Campeones (Champions, Javier Fesser, 2018) offers an empathetic perspective on intellectual disability, highlighting how meaningful personal interactions foster mutual growth, acceptance, and transformation. Instead of being objects of pity, the characters with disabilities are active agents of change who, through their perseverance and authenticity, challenge social expectations and humanize the protagonist. With humor and warmth, the film avoids clichés, offering a respectful and emotionally resonant portrayal.

My Octopus Teacher (Craig Foster, 2020) embodies key principles of eco-feminism and Good Living by fostering an emotional connection between humans and the natural world. Through the intimate relationship between the filmmaker and the octopus, the documentary inspires empathy, respect, and awe for non-human life, illustrating the interconnectedness of all beings. It prioritizes public interest and collective well-being by emphasizing the intrinsic value of nature and the importance of caring for ecosystems—not for economic gain, but for the health of the planet and future generations. In doing so, it invites viewers to adopt a more humble, reciprocal, and respectful way of inhabiting the world.

Journey to Utopia (2020), directed by Erlend Eirik Mo, follows a Norwegian family as they leave behind a comfortable life to join an eco-community in Denmark. Through an honest and intimate narrative, the film explores the emotional and practical challenges of living according to ecological values within a consumerist society. Likewise, *Minimalism: A Documentary About the Important*

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/54me9hd8>

Things (Matt D'Avella, 2021) illustrates how, in response to the rampant consumerism in the American society, an alternative lifestyle is emerging—one grounded in voluntary simplicity and the conscious reduction of material possessions: the minimalist movement.

3.1.5. Communicative Social Responsibility as a Normative-Operational Axis of the Model

This approach calls for the social responsibility of the media and the cultural industries, emphasizing that, regardless of ownership, they must serve the common good by advancing ecosocial justice. The principle of social responsibility is rooted in the capacity for action to drive social transformation. The media serve as a bridge, providing information on services, contacts, and connecting interest groups, networks of individuals, and people on a personal level. This pillar should address questions such as: Does the narrative clarify what I can do now that I understand the urgency of taking action? Where do I begin? Whom can I reach out to? What steps should I follow? Does the narrative include contacts or resources to learn more about Ecosocial Transition communication initiatives? Does the narrative provide contacts for ET networks?

A great way to begin is by engaging with one of the many professional journalism networks dedicated to advancing the communication of ET. These networks offer valuable resources, training, and collaborative platforms for journalists seeking to report on key social, environmental, and technological issues. Among them, the Solutions Journalism Network (SJN), the International Journalists' Network (IJNET), the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, the Poynter Institute, the Earth Journalism Network (EJN), the Network of Environmental Journalists, the World Association of Community Radios (AMARC) stand out.

Other networks also focus on specific social issues: the Feminist Journalism Network, the Collective of Communicators Focused on Disability, the Network of Migrant Journalists or the Action Group on Erosion, Technology, and Concentration, among others. By engaging with these networks, journalists can gain the knowledge, tools, and community support needed to effectively communicate the challenges and solutions surrounding Ecosocial Transition.

3.1.6. Transversality as a Cross-Cutting Validated Dimension in Ecosocial Media Practices

The ecosocial approach requires a transversal perspective that permeates every phase and process of journalistic production. In this context, transversality means integrating ecosocial criteria across all sections, formats and genres,



making them an essential lens through which reality is interpreted and communicated. This includes not only the selection of themes and the adoption of viewpoints—through mechanisms such as agenda setting, framing, priming, or newsmaking—but also programmatic and creative decisions related to field production, plot development, scripting or storytelling. Likewise, it extends to the configuration of source types and their quality, ensuring a plurality of voices and a critical understanding of context. In the IMRESCOM Model, integrating an ecosocial perspective into information and communication processes also involves examining the forms of content production and generation to integrate a reduction in the carbon footprint, the promotion of citizen participation, transparency, and accountability, following this formula: the antidote-narrative perspective + professional and production practices + organizational and training coherence + participation and monitoring, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3. Key Criteria for Eco-Social Transversality

Production practices
The application of eco-social criteria should also extend to production, including the reduction of the environmental footprint (energy use, transportation, materials, etc.)
Verification against climate, environmental, and social misinformation should be actively promoted
Consistency between editorial content and advertising, marketing, or institutional agreements should be ensured
Communicative and participation practices
Mechanisms for participation and dialogue with citizens, social groups, NGOs and scientific communities on the Eco-Social Transition should be established
Training practices
Journalistic staff should be provided with internal training in eco-social approaches, climate ethics, ecofeminism, and related areas
Monitoring practices
Internal monitoring indicators should be implemented to assess the degree of eco-social transversality in content

Source: prepared by the author

4. Discussion

The Ecosocial Transition constitutes not only a socio-environmental transformation but also a profound communicative challenge. As a result, it requires rethinking the normative foundations of information practices, moving beyond a transmission-oriented logic toward a communicative ethics capable of



fostering participation, affective engagement, and collective agency. In this regard, this study aligns with scholarship that conceives communication as a form of democratic and transformative praxis rather than a neutral channel of information.

The IMRESCom model, as presented in the Results section, operationalizes this shift by integrating antidote communication, transversality, and a multi-dimensional analytical structure. In interpretive terms, this approach resonates with the critical pragmatist foundations of Nancy Fraser (2010), particularly her emphasis on justice as redistribution, recognition, and representation, which highlights the communicative conditions under which voices are included or marginalized in public discourse. Similarly, Hans Joas (1997) conceives action as value-generating and contextually embedded, reinforcing the idea that meaning in communication is co-constructed through situated and affective processes.

From a complementary perspective, recent ecosocial communication scholarship—such as the work of Arturo Escobar on “sentipensar”—and ecological approaches to affect and relationality (e.g., biophilic perspectives) further support the relevance of integrating emotional, embodied, and collective dimensions into communicative frameworks (Osborne, 2021). In this sense, the IMRESCom model should not be understood merely as an analytical tool, but as a proposal for reorienting media ecologies toward more reflexive, relational, and transformative practices.

Within this framework, the distinction between Diagnostic Information (DI) and Antidote Information (AI), introduced in the model, gains particular relevance as an interpretive lens for assessing how narratives construct problems and whether they enable pathways toward engagement and transformation. This distinction allows for a more nuanced understanding of how media narratives may either reproduce cognitive inertia or foster conditions for ecosocial awareness and action.

However, the transformative potential of antidote communication depends not only on narrative design but also on institutional and structural conditions. As highlighted in the Results section, transversality must be understood as a cross-cutting principle that extends beyond content selection to include production practices, editorial coherence, environmental impact, and institutional alignment. Without this broader commitment, ecosocial communication risks remaining symbolic rather than operational.



Ethics and Transparency

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Author Contributions

Contribution	Author 1	Author 2	Author 3	Author 4
Conceptualization	X	X		
Data curation	X	X		
Formal Analysis	X	X		
Funding acquisition	X	X		
Investigation	X	X		
Methodology	X	X		
Project administration	X	X		
Resources	X	X		
Software	X	X		
Supervision	X	X		
Validation	X	X		
Visualization	X	X		
Writing – original draft	X			
Writing – review & editing	X	X		

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