



The Climate Scale – In Practice

The Climate Scale in Action

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What is the Climate Scale all about?

The Climate Scale is an interactive learning and hands-on tool. It makes the climate impact of everyday actions clear and comparable, inviting people to discuss effective climate protection in daily life. Participants estimate, compare, and discuss. This creates casual conversations where individuals can reflect on their own actions and strengthen climate awareness.

How does the Climate Scale work?

The Climate Scale consists of a scale with two balance pans and cans of varying weights. Each can represents a specific everyday action from areas such as nutrition, mobility, or heating & housing.

The weight of the can symbolically represents the climate protection impact of that action. Heavier cans represent larger CO₂ reduction potentials, while lighter cans represent smaller ones. All (!) depicted actions benefit climate protection, meaning there are only good deeds here. That is the beauty of the Climate Scale's positive, non-judgmental communication. So, you are doing good whenever you implement any of these actions. However, some suggestions have a larger impact than others. With the Climate Scale, you can playfully discover for yourself which ones those are.

Where can the Climate Scale be used?

The Climate Scale is suitable for many contexts and target groups – even without prior specialized knowledge:

- As a hands-on activity at information booths, city festivals, or exhibitions
- As an engaging element or active break in workshops, seminars, and conferences
- In formal and informal educational work (including lesson units based on ESD guidelines)



Availability

Rental & DIY: The Climate Scale (German version) can be borrowed free of charge from [over 30 locations nationwide in Germany](#). Alternatively, you can build your own custom Climate Scale using the [crafting instructions](#) (in German).

Climate Scale Card Game: The card game follows the same concept as the scale, but is more compact and easily portable. It is particularly suitable for formal and informal education and can be ordered free (mail@nachhaltigerkonsum.info) or printed out at home.

Information Booth Checklist

☐ Booth Equipment

- The following equipment has proven effective:
 - 2 long tables
 - Partition / Display wall
 - Optional: A-board / Poster display
 - Optional: Transparent A4 acrylic table stands and/or brochure holders

☐ Cans & Scale

- We recommend a sturdy transport box ("Eurobox"); rolling suitcases are also suitable.
- Depending on space and target group, it is recommended not to bring all 49 cans, but to select a subset. Our recommendation for a balanced basic set as well as cans for a young target group can be found in the [crafting instructions](#) (in German).

☐ Printed Accompanying Materials (in German)

- Communication guide [„Peanut-Frust“](#)
- Info sheet ["Data – Facts – Backgrounds"](#) – *ideally laminated*
- Info sheet [for unattended use](#) – *ideally laminated*
- Optional: Printed [calculation sheets](#), [posters](#), [roll-ups](#), [infographics](#) on Handprint, Big Points & Co.
- When used in schools: [Lesson unit including sufficient worksheets](#)

☐ Optional: Flyers & Brochures (in German)

- We have created flyers to promote the Climate Scale. We are happy to send these to you.
- Feel free to also bring flyers & brochures from local initiatives.

Tip: For preparation, we recommend at least skimming through these documents:

- [FAQ on the Climate Scale & Sustainable Consumption](#) (in German)
- Communication guide [„Peanut-Frust“](#) (in German)

Preparation & Execution

Preparation

We recommend using the Climate Scale with staff present. An approachable contact person facilitates discussions, answers questions, and helps put things into context. Two topic pages are available for preparation, which you can use in print or digitally (e.g., on a tablet):

- [Background Knowledge](#) – Assumptions, calculations, sources, and guidance on interpretation
- [FAQ](#) – Climate Scale & Sustainable Consumption

Procedure – How it works

Depending on the event format and group size, different approaches are possible. The following sequence has proven successful, as it fosters curiosity, readiness to talk, and "aha" moments:

- 1. Let them estimate:**
Participants first estimate which cans are heavier or lighter.
- 2. Weigh & Compare:**
The cans are then checked using the scale.
- 3. Categorize & Discuss:**
Differences are reflected upon together.



Example Tasks

For individuals

- "On one side of the scale is Can XY – which action do you think saves even more CO₂?"
- "Choose two cans representing measures you already practice, and two you would like to try in the future."

For groups

- "Arrange the cans from lightest to heaviest."
- "Who can find the lightest or heaviest can first?"

Starting Conversations

Helpful prompt questions include:

- Which actions do you find particularly easy or difficult to implement?
- Which action surprised you in terms of how much or how little it actually impacts the climate?
- How can we motivate others to take action themselves – without being preachy?

Tip: You can find further prompt questions in the [Climate Scale Card Game](#).

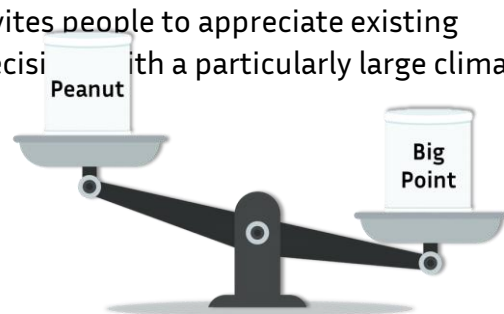
Context, Tips & Formats

Big Points and "Peanuts"

The Climate Scale shows that the climate impact of individual daily actions **varies significantly**. This realization can be disorienting at first, especially when measures implemented with great dedication turn out to have relatively little weight.

However: The Climate Scale is **not intended to demotivate**. It invites people to appreciate existing engagement while also focusing on the so-called [Big Points](#) – decisions with a particularly large climate impact.

How to convey this message in a motivating way is explained in the info sheet ["Peanut-Frust"](#) (in German).



Tips & Tricks for Practical Use

- Select cans intentionally and adapt them to your target group
- Work with elements of surprise (estimate first, then weigh)
- Position additional materials like posters or table displays in easily visible places
- Keep icebreaker questions ready ("Which can do you think is the lightest?")
- Keep flyers or QR codes ready to direct people to further resources

Unattended Use

In principle, the Climate Scale can also be set up without staff. However, we recommend active supervision to answer questions, provide context, and spark discussions. If the scale is used temporarily unattended as an exhibit, display the explanatory [info sheet](#) to guide users and encourage engagement.

Feedback

Your opinion helps us further develop the Climate Scale and make it even more user-friendly. Please take a moment to share your experience in the [feedback survey on the German Environment Agency \(Umweltbundesamt\) website](#) – every response counts!