



The art of exchanging weather stories

Mathew Stiller-Reeve (1,3) and Eamon O’Kane (2)

(1) Uni Research Climate, Uni Research Climate, Bergen, Norway (mathew.reeve@uni.no), (2) University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway, (3) Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, Bergen, Norway

If children from different countries and cultures want to exchange ideas about weather and climate, then it may be a challenge. They cannot simply write to or Skype each other if they speak different languages. But they can create art for each other! Art transcends language, which opens up an exciting channel of communication. Someone needs to facilitate this sharing and communication, which is where the adults come in. In a recent project, we gathered a group of climate scientists and artists in Norway and Bangladesh to facilitate an exchange of children’s climate-art between our countries.

We visited schools in Norway and Bangladesh, lectured about climate and challenged the children to draw pictures of what good and bad weather meant to them. We travelled between the countries and exhibited the pictures from Norway to the children of Bangladesh and vice versa.

Through the art, the children presented their own views on weather and climate and compared them with children from other parts of the world. They shared perspectives and understood what others were concerned about. The art told stories about the children’s local cultures and livelihoods. And in the end we are left with a beautiful repository of children’s ideas about weather and climate that can also teach us adults something. Our children are the ones who will be most impacted by future climate change. It’s important that we listen to their voices. In this project, climate science and art collaborated to motivate the children. Then the art provided a platform for creating dialogue and sharing ideas between children from two very different places.