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Where to get visual climate data that suit education and outreach?

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From our own climate outreach experiences, we have observed key elements that make an efficient outreach work. They include interactivity, exclusivity, fun and surprising content, intuitive explanations, connection between data and the audience lives, and the use of beautiful illustrations. Geosciences continuously produce highly esthetical and novel material that can be much appreciated, even by people who are not familiar with environmental issues. Data like satellite imagery and its derived products are thus a strong educational means for intuitively apprehending climate and other environmental topics. They have strong artistic power, as well as a strong ability to capture phenomena occurring on spatiotemporal scales stranger to the human eye (e.g. glacier flow, desiccation of lakes, sea level rise, surface air temperature changes, etc.). For non-experts however, the way to find these data may be quite tortuous.

One of the main issues to access to the many free online visual resources is the multiplicity of sources where to get the information. This is challenging for journalists, teachers and other interested people, as well as for geoscience researchers who develop outreach materials with content wider than their own specific field. On the other hand, when it comes to their own field of expertise, climate scientists are the best placed to find the relevant resources.

We call the scientific community to promote the visual data they produce to the large public. To catalyze this process, we are continuously gathering a selection of websites with scientific content easily understandable to non-experts. This catalog can be freely read on our EarthBreath webpage at http://www.sophia.mines-paristech.fr/earthbreath/. EarthBreath aims at being enriched by scientific and non-scientific people aware of additional state-of-the-art high-quality online contents. We therefore enjoin all to help us building this box of precious outreach tools, by notifying to us via email such websites.

The objectives of the EarthBreath tool will be presented along with two detailed examples of workshops leaning on contents from indexed websites.