



## Our personal journey of learning about climate change

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The importance of climate change (CC) education (CCE) has been expressed widely. Two quotes will illustrate:

“Education is an essential element of the global response to climate change. It helps young people understand and address the impact of global warming, encourages changes in their attitudes and behaviour and helps them adapt to climate change-related trends.”<sup>[1]</sup>

“Parties shall cooperate in taking measures, as appropriate, to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information, . . . .”<sup>[2]</sup>

In this paper, first, we show that learning about CC by oneself is possible. Second, we wish to encourage people, especially young citizens, to take up CC learning outside classrooms. Third, we emphasize that CC should be taught at all schools around the world, and also at home.

“The topic of climate change needs to become the backbone of education round the world . . . sustainability, climate change, and resilience must be included in one way or another in every single course, at all levels, primary to university, across the world”<sup>[3]</sup>.

We had become aware of the worsening change in climate (eg, SR1.5<sup>[4]</sup>), and we realized that, despite the Paris Agreement<sup>[2]</sup>, CCE has not been enhanced in our high school. So we decided that we should study CC independently outside school. The more we learned, the more we realized that it is important for all younger citizens of the planet to learn about and adapt to CC.

We also realized that traditional classroom chalk-and-talk study is not the only way (nor probably the best way) to learn about CC. We discovered that it is perfectly possible to learn about CC through a myriad of other ways, often on an independent or autonomous basis<sup>[5]</sup>. We also realized that we were able to achieve some “objectives of climate education includ[ing] content **knowledge** of climate science and options for **action** . . . , cultivating science and **communication** skills . . . , and initiating positive **attitudes** and actions.”<sup>[6]</sup>

In our presentation, we will present our personal experience of learning about CC under our own steam. We will explain how we have been learning about CC through a variety of modes and methods. These include: mountain walking, research field trips on CC, participating in the EGU conference, MOOCs, summer schools, children’s holiday centres, films, meeting geoscientists. We will outline these methods and comment on how effective we found them to be. We will also provide recommendations for others who might wish to follow in our footsteps.

We found that independent CC learning is a relatively effective way of becoming familiar with CC and CC issues, especially for young people unable to obtain such learning in their classrooms.

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1. UNESCO. (no date). *Climate Change Education*. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development/cce>

2. Article 12, *Paris Agreement*. [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english\\_paris\\_agreement.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf)

3. Crookall. (2013). Climate change and simulation/gaming: Learning for survival. *Simulation & Gaming*, 44(2-3), 195-228.

4. *SR1.5*, <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

5. See, eg, Holec. (1981). *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Pergamon.

6. Matthews et al. (2018). *Climate Change Education*. <https://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU2019/session/32129>