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Rising To The Challenge: Addressing climate literacy in Ireland through the lens of student rights

Emer Emily Neenan

Trinity College Dublin, School of Education, Carlow Town, Ireland (neenane@tcd.ie)

A recent geoscience education project, undertaken in Irish secondary schools using a children's rights based methodology that incorporated student voice in the design, implementation, and analysis, began with a focus on "Earth Science" but ended, through the influence of the student co-researchers, with a focus on climate literacy. Teenagers have seen the writing on the wall, as sea levels and global temperatures rise, and traditional career paths and global superpowers fall.

Following on from the aforementioned project, an international comparative study currently ongoing seeks to establish global best practice in geoscience education and climate literacy, with the aim of facilitating improvement in the Irish context. Research suggests Irish school students are eager to learn about the Earth, but are frustrated by classes on climate change that are not actionable and do not address the systemic causes of the climate catastrophe. There is an appetite among teenagers and young people to learn more, but simply adding more classes or more class time isn't sufficient, the classes must be appropriately challenging, honest, and action-focused. This ongoing research seeks to provide guidance and tools to achieve that in Irish formal and informal education.

Thus, in this presentation, the findings of a recent geoscience and climate change education project will be discussed in the context of how the expressed needs and opinions of the participating students have impacted the ongoing international comparative study seeking to improve Ireland's geoscience and climate literacy.