

Climate Change

Project Title	Climate Change – Measuring Baseline Biodiversity
Project Team	Associate Professor Len Sparrow, Dr Sandra Frid (SiMERR WA)
Period	June 08 - December 08
Funding Agency	SiMERR
Organisational Base	SiMERR WA

Description

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This project aims to document students' and teachers' experiences and learning when involved in science-oriented community based projects, while at the same time identifying key features of the ways such projects are conceived and then developed. The project is a case study at one school that became proactive in 2007 with learning about climate change and putting into place changes to reduce carbon emissions at the school and in the students' homes. As an extension to these actions the students expressed a desire to become involved in monitoring over a period of time a tract of land to collect and collate data related to biodiversity. Two locations were selected as land sites – a heathland and a wetland.

A senior education officer from the state Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) visited the school for two days to teach the students and teachers how to measure biodiversity. The research component involves a SiMERR researcher who will visit the school on two occasions to participate in site visits and collect field notes and interview data related to students' science learning, teachers' professional learning, students' and teachers' views about the project, and the views of community members involved in the project; data will also be collected to document how the community partnerships are developed and sustained.

Participants

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Years 6 and 7 teachers and students at a small rural school in the south coastal area of WA; approximately 122 students in four classes.

Findings

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Outcomes

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The school has already been preparing a short article for SCIOS that will highlight SiMERR's involvement in the Climate Change project.

Impact

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This initial year of the project will provide a model for partnerships between a rural school and local government agencies for building students' scientific awareness and appreciation of their environment as well as scientific skills to support sustainability efforts in the region. Feedback from the students, teachers and community personnel will provide insight into the science that is learned and how science curricula in primary school can be developed in an integrated way within the context of local issues and needs.

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