

Art as a Tool for Climate Change Adaptation Communication

Mediating Culturally Adaptation Knowledge Stemming From ARTISTICC's Integrative Community-Centred Research

In task 5 the ARTISTICC research consortium has committed to contribute towards the bridging, within the context of coastal adaptation, of the divides between nature and culture, between scientific knowledge and local actions by mobilising scientific, and socio-institutional economic data collected from diverse social ecological setting. This data base will be analysed to produce locally meaningful artwork, will then be assembled, combined, in digital form and publicly exchanged through mobile applications. The key element here is to give access to the diversity of coastal adaptation experiences while retaining its heterogeneity.

The first step consists of transforming results of the field analysis into locally meaningful narratives. Storytelling is seen here as an efficient translation tool to connect environmental changes and societies. The current global warming crisis is disconnecting the future from the past by putting such a future beyond the grasp of historical sense. Storytelling may help, in the present, to reconnect the past and the future. Stories bring not only together memory and culture, but also reveal a distance which makes both visible as frames for policymaking. We will dovetail the natural science-based, historical and sociological analyses within the narrative forms to be developed. These narratives will be created through joint participatory writing workshops with the local team of scientists, community members and local artists participating in step 2 below.

The second step will be to translate the narratives obtained into a variety of art forms. Climate change as a cultural material for artistic production is the subject of a recent yet extremely active interest (see background, above). Within ARTISTICC, we will propose to local artists on the study sites the raw material consisting of the scientific results from the analyses produced within Tasks 2 to 4 and consisting of the narratives produced within task 5. This creative work will be (re-) “composed” through a compositionist exercise. The word compositionist, coming from Bruno Latour’s “Compositionist Manifesto”, means that the divide between nature and society, matters of fact and matters of concern cannot be taken for granted anymore: it underlines that things have to be put together while retaining their heterogeneity. If

nature is not already assembled, the scientific facts of the matter have to be constructed and an assembly is necessary to compose a common world through arts and politics (Latour 2010). Furthermore, these compositions will allow for the development of an integrative multi-scale approach that will not betray the diversity of local specificities, thus allowing ARTISTICC results to remain connected to the daily and locally-defined nature of adaptation to climate change.

Activities in Kerala

ARTISTICC India's research programme in Vypin Kochi, Kerala is designed to ensue through community participation. In order to facilitate adaptation research and involve communities in policy making process, ARTISTICC(India) formed the community research group called **Janakeeya Gaveshana Samithi**. Several group meetings and workshops were conducted with local community groups, scientists and artists during the last two years and these interactions have laid necessary background for task 5 and 6. This dimension is also pursued in the case of using art as a medium for climate change based science communication. This is an on-going process.

The first phase of activities in module 5, started an year ago will be continued for another six months in Vypin Island. The first stage was video mapping of the seasonal impact of climate variability, especially during rainy season, and it was followed by interaction with the affected people. A few clippings of these are uploaded in the ARTISTICC India website for watching. As per suggestions from the community research team the following activities were completed in Vypin.

- ARTISTICC India convened a combined meeting of community research team and Photographer's Association of Vypin to discuss the possibility of using photography as a tool to map climate change induced adaptation in Vypin region in November 2015.
- A photographic competition on climate change adaptation was organised with good participation from local artists. The competition ended on 31st March 2016. A team of experts are evaluating the submissions.
- Another attempt was to disseminate the message about the significance of climate change adaptation through younger generation. Hence the combined team of ARTISTICC India and Janakeeya Vikasana Samithi conducted

various arts competition focusing on climate change adaptation involving more than 50 educational institutions from primary to 12th standard in Vypin Island. The competition was conducted on 9 January 2016 from 9 am to 6 PM. It was a festival consisting of 200 children and their parents at Sree Rama Varma Higher Secondary School, Cherai, Vypin. Competitions were conducted in six items viz. elocution, essay, painting, cartoons, poetry recitation and skit. All the items were based on climate change themes and the programme was inaugurated by a film star in Malayalam, named Sri. Majeed. Most parts of the programme were mapped by video and it is planned to convert it into a documentary. The highlight of the festival was a one kilo meter procession by the children, parents and the public. The procession was accompanied by beats on native drums and banners conveying the message of climate change adaptation.

Upcoming Events

- Prize distribution and display of winning art forms will be conducted on 30th July 2016. During this camp the arts festival of winners, we wish to collect a feedback on the message of climate change adaptation.
- The team plans to conduct a competition on short films focussing on the theme of climate change adaptation. It will be propagated through social media and YouTube.
- It is also decided to make a short film on climate change adaptation by ARTISTIC India by utilising the services of professionals in this area.
- Meanwhile, Mr. Mathew Puthuserry, the co-ordinator of community research team is a painter, teacher and a social activist offered to provide a series of painting on climate change adaptation.
- Finally, the whole experiment of Art as a tool for Climate Change Adaptation Communication will be documented as a report for ARTISTIC India for public information. <https://www.facebook.com/100007522324097/videos>
- Science communication workshop in late November 2016. University of Plymouth, ARTISTIC partners, CUSAT, INCOIS, CMFRI,CIFT,NGOs community groups participate