



"Teachers need support in finding new ways to teach science at schools, and tools to make science education stimulating and engaging."

Marikka Nevämäki from Vaisala instructs students on how to fill in their weather diaries with real meteorological symbols.

Henrik Anttila is shown analyzing water samples taken from a lake by his team.

Hands-on natural science

Teachers need support in finding new ways to teach science at schools, and tools to make science education stimulating and engaging. Motivating children to study science helps in inspiring a new generation of scientists, and individuals who are able to understand and care for their environment. So far, mankind has not scored high points for acting responsibly and sustainably regarding the environment. New generations are entering a world where environmental matters are in focus more than ever before.

Vaisala participates in an international science and education program for children called GLOBE - Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment. The program was first launched in 1994.

The Globe program brings together a worldwide community of primary and secondary school students and teachers, scientists, and citizens. They are all working together to better understand, sustain, and improve the Earth's environment on the local, regional, and global scales. The goal of the program is





Teacher Timo Pakonen leads his group of students through some arid Finnish terrain.

to promote the teaching and learning of science and enhance environmental literacy and stewardship through active and fun hands-on participation.

Over 20,000 schools involved

Globe is an interagency program funded by the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). It is supported by the U.S. Department of State, and implemented through a cooperative agreement between NASA and the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) in Boulder, Colorado. Colorado State University (CSU) is also a key partner in Globe.

Internationally, Globe is a partnership between the United States and over 100 countries, each of which manages and supports its unique national and regional program infrastructure and activities. Over 20,000 schools around the world are participating in the program.

Learning science through fun and games

One of the most recent local-level Globe events was held in Central Finland in August 2008, when schoolchildren from

around the country and neighboring Estonia got together to compete in the Globe Games, held near the city of Oulu.

Teams competed through a series of different tasks, all relating to environmental measurement and natural science. Echo-soundings and water sample analysis were carried out at a lake, soil qualities were analyzed, and different plants and insects identified. Weather observations were made on cloud formation, wind conditions, temperature and humidity. Teams tackled their tasks enthusiastically, and made many new friends during the three-day event. "These kinds of events are a great opportunity for students and teachers to network and learn while having fun and many memorable experiences. It is wonderful to have programs like this to spice up our teaching resources!" says teacher Markku Tossavainen. ■

Further information:
www.globe.gov

GLOBE program provides the opportunity to learn by:

- Taking scientifically valid measurements in the fields of atmosphere, hydrology, soils, and land cover/phenology
- Reporting data through the Internet
- Publishing research projects based on GLOBE data and protocols
- Creating maps and graphs on a free interactive website to analyze data sets
- Collaborating with scientists and other GLOBE students around the world