

# trackingchange

Local and Traditional Knowledge in Watershed Governance

## COP24 Conference for Youth and UNESCO

2018 Youth Knowledge Fair Winners in Katowice, Poland and Paris, France



### *Sharing Local Knowledge with an International Audience...*

From November 28<sup>th</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the winners from the third semi-annual **Tracking Change Youth Knowledge Fair** were invited to participate in side events at the **UN Climate Change Conference (COP24)** in Katowice, Poland and present at **UNESCO Headquarters** in Paris, France! The trip was an opportunity for students to share their ideas, network with each other, work with scientists, researchers and academics, and have a bit of fun while learning about traditional knowledge and climate change! After all, youth are our future leaders and their ideas matter!

### Who did the youth present to?

After months of preparation in their home communities, where the youth consulted Elders, gathered photos, interviewed community members and synthesized their learning into posters, youths presented to:

1. UNESCO representatives at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, including Canada's Permanent Ambassador to UNESCO, Elaine Ayotte;
2. Young climate researchers and advocates at the UN Conference of Youth (COY 14);
3. International Indigenous delegates to COP24 at the UNC Indigenous Peoples Caucus;
4. Representatives from Environment Canada, including Larry Hegan, Lead Negotiator for the UNFCCC Indigenous Peoples Platform; and
5. Journalists from the Finnish Journal, Hyvän sään aikana.

*“In the beginning, I had no clue what UNESCO meant or how big of a deal this opportunity was for me. I learned that I was at the world’s headquarters of UNESCO and was speaking in front of world leaders on climate change from around the world. These people listened to what I had to say about the impact of climate change on my home community.”*

*Ryan Schaefer, Fort Smith NWT*



Top (from left to right): Gavin Winter-Sinnott, Mayo YT, Kaidynce Storr, Inuvik NWT and Portia Morin, Edmonton AB.

Bottom: Ryan Schaefer, Fort Smith NWT, Richard Stewart, Ft. McPherson (Tetlit Zheh) NWT and Kelsey Lockhard, Lutsel K'e, NWT.



Building on the existing work within the larger Tracking Change Project, the overall objective of the COP24 trip was to create an opportunity for high school youth (grade 10-11) to connect with each other in Poland for ten days of educational activities. This included knowledge sharing, educational workshops, keynote presentations from inspirational youth and Indigenous leaders and local field trips. Another key objective was to encourage the development of research and written/oral communication skills through a poster project related to health of the water, fish, fishing livelihoods and well-being of communities in the Mackenzie River basin. The opportunity allowed for youth and schools to network with other youth globally on issues of climate change!

*Two big thumbs up to  
our awesome  
coordinators and  
chaperones for the trip!*

*More information and pictures at:  
<http://www.trackingchange.ca/cop24/>*

## Learning Abroad

This project engaged youth in the definition of research priorities in the Mackenzie and key issues for study. It is important to hear from youth about their perspectives of climate change!

Building on the learning that began in their communities as they developed their posters, students participated in a variety of activities that supported their learning about climate change and alternative energy!

Students:

1. Participated in team-building and presentation-development workshops in preparation for their trip;
2. Spoke with Indigenous Elders and young Indigenous climate leaders;
3. Engaged in a participatory workshop on alternative energy and select sessions at the UN Conference of Youth (COY);
4. Toured the Wieliczka Salt Mine and Silesian Ethnographic Museum to learn about the histories of land, culture and mining in Poland;
5. Shared a meal with a Polish family in Katowice; and
6. Enjoyed tourist sites like the Eiffel Tower and Katowice Christmas Market – just for fun!



For more project information visit our website:

# [www.trackingchange.ca](http://www.trackingchange.ca)



Enjoying the traditional Polish Christmas Market in Katowice!



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