

First SuPrHuman Joint Teaching Activity: Climate simulation game "C-ROADS World Climate" at four universities at the same time

On April 30, Nürtingen-Geislingen University (NGU) carried out its first Joint Teaching Activity within the framework of SuPrHuman, a project funded by DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). Two of the four SuPrHuman partners participated: Dankook University in South Korea and the University of Pisa in Italy. The other partners Universidad Panamericana in Mexico and Linfield University in the USA could not join us because of the time difference – it would have been in the middle of the night. NGU invited its own students, the students from Pisa and Dankook as well as students from Ritsumeikan University in Japan, to jointly simulate UN climate negotiations. With over 40 participants, the online event was a complete success.

In the simulation game "C-ROADS World Climate", participants take on the role of negotiators at a UN climate summit. They are faced with the task of limiting the increase in the average global temperature below 2°C by 2100 compared to the pre-industrial era. This will only be possible through a significant reduction in CO₂ emissions. The participants represent different countries or world regions and their interests and they must agree on a concrete plan of action. The results of the negotiations can be visualized and discussed live. The simulation or the underlying algorithm was developed at MIT and is also used by governments to form strategies for climate negotiations.

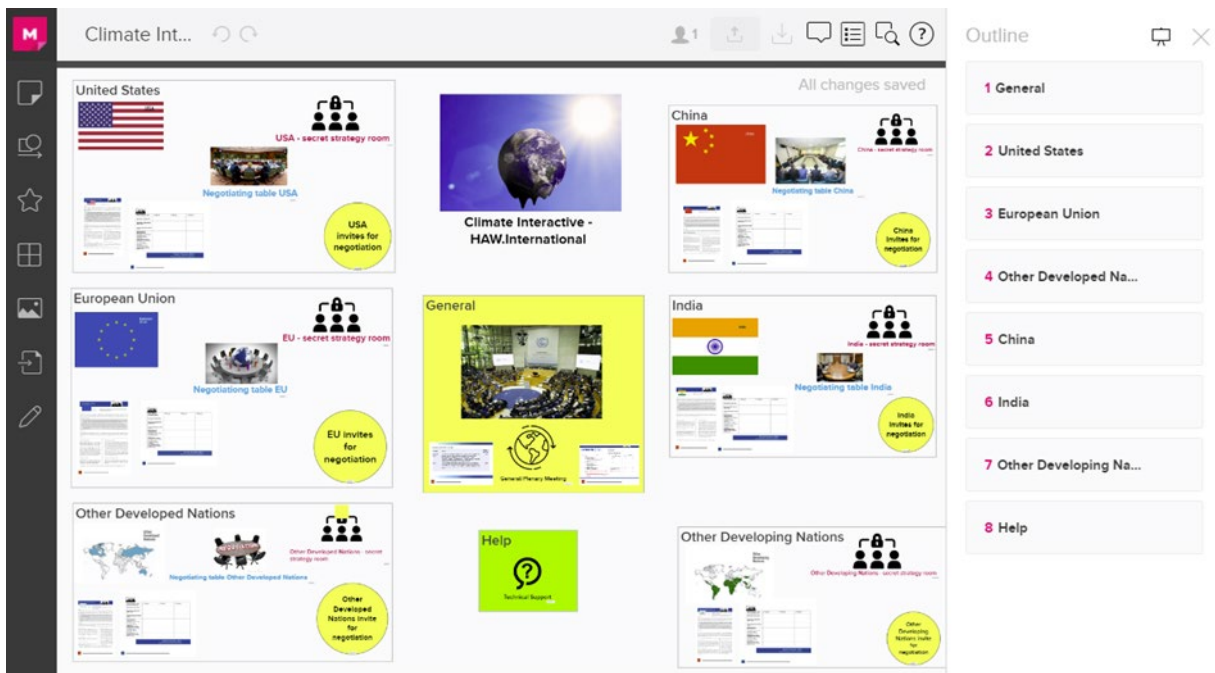
NGU professor Carsten Herbes guided the students, supported by colleagues, in the role of the UN Secretary General through the English-language simulation, in which negotiations and short presentations of the results by the respective parties alternate. Running the simulation online, which made it possible for participants from four different nations to come together in the first place, also presented the organizers with some challenges: communication within and between the individual negotiating parties as well as in the plenary session had to be ensured and coordinated. Under the leadership of Miriam Michelsen from the International Office at NGU, the setting of the UN climate conferences was digitally reconstructed for this purpose: Based on the web tool MURAL, individual negotiation rooms of the individual parties as well as rooms for bi- and multilateral discussions were created. Communication took place in various MS Teams meetings.

The common goal of limiting the increase in average global temperature to 2°C by 2100 was just achieved after the last round of negotiations. However, it was clearly more important to give the participants an impression of the complexity of climate negotiations with different starting points and interests, of global contexts, and of the general urgency of climate protection. Quoting a participant from Italy, "Even if we commit to making unrealistic promises, we will not achieve reasonable results. And that scares me."

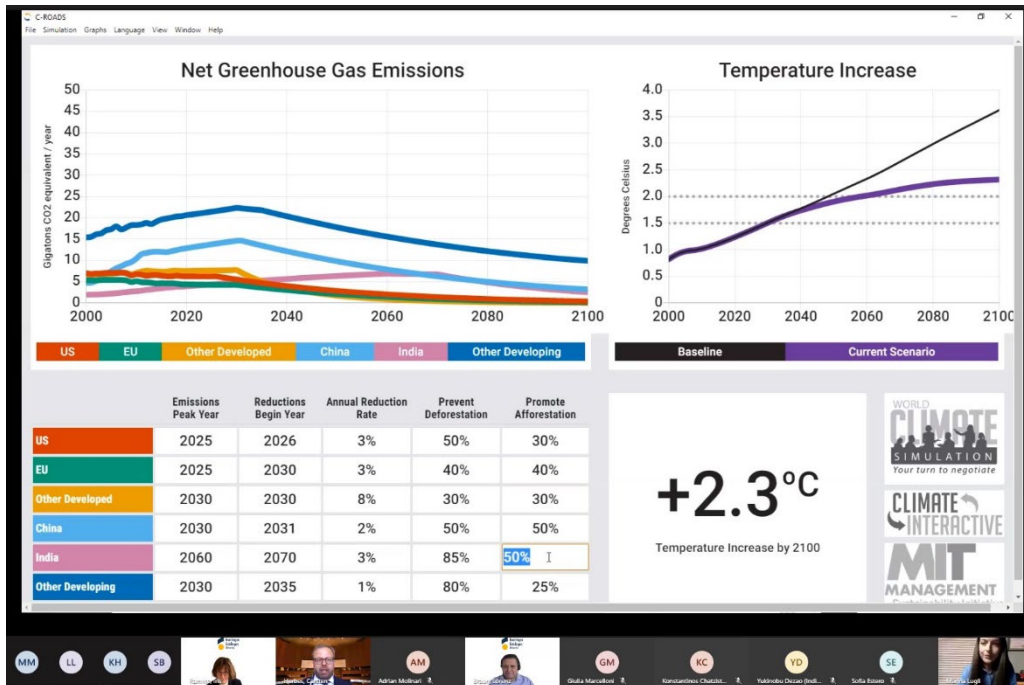
With the event, in times of limited travel possibilities, a virtual format for intercultural exchange based on a highly important topic could be realized. The organizers would like to thank the Baden-Württemberg-Stiftung for their support within the framework of the BWS plus program for the partnership between Ritsumeikan University and NGU as well as the German Academic Exchange Service within the framework of the HAW.International program.



Participants at the welcoming session



MURAL screenshot with different negotiation rooms



Representation of the intermediate states of negotiations in C-ROADS

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