

Dave MacLeod



What job are you currently doing?

Currently doing a PhD at the University of Liverpool, entitled “Seamless integration of climate and epidemiological models to assess the projection uncertainty of future infectious disease in the U.K. and Western Europe”

How did you reach your current job?

At school I always preferred the sciences over anything else, particularly Physics. I also have always had a good sense for Maths. After leaving school I continued along the physical science route, by taking Physics at Exeter University. This cemented my love of the subject, but also opened my eyes to new pathways. My third year was spent studying at the University of Sydney, Australia. Whilst there I took modules on the philosophy of science and also one on outdoor education which helped me realise two things. Firstly, the study of science is not isolated, but is intimately connected to society and it has great influential power to shape the world for better or for worse. Secondly, my experiences on field trips in Australia made me realise how the climate also has a deep influence on society. It can provide the conditions which allow civilisation to flourish, or cause widespread drought and famine.

After returning to Exeter to complete my degree, I knew that I wanted to continue at University in some way and it was reading about climate change and the potential harm it may cause to society, as well as my experiences in Australia which shaped my decision. I decided to take the MSc at Reading University, which gave me a great foundation in the study of meteorology and the climate. Once I'd completed the year I knew I still hadn't had enough of university, which is why I've just started a PhD at the University of Liverpool. The aim of my project is to try and understand what we know about disease and climate and how good our current models of both are, in order to improve them and thus improve predictions about patterns of disease in the future. Hopefully the work may help society in a beneficial way.

Are you enjoying your PhD?

I'm very much enjoying the PhD; the freedom research gives me to advance my knowledge is a big part of the enjoyment, as is the feeling that what I'm doing could be considered worthwhile. In the future, I hope to continue in research and would like to explore new frontiers, especially those relating to humanitarian topics. However I imagine I'll always keep one foot in Meteorology!

Qualifications: MSc: Mathematical and Numerical Modelling of the Atmosphere and Oceans, Reading University.

MPhys: Physics with Australian Study, University of Exeter

A levels: Maths, Further Maths, Physics, Chemistry