Greeting

The issue of climate change is a challenge for all humanity. Climate research, resource efficiency and earth systems research are more relevant now than ever before. The Green Talents from all over the world show us what sustainability can look like – working together across disciplines and national borders. After all, climate change doesn’t stop at borders either. At the same time, digitalisation offers us new opportunities to process large volumes of data faster and to understand this data correctly. In this context, it is only logical that the young scientists and researchers sought solutions for the Smart Green Planet this year.

We launched the Green Talents Competition ten years ago. Since then, 257 talented young researchers from 69 countries have come to Germany to study sustainability. Some have then extended their stay by a further three months at a German research institution of their choice. Several of the Green Talents have even ventured to take the next steps in their career in Germany and are now conducting research at universities, non-university research establishments or within a company.

The Green Talents network is bursting with life. We have, thus, achieved one of our primary objectives – to create a lasting connection between our international award winners. They come from all over the world.

After returning from Germany, they serve as ambassadors for environmental protection and sustainability in their home countries.

As patron of this competition, I am particularly delighted to see the second generation of Green Talents emerging – young scientists who have been mentored by alumni from the programme and who have now become successful participants themselves. From the very beginning, the competition has enjoyed relations with strong partners from science, society and policy-making. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of these partners who have made these many success stories possible.

The next generation of scientists and researchers is inquisitive, creative and delivers exceptional work. It is wonderful to see the great willingness shown by all involved to work together for our future. We all share one goal – we want to ensure a good life for everyone and protect and preserve the planet for our children.

Anja Karliczek
Member of the German Bundestag
Federal Minister of Education and Research
257 Green Talents from 69 countries
Target of evaluation: the Green Talents Competition

The Federal Government considers global warming, increasing scarcity of energy and resources, and large-scale environmental pollution to be among the greatest challenges of our time. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is looking to international cooperation to tackle these issues. This approach is supported by the annual Green Talents Competition, which promotes cultural diversity and creativity in the development of global solutions. Networking among the most promising young scientific talents as well as access to Germany’s centres of research and innovation are a key feature of this.

Every year since 2009, a jury composed of high-ranking German experts has selected the Green Talents awardees from a large pool of applicants, on the basis of their scientific excellence and innovation potential. The programme covers a broad range of research areas and invites the winners to participate in the Science Forum. This two-week trip through Germany includes visits to cutting-edge research institutes, gives insight into the German sustainability landscape, and lays the foundation for international research cooperation in the future. Access to the German scientific community is further strengthened by the opportunity for one-on-one exchanges with leading experts chosen by the awardees. Swapping ideas on sustainability science as well as exploring possibilities for cooperation are central to these discussions.

A further part of the award is the opportunity to complete a fully-funded research stay of up to three months at a German institution of the awardee’s choice in the year following the Science Forum. During their stay, the Green Talents will gain insight into sustainability research and application in Germany. Furthermore, existing networks can be strengthened and expanded. Both the Science Forum and the research stays are funded by the BMBF.

What were the underlying research questions of the survey?

The Green Talents survey focused on the following questions:

- In which positions, institutions and regions are the Green Talents alumni currently employed?
- How significant is the influence that the competition had or still has on the academic or professional careers of the Green Talents alumni?
- Did the Green Talents Competition create lasting relationships between alumni and German partners?
- According to the alumni, expansion of their personal network, a heightened international reputation and recognition of their research, and improved job opportunities are among the main benefits of the Green Talents Competition.
- About two thirds of the alumni received further scholarships or awards since their participation in the Green Talents Competition.
- The survey was conducted online between May and June 2019 over a period of eight weeks. The questionnaire for the alumni was in English and questionnaires for experts, supervisors and jury members were in German. The survey consisted of both open- and closed-ended questions, which were customised for the specific target groups.

Who was selected for the survey and who took part?

Overall, 227 Green Talents alumni, 168 experts from individual meetings, 53 research stay supervisors, and nine former members of the jury were invited to participate in the survey. The questionnaire was answered by 88 alumni, 25 experts, 18 supervisors, and four jury members, which equates to response rates of 38% (alumni), 15% (experts), 34% (supervisors), and 44% (jury members).

Results of the survey

- It is always helpful when someone from outside comes to our institute with a clear idea and then, in contact with different team members, supports the development of their own project as well as our thinking.”

Green Talent 2018

“More than a competition, the Green Talents programme helped me discover my passion for sustainability research and gave access to an amazing professional network that I will cherish for years to come.”

Methodology of the 2019 Green Talents survey
"Motivated talents are given great opportunities to network and become internationally active – a chance that many young scientists would otherwise not get. The programme also offers recognition and motivation."  

Supervisor of the alumni would recommend the Green Talents programme.

According to 92% of the respondents, winning the Green Talents award has influenced their professional careers in a positive way.

"Beside the recognition of the award itself, this was a great immersive experience with like-minded and talented peers. It has left a noticeable personal and professional ‘green’ footprint in my life."  

Green Talent 2009
89% of the supervisors said that their organisation has benefitted from the Green Talents research stay.

96% of the experts contacted stated that they would be available for another meeting with the Green Talents alumni.

98% of all alumni interviewed are still in touch with the Green Talents network.

“I’d say that one of the most pleasant things I’ve experienced in regard to Green Talents was to meet scientists from different nationalities and cultural backgrounds interacting with each other in total harmony and with a common goal, which is building a sustainable future. This scenario was positively different to what global media normally spread.”

Green Talent 2016
Interview with Professor Christa Liedtke

How would you summarise the opportunities that the Green Talents Competition provides for young international researchers?

The Green Talents Competition offers these young scientists an ideal platform to present and discuss courageous and sustainable research questions and concepts, thereby making a valuable contribution to science, civil society and politics. However, science also means critically questioning oneself and one’s approach – this is supported by the intensive exchange between the participants and research institutes. Science thrives on discussion and constructive debate to find the best solutions. In addition, intercultural and interdisciplinary exchange promotes the networking of international junior researchers and thus makes a decisive contribution to further cooperation and projects. In the sense of SDG 17, it is precisely such cooperation that can develop the foundation of a peaceful world if they make SDG 1-16 the basis of cooperation.

In which way does the German research landscape benefit from this programme?

In particular, the interdisciplinary and intercultural exchange helps to understand and discuss sustainability issues of our time across national borders. Germany, anchored in Europe, is thus broadening its perspective on global social, economic and ecological situations, and their link with its own actions in science, business and society.

What strikes you as the most remarkable characteristic about Green Talents? What is unique?

The applications of the young researchers show a broad spectrum of research disciplines – from spatial planning, governance research, sociological and cultural studies to economic as well as natural sciences and engineering – from application-oriented to basic research. The international sustainability and climate research is diverse and technically well positioned to meet the global challenges. All regions of the world are represented and the gender situation is almost balanced. The result is an exceptional, globally composed group of young people with excellent education and a high level of commitment to sustainability, whose connection with one another through this programme will be singular and formative for their lives. What a unique opportunity!

In what way does Green Talents contribute to better international research cooperation?

Bringing together talented and innovative young scientists from different countries and cultures helps to take a globally differentiated approach to sustainability issues. In this way, country- and culture-specific differentiated measures can be derived that can bring about global thought-provoking impulses and changes through the networking of the international participants in the Green Talents Competition. At the same time, they encourage the emergence of international collaborative projects and cooperation.

Green Talents means to me... young researchers with heart and mind, critical and courageous, curious and committed, who face the global challenges with openness and global tolerance in appreciation of cultural and ecological diversity and actively and critically advance the achievement and further development of the SDG globally as scientists. Green Talents are the Green Scientists and Professionals of today and tomorrow.

Professor Christa Liedtke
Director Division Sustainable Production and Consumption at Wuppertal Institute and Green Talents Jury Member 2019

Prof. Christa Liedtke graduated from University of Bonn with a PhD (Dr. rer. nat.) in Biology in the research field of Cytology. Following a position as head of the working group “Monoclonal Antibodies” at the Chair of Cytology, University of Bonn, she started her career at Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy in 1993. Since 2003, she has been heading the research group “Sustainable Production and Consumption” at Wuppertal Institute and became Director of the “Sustainable Production and Consumption” division in 2018. She recently was appointed member of the Advisory Council for Consumer Affairs (SVRV).
Green Talents Networking Conference 2019
Impressions

“For me as an experienced research manager and team leader, collaborating with young creative minds was refreshing and invigorating and led to conceiving new ideas and research approaches. I was particularly impressed by the high motivational potential of the participant. Our joint publication was a great success with a lot of positive international feedback; we are still in contact and long-term research collaborations could be established – all in all a consistently 5-star experience.”

Supervisor
“Green Talents was the turning point in my career in international research. It opened the door to international collaborations in Germany and beyond, and I entered a network that would expose me to countless research and learning opportunities related to sustainability and disaster risk reduction. I have made the most wonderful contacts and friendships through this programme and I fondly remember my 3-months research stay in Germany back in 2012 – even seven years later.” Green Talent 2011
Manar ABDALRAZEQ
Palestinian Territories
PhD Student in Biotechnology
University of Naples Federico II, Italy

Manar’s research focuses on developing and producing sustainable bioplastics as alternative to petroleum-based plastics. Her aim is to exploit different bio-polymers coming from agro-food wastes. Petroleum-based plastic, widely used in the food sector, causes serious environmental pollution, and only a small part of it is being recycled. Burning plastic releases poisonous chemicals, and large amounts end up in landfills or in the oceans. In particular, Manar is working on the development of biodegradable and edible bioplastics, obtained from plant or animal feedstock. She developed a method to produce these novel materials by utilising the proteins from milk whey, which is accumulated as waste in large quantities by the dairy industry during the production of cheese and curd.

Manar recently got a scholarship to work on “Nano-reinforced edible films to be used in food packaging” within a cooperation between the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United States of Mexico.

Research focus: development of bioplastics, reduction of waste

Kathryn ARNOLD
South Africa
Master’s Student in Engineering Geomatics
Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and University of Cape Town, South Africa

Kathryn has a background in Geographical Information Sciences with a specific application in the context of urban and regional planning. The overarching focus of her research is on decision and planning support as it relates to city and regional development futures, through advanced spatial analysis and modelling. She also has a keen interest in risk and vulnerability research in the climate change and adaptation space.

Kathryn’s research is exploring internal migration and population movement in South African cities, in relationship to changing local economic conditions and social welfare provisions. This research supports her bigger research aim, which is to develop a settlement growth model to spatially predict long-term population change at settlement level in South Africa.

She hopes her work will provide a sound evidence base for local planning and decision-making that is inclusive and sustainable.

Research focus: geoinformatics and advanced geospatial analysis for urban and regional planning support

Applications total 837
Application countries 97
Winners 25
Luísa CORTAT SIMONETTI GONÇALVES
Brazil
PhD Student in Law
Vitória College of Law (FDV), Brazil and Maastricht University, the Netherlands

Luísa’s research focuses on both public international legal regulation and private pathways to find a solution for the huge and ever increasing global problem of plastic pollution of the oceans. Research is necessary in several fields to find joint solutions. Luísa started by looking at this complex issue from the perspective of the legal field. Her research aims at finding ways to incentivise a more sustainable behaviour and effectively face the problem.

Luísa’s analysis of eleven existing instruments and protocols shows that none is specifically addressing the problem. But it points to several essential aspects to be considered when designing a sustainable solution to face the plastic pollution in international waters. Furthermore, she is looking at private initiatives (e.g., from NGOs and companies under the aspect of corporate social responsibility) dealing with plastic pollution. She aims at deriving principles for an appropriate policy mix, an optimal theoretical structure for environmental solutions and the interactions between government, civil society, and corporations concerning effective environmental regulation in the international context.

Debanjan DAS
India
PhD Student in Chemistry
Current position: Research Associate at the Indian Institute of Science, India

Debanjan is a chemist with expertise in material science, who is searching for new ways of economically storing solar energy by looking for new electro-catalysts for water splitting. Solar power is the most plentiful energy source available to mankind. An attractive method to store this energy is to split water into hydrogen and oxygen. The success of this technology depends on the development of an economic solution to catalyse this reaction. Debanjan is searching for new transition metal-based electrocatalysts which are cost-effective, highly active, and consisting of raw materials that are not rare.

Another idea Debanjan is pursuing is to make the process economically more attractive by replacing the oxygen evolution reaction at the anode with the oxidation of primary amines. This results in the production of hydrogen and nitriles which makes the entire process more attractive, because nitriles can be sold at a higher price than oxygen.

2019
2019
2019
2019

Dr Sheikh Adil EDRISI
India
PhD in Environmental Science and Sustainable Development
Current position: Senior Researcher at Banaras Hindu University, India

Marginal land is not used since it does not deliver enough yields to justify the adopted efforts. Degraded land has lost its ability to grow food due to inappropriate and unsustainable land use. Vast areas have been degraded across the world.

Adil’s research focuses on utilising geopark modelling to classify, explore, and use of marginal and degraded lands. He is exploring possibilities to use these sites for biomass and bioenergy production, and to regain its various ecosystem services at the same time.

Jean EL ACHKAR
Lebanon
PhD in Biochemistry and PhD in Chemical and Process Engineering
Current position: Researcher and Lecturer at Saint Joseph University of Beirut, Lebanon

Jean is an experienced scientist who extensively researched the production of bioenergy by anaerobic digestion. Bioenergy is a promising way to reduce the use of fossil resources on one hand and to make good use of organic waste and by-products on the other. Biogas produced through anaerobic digestion is a versatile energy source since it can be used to produce heat, electricity combined with heat or biokiesel.

Jean focused on researching the usage of anaerobic digestion to valorise organic by-products, on understanding the biochemical parameters affecting the bioenergy production as well as on intensifying the process using several mechanical, chemical, and physical pre-treatments. He closely studied the use of grape pomace from wine production and olive pomace from oil production in his home country Lebanon. He developed and realised a prototype bioreactor and worked on the optimisation of the inward processes. In further studies, Jean aimed at valorising local microalgae and lipid-extracted residues as well as whey cheese from dairy industries and coffee grounds for bioenergy production.

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Research focus: international environmental law, legislative, private, and corporate initiatives to reduce plastic pollution in the oceans, fundamental rights and duties (human rights)
Karima EL AZHARY
Morocco
PhD Student in Energy Efficiency
Mohamadia School of Engineers, Team, Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco

Karima directed her university studies and professional activities towards developing new sustainable construction and insulation materials, based on alimentary and agricultural waste. These materials should improve thermal insulation and energy efficiency of buildings predominantly in underprivileged areas. Buildings offer the greatest potential for achieving significant greenhouse gas emission reductions at least cost.

Karima is working on improving the energy efficiency of buildings envelope, while providing the necessary thermal comfort without using any heating and air conditioning systems. She is developing new ecological, sustainable construction and insulation materials based on local waste. Karima’s idea is to process waste generated in agriculture in order to create ecological bricks and coating materials, using different mixtures and formulations, employing thermophysical characteristics and thermal optimization. Karima is also working on proving the importance of traditional and bioclimatic architectural design configurations in providing green and sustainable buildings.

Research focus: building materials, building’s energy efficiency, traditional architecture, waste management, and sustainability

Ernest Dadis Bush FOTSING
Cameroon
PhD Student in Zoology with specialisation in Primatology
University of Dschang, Cameroon

In his current research, Ernest is planning to focus on human activities, feeding and nesting habits of Nigerian-Cameroon chimpanzees, and on human activities in Mpyem and Djm National Park in Cameroon. This should lead to developing sustainable strategies for management of this area and to saving a viable population of chimpanzees in their natural environment.

Nigerian-Cameroon chimpanzees are cited as a critically endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and are known as the subspecies with the smallest population size (3,000–9,000 individuals) as well as distribution (restricted to Cameroon and Nigeria) among all chimpanzees known across Africa. Indeed, more investigation needs to be done in order to promote conservation of this species as their behavioural ecology is not well understood in Cameroon where illegal activities are prominent. In the past, Ernest studied the behavioural ecology of a western lowland gorilla group in Cameroon; his current study aims at assessing a community of these chimpanzees living in a forest-savanna environment that has not been previously studied and at promoting long-term research as well as conservation activities in this area.

Research focus: ecology and evolutionary biology, conservation of biodiversity

Karima is also working on proving the importance of traditional and bioclimatic architectural design configurations in providing green and sustainable buildings.

2019 Best Presenter Award – Excellent Oral Presentation, International Conference on Physics Alumni (ICPA)

Sierra ISON
Canada
PhD Student in Marine Social Science and Conservation
University of Tasmania, Australia

Sierra’s research is examining how to identify conservation outcomes in complex multi-stakeholder environments, the field of conservation science is quickly emerging as an action-orientated discipline. As governments, non-governmental organisations, and industry are under pressure to demonstrate project success via tangible impacts, it is imperative to not only demonstrate policy changes but also how these changes are facilitated by the stakeholders involved. Thus, there is a need to improve stakeholder participation.

The goal of Outcome Mapping is to bring about behaviour change to support long-term outcomes by considering conflict resolution, combining divergent knowledge systems, participation, and social learning within complex stakeholder systems. Sierra’s objective is to explore the potential utility of Outcome Mapping as a framework to complement existing participatory research approaches to create conservation outcomes.

Research focus: marine social science, stakeholder engagement, participatory conservation

Andrew’s expertise comprises chemical thermodynamics, process, and material modelling with applications focused on organic-based perovskites. These materials are highly interesting for the construction of supercapacitors, which can be used as an alternative or in tandem with metal-based rechargeable batteries to spearhead a mobility technology towards the production of last charging electric vehicles.

Andrew’s research focuses on the pseudocapacitance of organic polymer perovskites for supercapacitor applications. Organic polymers can be made from various sustainable carbon sources and, thus, are not dependent on limited elements. In addition, organic polymer perovskites are cheaper, lighter, and of better physicochemical properties tunability than metal-based perovskites.

Research focus: role of excitons and polarons on the pseudocapacitance of polymeric layered perovskite

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Research focus: role of excitons and polarons on the pseudocapacitance of polymeric layered perovskite
Benjamin KEENAN
United Kingdom
PhD Student in Biogeochemistry
McGill University, Canada

Droughts and water shortages are two of the many problems that will increase with climate change. It is believed that ancient Maya societies have declined as a result of drought. Benjamin’s research to verify this theory is based on organic geochemistry by linking past population dynamics with hydrological dynamics in the Maya Lowlands. Benjamin is developing techniques to measure population and hydrological changes by analysing various organic molecules preserved in lake sediments. The methods Benjamin is developing could be applied in lakes anywhere to examine how ancient population development corresponds to changes in climate.

The goals of his project are twofold: firstly to examine the relevance of drought in causing societal decline; and secondly to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the weaknesses in the way ancient Maya societies responded to the changing climate. He sees potential that modern cities like Mexico City and Cape Town may benefit from his findings and get new perspectives on how to deal with droughts and water shortages. Benjamin also intends to use the insights from his research as convincing narrative for the public in the ongoing discussion about climate change.

Yee Qing LAI
Malaysia
PhD Student in Chemical Engineering
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia

Yee Qing is researching a practical method to increase thermal efficiency of manufacturing processes in order to reduce the amount of energy needed and, thus, reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Waste heat released from manufacturing processes can be recovered and utilised to heat other parts of the processes via heat exchanger networks (HEN). By performing heat integration via HEN, the amount of waste heat released into the environment and the amount of energy needed for a given process can be reduced significantly.

The main objective of Yee Qing’s research is to develop a new graphical method to improve energy efficiency of existing HEN. A graphical method is easier to understand and to use for normal industrial practitioners. The method proposed can be used to diagnose and retrofit existing HEN in the manufacturing plants. Yee Qing looks into background processes to identify process changes opportunities instead of focusing on retrofitting the HEN alone. Her proposed method, moreover, considers plant layout factors which may constrain the maximum heat recovery that can be achieved by a given process.

Samjhana KHANAL
Nepal
Master’s Student in Plant Breeding and Genetics
Wageningen University & Research, the Netherlands

Samjhana aims to develop better seeds (maize, quinoa) for her home country Nepal as well as for other developing countries. Better seeds would be more tolerant to drought and should, at the same time, contain more nutrients that help to prevent malnutrition.

Lots of people suffer from malnutrition or undernutrition, which can cause serious diseases and may result in an increased infant mortality rate. People in countries of the developing world largely have to depend on rice, wheat or maize as their daily food. For this reason, Samjhana works on growing quality maize and quinoa with additional proteins, vitamins and other essential nutrients. Since maize is often threatened by drought, she is also researching drought-resistant seeds and resistant varieties of maize.

Dr Lizzy LOWE
Australia
PhD in Ecology
Current position: Researcher in Urban Ecology at the Macquarie University, Australia

Lizzy is studying the impact of the use of insecticides on biodiversity in cities, especially insects and spiders. Insects play a crucial role in maintaining functional terrestrial ecosystems, including cities.

Cities require healthy green spaces to create environments available for both the physical and mental wellbeing of their residents. However, simply planting trees and grass is not sufficient. In order to provide healthy ecosystems for both nature and people, green spaces require biodiversity. Insects are a key component of urban biodiversity, but unfortunately drastic declines in insect populations are being recorded around the world. One of the biggest threats to invertebrates even in urban environments is the use of insecticides.

The aim of Lizzy’s multidisciplinary research is to quantify the impacts of insecticides on the healthy functioning of urban environments, determine the reasons why urban residents use insecticides, and develop and test sustainable alternatives to using insecticides in cities. She also aims to raise awareness of unintended side effects of insecticide use and of the significance of insects, spiders and other invertebrates for ecosystems.

Research focus: urban ecosystems, biodiversity, impact of insecticides
Mahder MEKONNEN SHUMI
Ethiopia
MSc in Aquatic Ecosystems and Environmental Management
Current position: Lecturer in Aquatic Toxicology, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

Mahder’s research focuses on treatment of hospital wastewater in constructed wetland cells. Untreated hospital wastewater is particularly dangerous due to its high concentrations of infectious agents. Mahder’s study was aimed at characterising hospital wastewater and evaluating the treatment efficiency of two species of bulrush and a species of sedum in constructed wetland cells. Constructed wetland is cost-effective, easy to manage, and efficient for treatment of wastewater of any kind after primary treatment. The wetland in the study has four cells. One serves as a control cell with no plants while the others are planted with Typha latifolia, Phragmites karka, and a mix of both plants. The treatment efficiency of these cells was observed by measuring physico-chemical and biological water quality parameters.

Research focus: ecotoxicology, wastewater treatment, and water quality

Sai MA
China
PhD Student in Law
The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

Sai’s research aims to analyse the role and competence of international investment arbitration in enforcing the clean energy policies. To make clean energy transition successful, sufficient investment in renewable energy is necessary. However, disputes between foreign investors and states are inevitable. Investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), as an enforcement mechanism under the investment law regime, enables foreign investors to settle these disputes through arbitration proceedings with the states in which they have invested. As investment disputes with environmental components take a large portion of the ISDS caseload, the influence of ISDS on environmental regulations and policymaking arises wide concern.

Sai strives to review the environment investment interaction in the context of the energy transition through the lens of ISDS. She studies the constraints regarding the role and competence of ISDS in enforcing energy policies. Her research project contains an overview of the nexus between the climate goals, the clean energy transition, and the investment law regime. Besides, a case study approach will be used to examine the energy transition-related ISDS disputes.

Research focus: law, international investment arbitration, energy transition, and climate change

Marcelo MENEZES MORATO
Brazil
PhD Student in Control and Automation Engineering
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil and Université Grenoble-Alpes, France

Marcelo has been working on several research projects on management and control of renewable energy systems. He started studying the possibilities of using huge amounts of biomass waste in the sugarcane industry in Brazil and went from management of microgrids to looking at larger systems integrating different sources of renewable energy. Marcelo studied microgrids on sugarcane processing plants using biomass, sun, and wind energy. These plants can sustain themselves and sell power to the network distributor. Marcelo’s part in this project was to find ways to automatically manage the different energy sources and power consumers.

To control microgrids, observation and fault analysis are essential. To manage such systems, predictions using information on upcoming conditions such as weather forecasts for solar and wind power are necessary. Marcelo developed corresponding mathematical models. Controllers for microgrids are being planned on the basis of such models. Essentially, Marcelo aims to design automatic controllers that determine when to use, store, distribute, or convert each available renewable source so that the energy generation becomes continuous.

Research focus: control and automation engineering, microgrids, and renewable energy

Rubén MOCHOLÍ MONTAÑÉS
Spain
PhD in Energy and Process Engineering
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher in Energy Technology at Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden and Research Scientist at SINTEF Energy Research, Norway

Rubén’s research includes the development of dynamic process models for various decarbonised thermal power generation and industrial processes.

Research focus: energy and process engineering and dynamic modelling
Research focus: sexual and reproductive health, digital demography, and adolescent health

Emmanuel OLAMIJUWON
Nigeria
PhD Student in Demography and Population Studies
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa and University of Eswatini, Eswatini

Emmanuel focuses in his research on advancing sexual health education for young African adults in the digital age. The motivation for this is that early exposure to good and quality sexuality education has clear implications for avoiding sexual exploitation, abuse, and achieving healthy sexual development. Until today, there is scanty evidence on how social media can be used to effectively communicate sexual health information to young African adults. Emmanuel is targeting this research gap and is harnessing the power of social media in helping adolescents and young adults to make better and informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

Emmanuel’s research is set on the social media platform Facebook in the form of an online collaborative and advocacy network on sexual and reproductive health by and for young adults in Africa.

2019-2020 Policy Communication Fellowship, Population Reference Bureau (PRB) and the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP)

Research focus: metal catalysts for ammonia synthesis in the Haber-Bosch process

Yalinu POYA
Papua New Guinea
PhD Student in Chemistry
University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

In her research, Yalinu is developing novel catalysts for ammonia synthesis. Ammonia is essential for the production of synthetic fertilisers, which are used in agriculture in huge quantities. Currently, the process of ammonia production requires large-scale plants consuming great amounts of energy and leading to a high carbon dioxide output. Yalinu aims to make ammonia synthesis more sustainable, highly efficient, and applicable in small-scale plants.

To reduce the harmful effects and yield massive rewards both in terms of economic and environmental benefits, there is a great interest in the development of local small-scale ammonia production plants based on the use of renewable energies. In such a context, Yalinu has taken up the challenge of developing new ammonia synthesis catalysts which are active under less severe operational conditions approximating the Haber-Bosch process.

2019-2020 University of Glasgow Future World Changer

Research focus: chemistry and material sciences

Mohammad RAMEZANI TAGHARTAPEH
Iran
PhD Student in Chemistry/Material Sciences
Swinburne University of Technology and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia

Mohammad aims at designing a fully rechargeable organic battery with high capacity and long cycle life that can compete with current lithium-based batteries. Organic or metal-organic batteries might contribute to minimise the threats connected to production and recycling of lithium-based batteries. All-organic batteries also allow for a tailored structural design, tuned redox potential and capacity, and flexibility which opens opportunities to design the ideal battery for a specific application. That way, safer and biocompatible batteries without need for energy- and cost-intensive recycling processes could be provided.

Mohammad has been working on the synthesis of 2D and 3D conducting polymer networks to be used in lithium-sulfur and lithium-polymer batteries. His goal is to design and synthesise new conducting monomers to prepare 2D and 3D polymer networks with n-type, p-type or bipolar type characteristics being used as anode, cathode, or as both electrodes in either metal-polymer or all-organic batteries. He believes that this type of organic energy storage system could contribute more to a sustainable than the current metal-based energy storage systems.

Research focus: ecosystem services, conservation and sustainable management of wetlands

Priyanka SARKAR
India
PhD Student in Ecology and Environmental Science
Assam University, India

Priyanka is researching the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands in developing countries under the ecosystem services perspective. Wetland management is highly relevant for the implementation of several UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Priyanka’s research focuses on understanding how the various ecological aspects of wetland ecosystems in the tropics are related to socio-economic dimensions, livelihood sustenance, and human wellbeing. She is studying the ecosystem services and economic valuation of Chatla—a one of the largest floodplain wetlands in Northeast India.

With an interdisciplinary approach, Priyanka attempts to find the link between the natural capital of wetlands and the wellbeing of the dependent communities.

2019 Wetland Ambassador by the Society of Wetland Scientists, United States of America

Research focus: chemical and environmental science

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2019 Wetland Ambassador by the Society of Wetland Scientists, United States of America
Jaewon SON
Korea
MA in International Development and Cooperation
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Seoul Policy Center, Korea

In her research, Jaewon focuses on the effect of access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) on girls’ access to education using the Lao Cai Province in Vietnam as an example. Her main goal is to show how access to clean water for girls in developing countries is essential to reach several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By focusing on the compulsory school age range, her study argues that inadequate access to WASH is one of the major barriers to girls’ education. The relationship between primary school attendance rates of girls and access to WASH at schools are examined during the study. While researching the topic, she realised that sustainable development would not be achieved without investing in people living in developing countries, and in girls’ education in rural areas in particular.

2019 NextGen Ambassador Fellowship from Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to attend ICANN66 in Montreal, Canada
2019 Speaker at Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2019 of the United Nations (UN) in Berlin, hosted by the Federal Government, Germany

Research focus: international development, gender equality, and access to water, sanitation and hygiene

Georgina Esi TAKYI-ANNAN
Ghana
Master’s Student in Architecture

Georgina dedicates herself to the question of how sustainable building design concepts can be successfully implemented in developing countries. She intends to incorporate green concepts and sustainable architectural designs into affordable housing units in developing countries.

While researchers have devised and carried out much work on green urban designs in various parts of the world, there has been no corresponding focus on these issues in West Africa and other developing countries. Georgina, therefore, takes a closer look at those regions and on the aspects of affordability. The purpose of her research is to make housing affordable for all social classes through the implementation of green concepts and sustainable building designs. With this approach, she attempts to simultaneously address these challenges pertaining to housing deficit, lack of affordable housing and the negative impact of buildings on the environment in West Africa and other developing countries.

Research focus: green and sustainable design approach to achieving affordable housing in developing countries and West Africa

Dr Vikram SONI
India
PhD in Mechanical Engineering

Current position: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, University of Toronto, Canada

Heat and cold waves particularly affect underprivileged people as they often can neither afford cooling nor heating of their homes. A sustainable solution for this may be phase change material-based sustainable and low-cost thermal energy technologies.

To address this, Vikram’s research currently focuses on characterising high performance working fluids for geothermal energy applications – including advanced phase change slurries and blends. Also, he is working towards the establishment of high-throughput microfluidics-based industrial fluid testing systems and AI-guidance of the experimental system.

During his PhD, Vikram has worked towards addressing the issue of thermal mass by exploring so-called thermal batteries. Such batteries can store energy in form of latent heat due to the use of phase changing materials (PCM) and can be placed on the roofs of houses. Vikram developed a novel high-fidelity modelling-based prediction tool for PCM melting and undercooled solidification scenarios.

Research focus: phase change material-based heat transfer fluids, microfluidics-based fluid testing, machine learning, and AI-guidance

Current position: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, University of Toronto, Canada

Green Talents Alumni 2019

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Current position: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, University of Toronto, Canada

Green Talents Alumni 2019
Applications total 736
Application countries 102
Winners 25

Becky Nancy Achieng’ ALOO
Kenya
PHD Student in Biodiversity and Ecosystems Management at Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology, Tanzania
Current position: Tutorial Fellow at University of Eldoret, Kenya

In her research, Becky targets indigenous rhizobacteria associated with Irish potatoes (Solanum tuberosum L.) and their feasibility in biofertilization and bio-stimulation of Irish potato cropping systems in Tanzania. She examines the biology and physiology of the bacteria, their genetics and phylogenetic relationships as well as their effects on potato physiology and growth parameters. Irish potatoes are one of the most cultivated and consumed crops worldwide, but are also one of the heaviest fertiliser-demanding crops. The synthetic fertilisers have negative impacts on the environment and have been associated with chemical residues and traces in food products.

Becky’s research has shown that rhizobacteria can contribute to improved plant health through the production of plant growth hormones, solubilisation of plant nutrients, and enhancement of root surface area and root development. In her research, Becky is driven by finding unique and novel rhizobacterial isolates that can be formulated into biofertilisers and bio-stimulants replacing or reducing the usage of chemical fertilisers.

Dr Nithi ATTHI
Thailand
PhD in Electronics and Applied Physics
Current position: Researcher at National Electronics and Computer Technology Center, Thailand

Biofouling causes serious environmental damage and high costs. Recent techniques to deal with the problem are ineffective or harm aquatic ecosystems. Nithi is developing robust microstructures on flexible material surfaces to produce an ‘everything-free’ antifouling surface.

Biofouling describes the unwanted accumulation of biological or inorganic matter on underwater or moist surfaces. The consequences of biofouling are vast. Medical biofouling can cause the spread of infectious diseases. Marine biofouling results in increased ship hull drag. Nithi has identified the need to develop a much smaller micro-pattern (< 400 nm). He is working on the large-area fabrication of robust 3D microstructures on composite materials. Nithi will seek partnerships in the micro/nano fabrication field for high-throughput and large-area patterning and partners in the medical field in order to help build bacteria-free operating rooms. The technology will also be applicable for ship surfaces and underwater structures.
Dr Jamil Alexandre AYACH ANACHE
Brazil
PhD in Hydraulics and Sanitary Engineering
Current position: Professor at School of Engineering, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

In his research, Jamil is assessing water partitioning and the variability of hydrological processes in the critical zone of the Brazilian savanna (Cerrado). He also aims to quantify and model soil erosion processes and water cycle under common land uses for this area. The region of the Cerrado has vital hydrological functions that serve the rest of the ecosystem. Hence, there is a need for observation and better understanding as well as research on soil vulnerability and water erosion.

Jamil aims to establish hydrological reference values in the Cerrado. In addition, he is identifying the hydrological ecosystems services of the wooded Cerrado. This involves estimating and modelling the variability of water balance components. His goal is to create an understanding of water partitioning in different land uses and soil erosion processes in connection with land use changes and climate variability. Soil conservation is a strategic topic in Brazil, which needs to be established to maintain natural resources as well as food and water production. Water availability and soil sustainability need to be assured.

Research focus: hydrological monitoring and modelling

Dr Jan BRUSSELAERS
Belgium
PhD in Bioscience
Current position: Researcher Circular Economy at VITO, Belgium

Jan’s research focuses on the concept of circular economy. Moreover, he targets technological advances in order to place innovative emphasis in this context. Alternative economic systems require further investigation, especially the macro-economic analysis is still lacking. Jan aims to implement circular economy systems where all material will flow in one loop. Circular economies are more sustainable than linear economies. Decreased raw material use and waste generation allow natural systems to regenerate. Jan aims to achieve this through implementing and developing refurbishment, reuse, sharing, and material recycling. These initiatives are set to become part of an integrated approach towards circular economies.

Jan’s research refers to gathering, processing, and analysing all available data on circular economy. With this approach, he can analyse the indicators on circular economy and support the uptake of the circular economy by applying macro- and micro-economic modelling techniques, which demonstrate the potential of circular economies. His methods will map and quantify the demand and supply for products and materials to facilitate the matchmaking between consumers and suppliers.

Research focus: modelling and developing the concept of circular economies

Dr Ozgul CALICIOLGU
Turkey
PhD in Environmental Engineering
Current position: Environmental Engineer – Young Professional at the World Bank, United States of America

Ozgul is involved in environmental management and policy-making to achieve public engagement in sustainable development. Her interest lies in bridging the gap between science and policy, and providing answers to sustainability-related issues to policy-makers and the public. Ozgul, therefore, joined The World Bank’s Environment, Natural Resources and Blue Economy Global Practice in 2019. Through her involvement in Brown Agenda, particularly on marine plastics pollution, she brings knowledge and experience related to the water-energy-food nexus and waste valorisation. She also contributes to Environmental and Social Framework activities carried out for various development projects in the region, in order to safeguard environmental sustainability.

Ozgul’s research focuses on the development of reliable bioenergy and biomaterial supply networks, particularly on the technical, economic, and environmental feasibility of large-scale wastewater-derived aquatic plant biorefineries. She also worked for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, contributing to development of policy instruments and global guidelines for sustainable bioeconomy deployment.

Research focus: biorefining, bioeconomy, and solid waste management

Dr Badabate DIWEDIGA
Togo
PhD in Climate Change and Land Use
Current position: Researcher in Climate Change and Land Use, University of Lomé, Togo

Badabate’s research focuses on integrated land use and resilient landscapes. Following a multidisciplinary approach, he explores sustainable pathways and strategies for an integrated management of natural capital and helps communities in rural areas to develop sustainable socio-ecological landscapes.

One of the biggest challenges for sustainable development is the ongoing increase of the world’s population. Rural communities in particular must find a way to sustain their livelihoods and simultaneously mitigate climate change. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the complex interaction among environmental and social components at landscape scales.

After studying Environmental Management at the University of Lomé in Togo and Climate Change and Land Use under the WASCAL Programme at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana, Badabate conducted additional research in Tunisia and Nigeria through collaboration with the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA). Badabate aims to contribute to building integrated land use systems and processes at community level in West Africa in order to sustain green growth and counteract climate change.

Research focus: integrated land use and resilient multifunctional landscapes
Dr. Randika JAYASINGHE
Sri Lanka
PhD in Environmental Engineering Technology/Environmental Technology
Current position: Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

Randika identifies waste as a valuable material for communities in developing countries. Mismanagement of solid waste is causing serious problems, in particular, the disposal of non-degradable materials such as plastics, metalised films, and synthetic textile waste. She is promoting the sustainable use of available resources, minimising negative impacts, and maximising the use of discarded materials. Randika also focuses on education for sustainability and creating awareness on waste upcycling. Randika manages the research and development project “Australian-Sri Lankan University partnerships to develop community-based waste upcycling businesses” and collaborates with the organisation “Waste for Life”. She aims to devise composite materials using waste materials collected from the source and has already generated positive dialogue with many industries to collect and sort waste and to appreciate the resource value of waste. Four waste upcycling start-ups have been established. These businesses make use of the innovative products developed through her research and will promote upcycling practices in communities across Sri Lanka.

Mario Alejandro HEREDIA SALGADO
Ecuador
PhD Student in Energy Systems and Climate Change
Aveiro University, Portugal

Mario seeks to ease reliance on fossil fuels and promote carbon sequestration in the agro-industrial sector of Latin America by the integration of energy conversion devices able to transform agro-residues into perennial forms of carbon and thermal energy. He coordinates a collaborative project that groups research centres and universities in Portugal and Ecuador, non-governmental organisations, government ministries, farmers associations, peasant leaders, industrial guilds, and international innovation agencies.

Research focus: integration of thermochemical conversion processes to upcycle agro-residues into carbon-related products and renewable thermal energy.

Nirina KHADGI
Nepal
PhD Student in Environment Science and Engineering
Hohai University, China

Nirina is seeking to boost the efficiency of water treatment processes by developing photocatalysis techniques. She recognises the reuse and recycling of water supplies as the most efficient method for increasing water sustainability. Photocatalysis entails advanced oxidation processes, which involve the in-situ production of highly reactive transitory species accelerating abiotic pathways to degrade persistent organic compounds and microorganisms in water, without producing any secondary pollution.

Research focus: heterogenous photocatalysis

Sagar KAFLE
Nepal
MSc in Biosystems Engineering
Current position: Lecturer in Agricultural Engineering at Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Sagar is seeking to end coal fuel dependency of Kathmandu, one of the world’s most polluted cities, by producing cleaner fuel pellets. In addition to this, he is encouraging societal change in Nepal by educating young people and influencing policy makers. Sagar’s scientific research has focused on producing fuel pellets, made by using waste materials from forest based biomass and agricultural crop residues. Nepal lacks a suitable infrastructure to address environmental problems effectively. Similarly, there is a lack of strategic planning, which would be necessary to get sustainability efforts off the ground. Therefore, Sagar hopes to educate and to enthuse young people with sustainability science by giving lectures and establishing a campus research laboratory. He is striving to provide students with the skills necessary to succeed in sustainability science. Furthermore, he is growing a political network in order to influence policy makers: Sagar is collaborating with the think tank group of his country’s former minister of science, technology and environment. He is a fellow of the Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDIA), a foreign policy think tank based in Kathmandu. Additionally, he is persistently presenting green solutions to Nepal’s implementing bodies.

Research focus: fuel pellets, energy policy, energy politics, renewable energy
Brigadier LIBANDA
Zambia
PhD Student in Atmospheric and Environmental Science
University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Brigadier examines the growth rate which is helpful for sustainable management. Scientists can use predicted growth rates to analyze how ecosystem services provision will change in the future and provide a better understanding into the role of the woodlands in the carbon cycle. Brigadier also carried out an intensive literature review to establish the current comprehension of tree growth.

Research focus: ecosystems and climate dynamics

Ishani KHURANA
India
PhD Student in Chemistry
University of Delhi, India

In her research, Ishani aims to study the removal of toxic nitro organics which cause wastewater decontamination. In India, where Ishani has her roots, water scarcity and droughts are increasingly common and rivers are being polluted by the discharge of untreated sewage and organic pollutants. Limited access to safe water has long-term impacts on health, education, and livelihoods.

Ishani is investigating the synthesis of graphene oxide, reduced graphene oxide, and graphene-based nanocomposites with metals. Following this, she will be examining wastewater decontamination and toxic nitro organics. Through her research, she aims to remove those toxic nitro organics, such as dyes and explosives. Therefore, she has developed a customised graphene filter that efficiently removes dye from contaminated water. Another part of her research is converting these water pollutants into less toxic and useful compounds. Ultrathin graphene-based water-separation membranes have been used in the field of water treatment and Ishani aims to transfer her research findings into a reusable, portable and also cost-effective graphene-based membrane device that will efficiently decontaminate water.

Research focus: synthesis of graphene-based composites for the removal of water pollutants

Dr Shirin MALEKPOUR
Australia
PhD in Environmental Sociology – Strategic Infrastructure Planning
Current position: Senior Lecturer, Monash Sustainable Development Institute, Monash University, Australia

Shirin’s research can be positioned at the interface of Urban Planning and Social Sciences. She studies processes of long-term planning and policy making for sustainable development in cities, regions, sectors, as well as individual organisations, and designs interventions to assist decision makers with developing robust strategies in the face of uncertainties and complexities.

The processes Shirin has designed include, but are not limited to, new ways of scenario planning, backcasting and stress-testing.

These processes can challenge implicit assumptions and biases underlying strategic decisions, explore future disruptions, reveal vulnerabilities, and help with devising coping strategies. She has advised various organisations in the water and the food sector on their long-term strategies and her interventions have been incorporated into industrial and governmental strategic planning processes. She investigates how the knowledge in the fields of Strategic Planning and Futures could be used to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Her professional goal is to become a thought leader in the area of sustainable development and to actively inform business and government decision making on this topic.

Research focus: electrical engineering, energy systems, renewable energy, and smart grids
Dr Wee-Jun ONG  
Malaysia  
PhD in Chemical Engineering  
Current position: Associate Professor in Chemical Engineering at Xiamen University Malaysia, Malaysia  
In his research, Wee-Jun focuses on solar energy conversion and energy storage by mimicking the ingenuity of nature. The main focus is on designing two-dimensional (2D-based) nanocomposites, which are analogous to an “artificial leaf” for CO₂ reduction, H₂O splitting and N₂ fixation.  
The idea of Wee-Jun’s research lies in the design of novel techniques for engineering heterojunction photocatalysts for efficient solar light utilisation. With the development of high-efficiency photocatalysts, the nanocomposites were employed to convert sunlight to highly energetic sustainable fuels. Wee-Jun collaborates with researchers in the field of computational modelling and advanced spectroscopic characterisations.  
As an Assistant Professor at Xiamen University Malaysia, Wee-Jun is developing his ideas among other academics to potentially create a renewable energy research hub on the campus.  
2019 Visiting Professor in the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), United States of America  
2019 Participation at the 69th Nobel Laureate meeting Lindau, Germany  

George Kofi PARKU  
Ghana  
PhD Student in Chemical Engineering  
Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany  
Following a successful master’s study, George continued to strive in establishing himself in the research environment. Having accrued major practical experiences with pyrolysis processes, he proceeded into technology and systems assessments of pyrolysis and other thermochemical processes, some of which include life-cycle assessment and thermodynamic modelling.  
2018 2019 Visiting Researcher at German Biomass Research Centre (DBFZ), Germany  
2019 Doctoral Researcher at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) using thermodynamics to optimise aqueous pyrolysis conditions for downstream microbial conversion  

Shilpa RUMJEET  
Mauritius  
MSc in Chemical Engineering  
Current position: Project Coordinator in Bioprocess Engineering at University of Cape Town, South Africa  
Shilpa has dedicated her work to the study of wastewater biorefineries. Valorisation of wastewater from the pulp and paper industry is one of her main goals.  
Natural resources are depleting and water as a limited resource needs sustainable management. Wastewater biorefineries (WWBRs) offer the possibility of treating wastewater, while using the nutrients contained within as resources to make bioproducts. To make WWBRs a profitable venture, production of high value products must be targeted with any residual organics being converted to low value energy products. In order to enable this, engineering processes need to be combined with biotechnological advances to enhance productivity of bioproducts along different bioreactors. Together with her team, she is working towards the successful implementation of a pulp and paper wastewater biorefinery in South Africa.  
Shilpa’s main objective is to design an implementation framework which can be transferable to other industries, who wish to valorise their wastewater. Her core research interest is the circular bio-economy where petroleum derivatives are substituted by their bio-based counterparts and waste is treated as a resource.  

Mark POLIKOVSKY  
Israel  
PhD Student in Environmental Bioengineering  
Tel Aviv University, Israel  
Mark works on developing a biorefinery concept using seaweeds as feedstock. His research topic is the influence of seaweed-associated bacteria on sugar and protein content and composition.  
Mark focuses on simultaneously producing biofuels, proteins, and chemicals from seaweeds cultivated offshore. His main interest lies in developing a sustainable infrastructure in order to meet the growing world population’s demand for food and biofuels. Bioethanol, obtained from i.e. sugarcane or corn, has a negative impact on the environment as well as on food prices. Within his research, he isolated bacteria and analysed the influence of some bacteria on the seaweed growth rate and sugar composition. He found out that the utilisation of some bacteria leads to an increase of the ethanol production. His goal is to examine how those bacteria influence the seaweed’s chemical composition.  
Apart from this, Mark works on identifying proteins and allergens, so alternative proteins, which are safe for human consumption, can be created out of seaweed. Furthermore, Mark developed a method for detecting the toxins that lead to a reduction of the efficiency of the fermentation process for bioethanol mass production.  

Research focus: wastewater biorefinery  
Research focus: interaction between seaweed and bacteria for improving the production of biofuel and protein out of seaweed  
Research focus: thermochemical conversion of biomass and other carbonaceous wastes into fuels and other value-added products  
Research focus: engineering next-generation nanomaterials toward efficient artificial photosynthesis for sustainable fuel production from sunlight
In his research, Mohit primarily focuses on ground-up design and fabrication of nanostructured materials for supercapacitor devices. These devices store energy more efficiently with good cycling stability and also have the potential to replace traditional capacitors and batteries. Many present-day batteries contain toxic materials, such as mercury, lead, and cadmium. For this reason, Mohit targets materials that are high-performing and free of environmentally harmful metals. Using low-cost synthesis without advanced instrumentation and laboratory test condition analysis, Mohit achieved results which are comparable with contemporary research based on complicated synthesis. Additionally, his research work focuses on low-temperature synthesis of nanomaterials aiming to make the process easily accessible for quick scale up whilst also maintaining the characteristics which are required for excellent performance in energy storage systems. The professional long-term goal of Mohit is to work towards building sustainable energy storage platforms and to develop alternative renewable energy sources such as solar power, thereby contributing to overall human development.

Yauheniya analyses existing methodologies and indicators, which are connected with sustainable development of the energy sector. She aims to define indicators that are used in the majority of methodologies and prove that they are of crucial importance for the sustainable development of the sector. The final index will include four sub-indexes: economic, technological, social, and ecological and will represent a balanced estimation of the sustainable development of the electricity industry enterprises. The index will help to describe the current level of sustainable development in the Republic of Belarus as well as identity areas of concern.

In her research, Yauheniya focuses on creating an index to assess the performance of electricity industry enterprises from the point of sustainable development. The assessment of the sustainable development of these enterprises is difficult. Firstly, the concept of "sustainable development" is new and still requires further research. Secondly, there is no existing unified set of indicators yet which assess the sustainable development of any enterprise. Besides, the sustainable development itself is complex and versatile.

Pheladi is focusing on understanding the perception of energy in disadvantaged communities and also the reduction of energy poverty. She believes clean energy should be accessible to and affordable for impoverished communities.

In South Africa, where Pheladi grew up, access to energy is challenging and limited for low-income households. She is exploring renewable energy technologies and implementable strategies to overcome these barriers. Energy security demands energy efficiency and reduced expenditure. Her approach is to take economic, social, and environmental factors into consideration. An investigation of the energy sector and the adoption of renewable energy technologies can lead to a positive impact on human wellbeing, poverty alleviation, and economic growth. Pheladi’s interdisciplinary research targets geographical and social issues and seeks technological advancement for informal settlements, as well as sustainable alternatives.

Research focus: synthesis of nanostructured materials for electrochemical energy storage

Research focus: emission accounts and low-carbon development in cities

Research focus: renewable energy strategies for energy poverty alleviation
Vishal TRIPATHI
India
PhD Student in Environmental Science and Technology
Banaras Hindu University, India

In his research, Vishal focuses on the soil system, namely the effect of soil pollution. He uses tolerant plant species, multi-purpose bacterial species, and various agro-residues for the bioremediation of organochlorine pesticides in order to improve the soil and nutritional quality of the agricultural produce.

Pollution is a major threat to the soil system. Contaminated soil needs to be restored in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Vishal’s research is broadly focused on harnessing plant-microbe interactions as a low-input biotechnology for the sustainable clean-up of soil sites. Whilst analysing the potential of bioenergy plants for phytoremediation of persistent organic pollutants, he is exploring the opportunities of biomass generated from biofuels and bioproducts. Since farmland is limited and primarily required to grow crops for an increasing global population, the use of polluted lands for bioenergy and bioproducts generation will avoid the conflict between food and fuel production. Vishal is also evaluating the plant-microbe-pollutant interactions under changing climate conditions to develop climate-resilient remediation strategies and promote the soil carbon sequestration.

Research focus: bioremediation of contaminated soils for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Govhar VALIYEVA
Azerbaijan
MSc in Environmental Policy and Management/Energy and Sustainability, University of Denver, United States of America

Current position: Environmental specialist at the Institute for Scientific Research on Economic Reforms, Azerbaijan

Govhar’s research focuses on reducing the used amount of heavy fuel and gas in Azerbaijan by implementing alternative and renewable sources of energy. Azerbaijan is a region rich in fossil oil and gas. The majority of the electricity produced there derives from these energy sources; only a small part comes from hydroelectric power stations. Renewable and alternative energy sources account for less than 1 percent. Govhar places an emphasis on improving existing energy measures in Azerbaijan as well as on using alternative sources in neighbouring countries.

She aims to introduce new technologies to increase energy efficiency and develop the energy trade with Georgia, as this country generates a major part of its energy from hydropower plants. She assumes that this energy trade would create additional revenues for Azerbaijan, leading to a positive impact on economic, social, and environmental processes. Furthermore, she predicts declining energy tariffs for the population. Her approach of implementing energy efficiency measures and new technologies will reduce CO2 emissions in her home country. Govhar attempts to provide a model which can be transferred to other countries.

Research focus: sustainable technology, renewable energy sources

Dr Di ZHOU
China
PhD in Environmental Law

Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at Wuhan University, China

Di’s expertise surrounds Environmental Law and mainly focuses on the legalisation and institutionalisation of sustainability. She aims to conduct research on the ecological civilisation and sustainable development in China.

Ecological civilisation is an explicit goal towards sustainable development. It points out the significance of a long-term perspective on the current climate crisis and represents another form of human civilisation, based on ecological principles. Following this, the world is in need of major environmental shifts and a restructuring of the society. One of the systems that need to be revised is the legal system, and Di aims to advance change towards an ecological civilisation.

Di shows that, for the ecological civilisation to arise, the environmental rule of law has to cover all environmental issues arising from development rather than being fragmented and narrowed down to small pieces. In addition, she argues that sustainable development will get a solid base by improving the environmental judicial system. The access to environmental justice would be a guarantee for sustainability. Her work also covers the climate-energy policies and carbon market.

Research focus: ecological civilisation, sustainable development, and environmental justice
Precious AKAMPUMUZA
Uganda
PhD Student in Sustainability Science, University of Tokyo, Japan

The impact of climate change on health has, until recently, been largely overlooked. A dearth of research is especially apparent in the world’s most vulnerable areas, such as East Africa. Precious intends to address this imbalance by investigating the association between climate change and infectious diseases in Uganda.

By analysing the association between extreme rainfall and temperature and the number of outpatient visits due to diarrheal diseases in Uganda, Precious will be among the first scientists to analyse the association between climate change and infectious diseases in Uganda. Precious is stretching the limit of data availability in Uganda by leveraging smartphone technology to digitise hospital and meteorological archives. From this, she has created a unique database, to analyse diarrheal diseases in one of Uganda’s most vulnerable sub-regions.

Research focus: effect of climate change on incidences of infectious diseases in Eastern Africa

Zeyad AL-SHIBAANY
Iraq
PhD Student in Mechatronics Engineering
Newcastle University, United Kingdom

Zeyad is working on the design and development of a portable medical device that will help prevent the spread of infectious diseases. The safest way to contain infectious diseases is to make sure that those who are infected do not mix with the healthy population. Currently, however, to be diagnosed, sick people, especially in poorer communities, often need to travel long distances to see a medical professional. This brings them into contact with a great deal of vulnerable people. In order to circumvent this potentially dangerous scenario, Zeyad has developed a prototype medical device that people can use in their own homes to test for infectious diseases. Results can, then, be sent to a hospital where their data can be logged.

Currently, Zeyad is a Project Officer and Research Associate in Mechatronics (Sustainable Manufacturing and Industry 4.0) to work on the Cardiff Element of the Advanced Sustainable Manufacturing Technologies Project. For his work and experience in both academia and industry, Zeyad has been elected and registered by the Engineering Council in the United Kingdom, and he is authorised to use the title Chartered Engineer.

Research focus: medical systems engineering and mechatronics applications
Dr Aretha APRILIA
Indonesia
PhD in Socio-Environmental Energy Science

Current position: Business Development & Environmental Specialist at CDM Smith Europe GmbH, Indonesia

Aretha is working on an off-grid rural electrification project using renewable energy sources in Indonesia. She is also evaluating the renewable energy policy mix to encourage the growth of renewable energy penetration in the country, including off-grid rural electrification.

Over 2,500 villages in Indonesia currently have no electricity access. Aretha is analysing the impact of the country’s new energy policies on the penetration of RE in the energy mix. Her second research topic is community-based waste management and the use of municipal waste for energy production. In her studies she identifies barriers of RE and waste-to-energy. Based on her waste survey conducted in Jakarta, more than 30 percent of household waste is organic. This implies that there is a high amount of methane gas emission which could be converted to generate energy.

Aretha has received multiple prestigious recognitions for her contributions to the fields of renewable energy development including Global Center of Excellence scholarships from the Government of Japan.

Research focus: renewable energy (RE) policy mix to accelerate RE penetration and off-grid rural electrification

Katherine BERTHON
Australia
PhD Student in Designing Green Spaces for Biodiversity

RMIT University, Australia

Sustainable cities need plenty of green space; however, urban environments pose significant challenges for conservation efforts. Katherine is seeking to tackle this problem by researching how green spaces can be designed to support biodiversity enhancement and other ecosystem functions. In addition to this, she also wants to demonstrate how increased access to green space not only boosts biodiversity, but also improves the wellbeing of urban populations.

Katherine works as part of a collaborative team of industry representatives, members of local government, and researchers across varied scientific disciplines, to understand how to better design green spaces for people and nature to coexist in the city. Her PhD work contributes to this project by understanding the ways in which green space design influences how invertebrates interact with and utilise plant resources. Understanding these interactions will lead to better plant choice for greening cities, but must be weighed against human needs and desires.

Katherine aims to understand which features of green spaces support biodiversity conservation objectives and to unveil whether these are the same or different features as those which support positive human health outcomes.

Research focus: designing green spaces for biodiversity

Dr Bishnu Prasad BHATTARAI
Nepal
PhD in Energy Technology

Current position: Senior Research Scientist/Engineer at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, United States of America

Bishnu has been working for many years on improving the grid integration of renewable energy sources through the development of various smart grid technologies. His research is primarily focused on enhancing energy security, reliability, and resiliency of integrated electrical, thermal, and transportation systems.

Bishnu is developing algorithms and system architecture to enable efficient integration of large scale integration of distributed energy resources. His algorithms regulate energy when system stability, reliability or security is jeopardised. Multi-time-scale controllers regulate the limited amount of power generation from renewable sources during critical conditions and maintain system stability. This increases the hosting capacity of electric grids and, therefore, contributes to a higher share of green energy.

For his research and academic excellence in his graduate studies, Bishnu was awarded the Gold Medal “Nepal Bihya Bhusan” from the president of Nepal.

Research focus: sustainable energy systems through integrated electrical, thermal, and transportation energy system

Rama Kant DUBEY
India
PhD in Environmental Science and Technology

Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at Environmental Research Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore

To meet the food demands of a rapidly growing human population, without negative effects on the ecosystem, Rama Kant is validating sustainable agro-biotechnological approaches for improving the soil and the nutritional quality of agricultural produce.

To ascertain the impact of climate change on soil and microbial respiration and microbial functional diversity, he has compared various agro-biotechnological interventions, such as the use of biochar, humicil, vermicompost, cow dung manure, sheep manure, leaf litter, and microbial inoculums, with practices like mulching, reduced tillage, and crop diversification.

2019 AMI Young Scientist Award in the area of Environmental Microbiology by the Association of Microbiologists of India

Research focus: agricultural sustainability and restoration of degraded land in times of global warming

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Research focus: sustainable energy systems through integrated electrical, thermal, and transportation energy system

Rama Kant is focusing on the reasons for the loss of micro- and macronutrients, biodiversity in agricultural soil, and how plant-microbe interactions can be harnessed to improve the same. He has conducted extensive field experiments in different regions of Uttar Pradesh, India’s most populated state, and investigated how climate-smart and resource conservation agro-biotechnological practices can improve the health productivity and sustainability of agroecosystems. In order
Dr Hannah HARRISON  
United States of America  
PhD in Ecology and Natural Resource Management  
Current position: Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Geography, Environment, and Geomatics, University of Guelph, Canada

Hannah is developing a holistic picture of conflicts in the discourse about small-scale voluntary salmon hatcheries. She intends to identify underlying drivers of conflict for more sustainable salmon fisheries management. Conflict over natural resources is inherently unsustainable. Such is the case for wild Atlantic salmon populations across Europe where using hatcheries as conservation tools has created controversy. Hannah is researching solutions for more sustainable salmon conservation by comparing small-scale voluntary hatcheries with habitat improvement and restoration work, with the aim of understanding underlying drivers of conflict and identifying solutions to harmonise salmon management efforts. Specifically, she is investigating different perspectives involved in conflicts over voluntary hatcheries, which are thought to have a damaging impact on salmon population genetics and survival. Hannah is exchanging knowledge with fishery ecologists, anglers, aquaculture experts, and policy makers, and by evaluating case studies in different countries, she is bringing clarity to the issue.

Research focus: researching innovative cultivation techniques for sustainable production of endangered freshwater fish species in Europe

Sea Jin KIM  
Republic of Korea  
PhD Student in Environmental Science and Climate Change  
Korea University, Republic of Korea  

Sea Jin is studying disaster risk in order to determine better land management strategies and promote sustainability. With natural disasters posing greater threats to people around the world, her research in developing disaster-related indicators and forecasting threats, such as forest fires, will be of immense value to vulnerable populations. Sea Jin aims at conducting research using Geographic Information Systems and satellite data to provide decision makers at a global level with the information they need to combat climate problems and prevent the disastrous outcomes that climate problems pose.

Research focus: disaster risk management, disaster risk reduction, climate change, forest fire, extreme precipitation

Anup K C  
Nepal  
PhD Student in Park Conservation and Ecotourism, Clemson University, United States of America  
Current position: Assistant Professor of Environmental Science, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Anup is using his training in both Environmental Science and Economics to support the ecotourism sector in Nepal. In his PhD research project, he is assessing opportunities to promote ecotourism in the country by benefiting local indigenous communities and conserving wildlife. He is always positive about incorporating aspects of indigenous culture and best practices from elsewhere in the world to enhance the ecotourism sector of Nepal. Anup believes that developing the ecotourism sector is one of the fastest ways to foster the economic development of the country.

Research focus: green economy, ecotourism, community forest, climate change

Ellin LEDE  
Australia  
PhD Student in Environmental Science  
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, United Kingdom

Ellin is investigating how we can effectively apply behavioural insights to incentivise water conservation behaviour and increase support for water-related climate change mitigation strategies. Ensuring a sustainable supply of water will require novel strategies, which will include engaging with end users to incentivise a reduction in overall water demand. In collaboration with research partners Ellin designs and pilots evidence-based approaches informed by behavioural science to encourage water conservation behaviour in water scarce regions in the United Kingdom.

Research focus: developing innovative and evidence-based approaches to incentivise water conservation in water-scarce regions in the United Kingdom
Dr Megan LUKAS-SITHOLE
South Africa
PhD in Environmental and Geographical Science
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at the African Climate & Development Initiative (ACDI), University of Cape Town, South Africa

For Megan, the everyday practices of ordinary people that have sustainable outcomes should be recognised in cities of the global south. She identified self-motivated individuals and NGOs promoting sustainability in an impoverished township in Cape Town. She hopes to use the examples of their practices to inform decision-makers about what is required to achieve sustainability and improve wellbeing within townships.

Megan’s research examines the often unintentional environmental engagement and everyday lives of residents living in Nyanga, a poor township in Cape Town. Given the local history, the community itself was poorly designed, and a sustainable lifestyle is often difficult. Megan’s findings reveal that connections to and imaginaries of home and home-making practices shape the sustainable lifestyles of some people living in Nyanga.

Currently, Megan is working on the IPCC’s 6th Assessment Report as a chapter scientist. It’s a postdoc position she got through the African Climate & Development Initiative (ACDI) at the University of Cape Town.

Research focus: transitions in energy systems connected to climate change mitigation policies

Dr Liv LUNDBERG
Sweden
PhD in Energy and Environment
Current position: Researcher in Energy System Analysis, RISE Research Institutes of Sweden, Sweden

Liv is focused on energy system transitions towards high levels of solar and wind power penetration, working with system modelling and policy analysis. When large societal transformations such as decarbonisation of the energy system take place, it is difficult to use previous knowledge for predicting future outcomes. While computer models can offer an explanation and are crucial for policy analysis, traditional models fail to account for non-rational behaviour and actor interactions and are often based on assumptions of optimisation or economic equilibrium. Liv is developing models that, by using methods from the field of complex systems, behavioural economics, and game theory, better account for how the behaviour of individual actors, the interaction between them and policies are a part of shaping the system.

Following the research stay at the Hochschule für Politik in Munich, Liv worked for the Swedish Government as an analyst and policy expert in an investigation on new policies for biogas. The global sustainability challenges are extremely complex, meaning that consequences of actions/policies intended to mitigate problems are hard to foresee. As a physicist and engineer who has also studied Industrial Ecology, Economics, and Psychology, Liv is well placed to take on this challenge.

Research focus: human connection to the environment in an under-resourced township setting regarding everyday practices that have sustainable effects

Dr Gian Powell B. MARQUEZ
Philippines
EngD in Aerospace Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at Ritsumeikan University, Japan

Biogas production offers an opportunity for a reliable energy supply for remote coastal communities. However, the resulting waste sludge poses a risk to the ecosystem. Powell is investigating ways of making biogas production more sustainable. Coastal villagers in the Philippines are surrounded by abundant marine biomass, and Powell is working on efficiently tapping into this supply, without damaging the environment.

Powell is researching the utilisation of thalassic conditions in anaerobic digestion for biogas production. He hopes his findings will alleviate the difficult living conditions of people in isolated island communities by providing low-cost energy sources. Powell’s aim is to determine a bio-refinery concept using marine biomass and microorganisms, wherein a sustainable thalassic biogas system is integrated with wastewater treatment and macro-algae/ micro-algae farming technology.

Currently he is transitioning his research to Futures Studies in seaweed biomass economy in the Asia-Pacific region. Besides Powell is part of the newly opened College of Global Liberal Arts at the Ritsumeikan University, where he teaches and facilitates innovative sustainable solutions for global issues.

Olga MIRONENKO
Russia
MSc in Environmental Science
Current position: Head of Waste Management, Leroy Merlin, Russia; Co-founder of Taiga, Russia

As founder of a marine plastics recycling start-up, Olga aims to make production and consumption in today’s world more sustainable. With her past research projects, she brings expertise in marine pollution into her business of reversing pollution in the seas by rethinking the way we produce and consume.

As a Master’s student she focused on marine anthropogenic pollution and investigated the interactions of marine biota with (micro-)plastics. For her thesis Olga conducted research into marine debris on the Commander Islands, mapping areas of pollution around the islands and looking into the potential of recycling using renewable energy sources. This investigation led to her setting up “Holy Jelly”, an initiative aimed at addressing the issue of plastics in oceans and their impact on marine life, by retrieving plastic from the sea and turning it into reground. In the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network Youth Report of 2017 the initiative was included as one of the 50 ground-breaking projects and ideas for sustainable development. Her second startup “Taiga” was awarded best environmental startup of 2016 by the city government of Moscow. Taiga focuses on greening the business, including restaurant and event industries, developing environmental games and raising public awareness of environmental issues.

Research focus: marine anthropogenic pollution, zero waste production and consumption

Research focus: anaerobic digestion, thalassic biogas technology, and recovery systems
Dr Enayat A. MOALLEMI
Iran/Australia
PhD in Environmental Policy
Current position: Lead Researcher at the Local SDGs Programme, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Deakin University, Australia
Enayat’s research is focused on computational and participatory approaches for modelling socio-ecological systems under the uncertainties of future global change. His research is applied to a range of areas, such as renewable energies, sustainable mobility, and the Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to advance robust decision-making and adaptive planning. Enayat obtained his PhD from the University of Melbourne, where he worked on model-based energy policy analysis. In his PhD, Enayat developed a theoretical transition framework and an exploratory system dynamics model for investigating future energy transition pathways under uncertainty. Enayat was a visiting researcher at the Faculty of Technology, Policy and Management, Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands) in 2016 and at the Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research in Karlsruhe (Germany) in 2018 as a part of his Green Talent research collaboration.

Ahmed Zakaria Hafez MOHAMED
Egypt
PhD Student in Civil Engineering
University of Nottingham, United Kingdom
Ahmed is researching ways to improve the efficiency of solar-powered engines. He has worked on boosting the water-pumping capability of Stirling engines in order to increase access to water in remote rural areas of his country, Egypt. Ahmed has identified a way to solve the problem of water scarcity in remote areas of impoverished countries. His work involves increasing the efficiency of water pumps by improving solar power technology. Remote communities often rely on diesel generators, and Ahmed hopes his research can be used to both improve access to water and decrease dependence on fossil fuel. Ahmed’s project provides the complete design and demonstration of a 10 horsepower laboratory prototype engine with a solar dish. The solar dish system is designed to follow the sun using a new technique for solar tracking systems, to maximise the amount of energy that is collected.

Chukwuebuka Christopher OKOLO
Nigeria
PhD Student in Soil Science
Mekelle University, Ethiopia
Unsustainable agricultural practices in Sub-Saharan Africa are both contributing towards climate change and exacerbating its impact on local populations. Chukwuebuka’s research interest centres on the accurate quantification of soil carbon in relation to climate change. He aims to provide framework information towards the understanding of carbon capture, distribution, and transfer. Soil carbon is vital for supporting ecosystems and improving soil productivity, and its effective management boosts sustainable use. By increasing the levels of soil organic carbon in degraded soils, CO₂ emissions will be sequestered and water capture enhanced.

Eyram NORGBEY
Ghana
PhD Student in Environmental Science and Engineering
Hohai University, China
Eyram is seeking to lower the world’s dependency on crude oil by inserting a substitute material into asphalt. He has identified lignin as an ideal replacement as it will lower costs, decrease environmental damage, and reduce the impact of flooding. Asphalt is the world’s most important binder for road construction; however, its use poses significant problems. Eyram’s research focuses on using industrial waste material to partially replace asphalt binder to make sustainable and cheaper road surfaces, to help reduce the dependence on oil products. In his project, he is modifying asphalt with lignin, a sustainable, renewable, and environmentally friendly waste biomass. Lignin is readily available, as a by-product obtained from the paper-making or corn industry. Asphalt modification with lignin will produce cheaper, sustainable, and environmentally friendly waste biomass.

Eyram is now adopting a climate analogues approach to his research. This term refers to the comparison of sites or conditions with statistical similarity, meaning his research will have a global scope. Most recently, he is focusing on effective and accurate measurement of greenhouse gases down the profile under different cropping systems with labelled tracers.

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Dr Kamila POPE
Brazil
PhD in Law, Politics, and Society
Current position: Visiting Researcher at Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF), Germany

Kamila is aiming to overcome planned obsolescence by raising awareness of the problem. Her research focuses on finding political solutions and appropriate legal regulations.

Planned obsolescence is the artificial reduction of the durability of consumer goods to induce consumers to purchase substitute products before they would need to and, therefore, more often than they normally would. Societal trends often dictate when products become outdated, as new designs and update versions emerge. The practice of planned obsolescence contributes to the overexploitation of natural resources and the overproduction of waste. In her research, Kamila is weighing up innovative strategies that can address these challenges from multiple angles, including business, design, and technology. She is focusing on political and judicial solutions because of their authority in influencing society.

2019 Best PhD Thesis in Law in Brazil, awarded by CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel), Brazilian Ministry of Education

Research focus: planned obsolescence, environmental governance, waste management, socio-ecological justice, ecological law and policies

Dr Kashif RASOOL
Pakistan
PhD in Environmental and Energy Engineering
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar

Kashif is taking on two of the world’s most pressing environmental concerns: water contamination and water security. He is developing innovative methods for extracting contaminants from industrial wastewater, so that it can be safely and sustainably returned to the freshwater supply. He is focusing on the removal of organics, heavy metals, nutrients, and emerging micro-pollutants from a variety of wastewater streams, coupled with renewable bio-energy production.

Kashif is working on the identification, selection, and scientific application of water quality, and sustainable innovative water/wastewater treatment for further water reuse strategies. He tested antifouling membranes for water desalination and biological water treatment. Designed to cope with the more extreme weather conditions of the Arabian Gulf, these advanced membranes enable ultrafast water permeation, while maintaining good mechanical properties – crucial factors for advancing sustainable water purification and desalination technologies.

2017

Research focus: environmental remediation, water and wastewater treatment

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2017

Research focus: environmental remediation, water and wastewater treatment

Pratiksha SRIVASTAVA
India
PhD Student in Environmental Engineering
University of Tasmania, Australia

Pratiksha has developed a unique piece of technology to enhance constructed wetlands technology in order to provide more efficient water sanitation in rural communities. Clean water and sanitation stand out as being among the most important aims of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Pratiksha is enhancing constructed wetlands technology which is able to effectively sanitise water without chemical or mechanical requirements. However, processes are extremely slow and a large landscape footprint is required. To solve the problem of inefficiency, Pratiksha has developed a novel Integrated Constructed Wetlands-Microbial Fuel Cell. This device accelerates anaerobic processes and enables constructed wetlands to perform at twice the speed. The landscape footprint requirement is also lower and electricity can even be generated.

In addition to this, Pratiksha has designed and built a unique zero discharge water-recyclable community toilet, which has been integrated with constructed wetlands and innovative septic tanks.

2017 Tasmania Graduate Research Scholarship
2017 University Graduate Top-up Scholarship

Research focus: anaerobic treatment

Dr Ravindra RATAN
Fiji
PhD in Geography (Climate Change/Sustainable Livelihood)
Current position: Researcher in Geography (Climate Change and Natural Disasters), Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies Potsdam, Germany

Ravindra is a social environmental scientist and has dedicated his academic career to the study of climate change and natural disasters in the Asia-Pacific region and to the understanding of coping strategies. His research is contributing towards improving the relationship between people and the ecosystem around them. Ravindra is researching on science, sustainability, and spirituality, and the culture of disasters in the Indian Himalayan Region, looking at the impacts of historical climate change and natural disasters on mankind and ecosystem. He particularly focuses on Asia/Pacific countries, which have been victim to an increasing number of natural disasters over recent decades.

His research also focuses on climate change and clean energy transitions in the Asia-Pacific region. He is investigating historical and contemporary natural hazards and disasters and their impacts on ecosystems, as well as vulnerability and resilience patterns of affected communities. Ravindra is aiming to improve awareness through a social marketing application by delivering public motivation lectures on sustainability.

2017 Green Talents Alumni

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2017 Green Talents Alumni
Dr Attila TÓTH
Slovakia
PhD in Landscape Architecture

Current position: Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at the Slovak University of Agriculture, Slovakia

Attila’s research is geared towards transforming cities into sustainable and resilient urban landscapes for a liveable and inclusive Europe. He is studying the environmental effectiveness of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

As a professional landscape architect, Attila aims to solve urban and climatic challenges in urban conglomerates by building with nature. Urban greening, especially trees in streets, squares and green spaces, is usually the first port of call when looking to boost oxygen, wildlife, and the sequestration of carbon. The term, however, also includes anything that helps to absorb, delay, and treat stormwater and mitigate flooding and pollution downstream. Urban greening also benefits human health through noise and dust reduction, clean air, and spaces for wellbeing. Green infrastructure will play a key role in achieving the EU’s policy objectives for healthy urban ecosystems.

Research focus: implementation of green infrastructure and its ecosystem services as nature-based solutions in sustainable urban and rural development

Dr Linjun XIE
China
PhD in Urban Sustainable Development

Current position: Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Department of Geography at Durham University, United Kingdom

Linjun’s research focuses on environmental governance and sustainable urbanisation. During her PhD, she contributed to the first systematic comparative analyses of the development of green economies between EU and China, in a collaborative research project that involved China, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and France. The project was focused on smart city and eco-city initiatives, and it contributed to identify the mechanisms through which societal innovations emerge in different socio-economic contexts.

Linjun has conducted extensive urban sustainability research on aspects such as sustainable transportation, green infrastructure development, and eco-city initiatives. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher on an EU Horizon 2020 research project NATUREVATION on innovation and governance of nature-based solutions. Her research focuses on the urban biodiversity governance and the mainstreaming of nature-based solutions.

Research focus: environmental governance and sustainable urbanisation

Jayati TRIVEDI
India
PhD Student in Engineering

Current position: Senior Scientist at Indian Institute of Petroleum, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Assistant Professor at Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research, India

Jayati seeks to make energy production sustainable and cleaner through interdisciplinary research in Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, and Agricultural Sciences. Using clean sources of energy is a vital step towards a more sustainable economy. In order to contribute to this effort, Jayati is researching energy generation from renewable lignocellulosic biomass. Instead of using environmentally harsh catalysts and solvents, her emphasis is on using environmentally friendly green enzymes for the synthesis of products from biomass feedstock.

Currently, Jayati is leading a project on the development of an energy-efficient process for producing biodiesel at room temperature. This project involves spreading awareness in the society about the health hazards caused by consuming used cooking oil and further channelling this waste stream for the production of biodiesel.

Jayati invented a novel biotechnological process for the production of (L) Lactic Acid from low cost lignocellulosic biomass, based on which the United States patent was granted in 2018.

Research focus: production of green fuels and chemicals from biomass-derived feedstock
Applications total 757
Application countries 91
Winners 25

Dr Abubakari AHMED
Ghana
PhD in Sustainability Science

Current position: Lecturer at the University for Development Studies, Ghana

Abubakari is currently a lecturer at the Department of Planning of the University for Development Studies (UDS), Ghana. Prior to joining UDS, he was a postdoc at the University of Trier in Germany and a recipient of a Humboldt Research Fellowship. His research during his PhD assessed the sustainability of large-scale land acquisitions for biofuel in Ghana by examining the social, economic, and environmental impacts of various feedstock options used in biofuel production. Abubakari’s current research focus is on the water-energy-food nexus in African cities, assessing the resource interdependencies at the household level.

Abubakari has won several different awards, including the United Nations University Junior Fellowship, the Tertiary Education Scholarship Trust for Africa, Humboldt Research Fellowship, African Peace Network Grant of the Social Science Research Council, and the Land Matrix Ghana Data Campaign.

Research focus: water-energy-food nexus in African cities

Melissa ATWELL
Trinidad and Tobago
PhD Student in Environmental Science, Soil Science, Geography, and Sustainable Natural Resource Management

University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago

In her research, Melissa aims to increase knowledge on soil ecosystem services under different land uses in humid tropical savannahs. Soil ecosystems provide multiple benefits to society including nutrient cycling, water relations, physical stability, and habitats. The preservation of these ecosystems is essential. Without integrating ecological conservation and sustainability into land use planning activities, there will be a decline in human well-being as a result of reduced food, fresh water, livelihood security, and greater economic losses due to natural disasters. Melissa’s objective is to help prevent soil degradation, advise decision makers in tropical regions and small island states, and to predict future trends to achieve sustainable adaptation strategies to climate change.

Due to her outstanding academic performance, she received a research grant from her university. She also won 3rd prize for her oral presentation on wetland soils at the ASA-CSSA-SSSA Annual General Meeting in the United States and received 1st place for her poster presentation at the research symposium for the International Year of Biodiversity in Trinidad and Tobago. She also received an Erasmus+ mobility scholarship to conduct research at the University of Graz, Austria.

Research focus: sustainable management of soil ecosystem services and its resilience in the face of increased population pressures and climate change
Dr Miroslav BRUMOVSKÝ
Czech Republic
PhD in Environmental Chemistry
Current position: Postdoctoral Scholar in Environmental Chemistry at Centre for Microbiology and Environmental Systems Science, University of Vienna, Austria, and Regional Centre of Advanced Technologies and Materials, Palacky University Olomouc, Czech Republic.

Miroslav’s research activities focus on the study of the fate of anthropogenic contaminants in environmental systems and the development of new approaches for their removal. Currently, Miroslav works as Postdoctoral Scholar at the University of Vienna and at the Palacky University Olomouc. He is investigating the removal of groundwater contaminants using advanced nanoscale zerovalent iron (nZVI) particles. nZVI particles attract extensive attention for contaminant removal due to their large specific surface area, superior reactivity, easy and flexible in-situ applicability, and low environmental risks associated with their application.

Research focus: removal of chlorinated hydrocarbons and chromium (VI) using advanced nanoscale zerovalent iron particles.

Dr Shamik CHOWDHURY
India
PhD in Environmental Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at the School of Environmental Science and Engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, India.

Shamik’s interdisciplinary research combines urban sustainability, resource efficiency, cleaner production, and eco-innovation. His objective is to create green technologies based on renewable feedstocks in order to promote more sustainable city life. In his doctoral research, Shamik focused on the development and application of novel 3D graphene nanostructures (GMs) to promote economically viable green technologies. He attempted to improve the quality of urban living through the application of 3D graphene nanostructures in smart devices. One of his major accomplishments was the production of high-quality graphene in large quantities from sustainable precursors.

Research focus: green synthesis of 2D nanomaterials and their self-assembly into advanced 3D macrostructures for sustainable urban development.

Dr Alejandra María CARMONA DUQUE
Colombia
PhD in Water Resources Engineering
Current position: Researcher at Constructora Conconcreto, Colombia.

Over the past years Alejandra has been studying climate change and climate variability in tropical South America with particular emphasis on Colombia and the Amazon River basin. Throughout her research career, she has worked with engineers, biologists and ecologists towards understanding and modelling hydrological variables and predicting their fluctuations at different time scales. She has, thus, helped to update and strengthen evidence for natural climate variability and possible signs of climate change in Colombia and the Amazon River basin. One of her goals is to contribute to the design of adaptation strategies and programmes that mitigate the effects of climate change through their orientation towards more sustainable and eco-friendly practices.

Alejandra has received a scholarship for her doctoral studies from Colciencias and a summa cum laude distinction for her PhD dissertation. In addition, she has also worked as an adjunct professor, teaching hydrology to undergraduate students.

Research focus: climate change and climate variability in tropical South America.

Dr Hèou Maléki BADJANA
Togo
PhD in Hydrology: Climate Change and Water Resources
Current position: Postdoctoral Research Assistant in Hydrological Modelling at the University of Reading, United Kingdom.

Hèou currently works at the Department of Geography and Environmental Science in the LANDWISE (LAND management in lowland catchments for integrated flood risk reduction) project. As a research associate at the University of Lomé, he also worked as a volunteer hydrologist for the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre in the Netherlands and as a consultant in sustainable wetland management for the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources, Togo. In his research, Hèou examines land use change and hydrologic processes in river basins in West Africa to develop strategies for sustainable natural resource management. Using statistical, analytical, and observational techniques, he is able to chart hydro-climatic variables and to make predictions about how these might change over time. He also uses remote sensing and GIS techniques to assess the impacts of land use changes on landscapes. Hèou conducts socio-economic surveys as a means of integrating the knowledge of local populations, an important component of integrated natural resource management.

In 2014, he was awarded a research grant from the International Foundation for Sciences in Switzerland along with a full PhD scholarship from WASCAL (West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use).

Research focus: assessing hydro-climatic and land use changes in order to develop strategies that allow for more integrated land and water resource management.
Emily ELHACHAM
Israel
MSc in Chemistry

Current position: Research Associate in Chemistry at Tel Aviv University, Israel

Emily is a scientist in the areas of Chemistry, Nanotechnology, and Geoscience. Her work involves the development of sensing and detection technologies with a focus on remote sensing and in situ nanosystems. In the age of urbanisation, it is essential to find solutions to the threats that are putting the whole global ecosystem in danger. One of the main consequences of urbanisation has been pollution. Emily believes that an interdisciplinary approach is necessary in order to better address the current issues with regard to pollution monitoring.

Over the past years, she has been developing and using monitoring and detection systems from nanosystems to satellite remote sensing. Emily has applied those systems to address and further investigate water and air pollution as well as new aspects of molecule detection.

Research focus: developing and using sensing technologies and systems

Marina DEMARIA VENÂNCIO
Brazil
PhD Student in Law, Human and Ecological Rights
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil

Marina’s doctoral research addresses the interconnection between the human right to food and agroecology, focusing on Brazilian food and agroecological public policies. Her main goal includes reviewing Brazilian environmental legislation in light of the new paradigm set by agroecology and food security in terms of organic and ecological production. Marina believes that one of the main contributions she has provided to sustainability research is the promotion of the exchange between law and agroecology in Brazil, raising awareness about relevant issues.

Research focus: climate change, agriculture, and food systems in the anthropocene

Dr Jesús ESTEBAN SERRANO
Spain
PhD in Chemical Engineering

Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at Max Planck Institute for Chemical Energy Conversion, Germany

Jesús undertook his doctoral studies on the kinetics of reactions for the chemical valorisation of glycerol to obtain fuel additives and green solvents at the Complutense University of Madrid. In 2015, he joined the University of Birmingham and left for his Green Talents research stay at the Technical University of Dortmund in 2017. In 2018, he joined the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Energy Conversion (MPI-CEC) in Mulheim an der Ruhr.

Research focus: catalytic valorisation of renewable chemicals to obtain sustainable value-added products

Dr Wasif FAROOQ
Saudi Arabia
PhD in Energy and Environmental Engineering

Current position: Assistant Professor at King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM), Saudi Arabia

Wasif has a master’s degree and a PhD from the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), South Korea. Since 2015, he has worked as an assistant professor in the department of Chemical Engineering at the National University for Science and Technology (NUST) in Pakistan. Wasif uses his knowledge of micro-algal biotechnology to reduce the negative environmental effects of using fossil fuels in industrial processes in his home country of Pakistan. His research focuses on creating more energy-efficient mechanisms for carbon capture and storage (CCS) by applying his knowledge of algal biotechnology based carbon capture (ABC). His research is improving and implementing the ABC process is making it an increasingly viable option for cleaner energy in Pakistan.

Wasif holds two patents for his unique methods in harvesting green algae and producing high-energy biodiesel. He is currently working on green synthesis of chemicals from biomass through electrochemical engineering and microbiologically influenced corrosion (MIC) in offshore systems.

Research focus: integration of micro-algal biotechnology with fossil fuel based power plants for improved CO2 capture and biofuel and green chemical synthesis

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Research focus: developing and using sensing technologies and systems
Carlos Andrés GARCÍA VELÁSQUEZ
Colombia
PhD Student in Sustainability of Biobased Materials
Aachen-Maastricht Institute for Biobased Materials, Maastricht University, the Netherlands

With a scientific background in Renewable Energy, Engineering, and Sustainable Technology, Carlos is focusing on hydrogen production using biomass through gasification and dark fermentation. He is evaluating different alternatives to supply energy in rural areas in Colombia not connected to the electricity supplies of urban areas. By using renewable resources such as forest and agriculture residues, Carlos aims to provide an added value to these wastes, to reduce the environmental impact of using non-renewable energy sources for electricity generation, and to improve the quality of life for inhabitants of these regions. He investigated different technologies. His objective was to evaluate gasification and dark fermentation systems in non-interconnected zones using lignocellulosic residues from different agro-industrial supply chains (such as pine, sugarcane bagasse, rice husk, and coffee husk). The goal is to produce enough energy for daily life in Colombia’s rural communities.

2019 Young Scientist in the International Institute of Applied Science Analysis within the Young Scientists Summer Programme
2013 chosen for the programme of Young Researchers from Colciencias in Colombia

Research focus: development of decision-support tools for the accounting of scope 3 (LCA) emissions into the value chain of biomass (first and second-generation) to produce bioplastics

Dr Brett HALLAM
Australia
PhD in Silicon Photovoltaics
Current position: Associate Professor in Photovoltaic Engineering, University of New South Wales, Australia

With an academic background in Physics, Oceanography, and PV Engineering, Brett completed his PhD at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia focusing on high efficiency laser-doped silicon solar cells with advanced hydrogenation. He is an associate professor at UNSW supported by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) and is also research director at ARENA Crystalline Silicon PV Projects at UNSW. Brett’s research focuses on defect engineering methods to avoid the detrimental effects caused by defects in silicon solar cells, to boost solar cell performance and reduce cost, while also lowering greenhouse gas emissions and improving the utilisation of resources used for solar cell fabrication. Throughout his academic career, he has patented multiple technologies.

2018 Australian Museum Eureka Prize finalist for the Emerging Leader in Science
2017 Discovery Early Career Researcher Award; J. G. Russell Award; Award for Energy Innovation in New South Wales; and NSW Premier Prize for Science and Engineering
2016 Ulrich Gossele Young Scientist Award
2015 finalist in the Junior Einstein Award from SolarWorld Innovations GmbH in Germany

Research focus: advanced hydrogenation for silicon solar cells

Dr Rachel KELLY
Ireland
PhD in Marine Space Social Licence
Current position: Marine socioecologist at Centre for Marine Socioecology, University of Tasmania, Australia

Rachel’s research focuses on improving community knowledge and engagement with the ocean, using approaches such as citizen science, social licence, and improving ocean literacy. With her cross-disciplinary approach, Rachel positions the community as a key stakeholder of the earth’s oceanic environments and promotes collaborative exchange across disciplines between diverse, ‘conflicting’ groups. Her objective is to investigate diverse perspectives about the ocean and the uses that exist within the community in order to develop methods for influencing them by applying engagement techniques, including citizen science. As the UN Decade of the Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) fast approaches, Rachel’s work is increasingly focused on connecting people to the ocean by improving understanding and ocean literacy, and increasing community involvement in decision-making and conservation.

2019 University of Tasmania’s College of Science and Engineering’s Outstanding PhD Candidate Award
2018 Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Australia Student Recognition Award for Excellence

Research focus: social licence of marine conservation (ocean literacy, citizen science, community engagement, etc.)
Dr Zhu LIU
China
PhD in Ecology
Current position: Young Talent Associate Professor in Earth System Science, Tsinghua University, China

Zhu’s research focuses on global sustainability and the assessment of the human impacts on the earth system in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. Growing up in China, Zhu developed an interest for sustainable development, which led him to his research project. As a postdoctoral research fellow in sustainability science at Harvard University, he explores the options for global decarbonisation. His research develops bottom-up energy, water, and emission inventories aiming to uncover the social and economic driving forces of energy and emission growth. In his study, he addresses the tensions between industrial activities and the production of human-induced carbon emissions, which are the primary cause of global warming. Using interdisciplinary methods, he assesses issues of energy, climate change, sustainability, and public policy.

Research focus: using carbon emissions as indicators in assessing global sustainability

Dr Elizabeth LAW
Australia
PhD in Environmental Science and Applied Economics
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA), Norway

Landscapes today are faced with manifold pressures, such as providing food, fibre, biofuels, and water, conserving the remaining habitat for flora and fauna, and mitigating the effects of climate change. In her research, Elizabeth aims to explore how landscapes and wildlife can be sustainably managed, to both capitalise on and enhance their multifunctional capacity, and to provide outcomes that are effective, efficient, and equitable for all stakeholders. She tackles this problem from a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that includes case studies from around the world and combines recent developments in causal inference, conservation science, ethics, simulation modelling, and multicriteria optimisation.

Elizabeth actively collaborates with several international research groups, including that of Humboldt University. She aims for exceptional research that contributes to the effective, efficient, ethical, and sustainable management of socio-ecological landscapes, and wants to continue developing her collaborative and interdisciplinary research track.

Research focus: understanding unavoidable trade-offs between environment, economics, and ethics in bio-diverse production landscapes

Dr James Guo Sheng MOO
Singapore
PhD in Materials Chemistry
Current position: Research Scientist at Evonik Industries, Singapore

James, who has been interested in materials chemistry from an early age, has decided to focus his work on creating new materials and understanding how they interact with their surroundings in order to make them most useful to society. He focuses on the development of self-propelled micro/nanosystems along with the extraction of useful macro-behaviour from nanotechnology.

James is currently working in the portfolio development arm of Evonik Asia Research Hub (Singapore) with a focus on the development of novel inorganic materials for emerging applications. During his PhD, he has successfully developed an artificial microfish that can detect the presence of lead and cadmium in water. For this groundbreaking innovation, he won the Falling Walls Lab Singapore 2016 and was representing the Nanyang Technological University at the Falling Walls Lab final in Berlin.

A different aspect of his research is the development of carbon nanomaterials for the removal of heavy metals from water. His work has been included in three different water forums: the Singapore International Water Week’s Young Water Leaders Summit, the Asia Pacific Youth Parliament for Water and the World Water Forum.

Research focus: inorganic materials

Dr Musaida Mercy MANYUCHI
Zimbabwe
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Director for Research, Value Addition and Beneficiation in the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, Zimbabwe, and Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Mercy studies sustainability, focusing on the water-energy-food nexus. She founded SustainableTech, a green technology company, and also worked as a researcher, lecturer, and head of department at the Harare Institute of Technology where she focused on harnessing energy from waste biomass.

Aiming at creating a sustainable power supply for communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, Mercy is currently researching options for using charcoal material as a sustainable power source in African communities by producing bio-coal from charcoal ashes. A process is being developed to find out whether the bio-coal produced by briquetting from charcoal fines could act as a solid fuel for cooking purposes and be used as a bio-absorbent during wastewater treatment, and whether the charcoal ash from cooking could be applied as a bio-fertilizer.

Mercy has registered patents, utility models and trademarks.

Research focus: production of bio-coal for larger domestic purposes using an integrated process

Dr Musaida Mercy MANYUCHI
Zimbabwe
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Director for Research, Value Addition and Beneficiation in the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, Zimbabwe, and Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa

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Research focus: production of bio-coal for larger domestic purposes using an integrated process

Research focus: production of bio-coal for larger domestic purposes using an integrated process

Green Talents Alumni 2016
Green Talents Alumni 2016
Dr Ana Rita C. MORAIS
Portugal
PhD in Sustainable Chemistry
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at National Renewable Energy Laboratory, United States of America

The environmental changes that have transpired in the last few decades have increased the need to search for more sustainable and renewable carbon sources. Ana thinks that instead of using food culture as a feedstock, we should direct our interest at wastes and residues. Less noble lignocellulosic feedstocks, including wastes and residues, appear to be relevant as potential sources of biofuels, biochemicals, and biomaterials. She regards the use of “dirty” chemicals in sustainable feedstock processing as something that is ruining the sustainability of biomass-based processes. This is the primary reason why the use of more sustainable solvents in processing of agro-industrial residues has become the focus of her research.

Research focus: integration of green chemistry into the valorisation of biomass wastes and residues through the use of more sustainable technologies

Dr Qianhong SHE
China
PhD in Environmental Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Qianhong graduated from the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, having completed studies in Environmental and Water Resource Engineering. He is working on the development of energy-efficient separation technologies with a focus on membrane technology for promoting environmental sustainability and circular economy. Since his PhD studies, he has focused on one of the most promising technologies for harvesting osmotic energy: pressure-retarded osmosis. Osmotic energy is a new type of renewable energy that is sustainably generated by combining two waters with different salinities, and it has huge energy potential globally. The pressure-retarded osmosis membrane technology developed in Qianhong’s research has been recognised as one of the most promising technologies for capturing this renewable energy. The entirety of his research has been carried out at the Singapore Membrane Technology Centre.

Qianhong’s work experience includes, inter alia, serving as technical consultant for a World Bank financed environment project titled “Zhejiang Qiantang River Basin Small Town Environment Project” at the PowerChina Huadong Engineering Corporation along with a research fellowship at Nanyang Technological University.

Research focus: development of pressure-retarded osmosis membrane technology for seawater desalination brine disposal and renewable osmotic energy recovery

Dr Deo Florence ONDA
Philippines
PhD in Oceanography
Current position: Assistant Professor and Deputy Director for Research, Marine Science Institute, University of the Philippines, Philippines

Deo is determined to find sustainable solutions to the climate change issues affecting the world’s oceans through ecology. His work centres on further understanding the diversity, ecology, distribution, and responses of microbial communities to these changing conditions. With the predicted opening of the Arctic to trade and transportation due to ice loss in the coming years, his research will help assess the impacts that these future activities could have in the region. His ultimate aim is to understand the consequences of the changing environment and increased anthropogenic disturbances to marine ecosystems from the perspectives of microbial ecology.

Research focus: host-symbiont interactions, microbial biogeography, diversity, dynamics and trophic interactions, and consequences of changing conditions

Hani ROCHA EL BIZRI
Brazil
PhD Student in Natural Sciences
Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

As an associate researcher in the Mamirauá Sustainable Development Institute, Hani has been collecting and analyzing data on game mammals’ biological traits as well as on hunting and trade of wild meat in the Brazilian and Peruvian Amazon, with strong participation and support from the local people.

Hani seeks solutions for a lack of history data on Amazonian wildlife. The new perspective he is providing to sustainability research is an innovative, community-based approach to obtaining reproduction information on wild mammals of the tropics, which can be applied in sustainable wildlife management initiatives across the world. He points out that almost no management strategy has been successfully developed in dense forests because of the severe lack of biological information, and scientists struggle to infer natural phenomena with very inaccurate data.

Research focus: achieving sustainable use of wildlife in the Amazon through participatory methods
Dr Yam Prasad SIWAKOTI
Nepal
PhD in Power Electronics

Current position: Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, University of Technology Sydney, Australia

Yam worked for many years in the area of renewable energy and sustainable power generation. His objective is to build scientific partnerships between Nepal and Germany to share both education and research findings, experiences and ideas. After finishing his PhD in Electronic Engineering from Macquarie University in Sydney, he was a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Energy Technology, Aalborg University, Denmark (2014-2016). He was also a visiting scientist at the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems, Freiburg, Germany (2017/2018).

Currently he is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, University of Technology Sydney, Australia. He serves as an Associate Editor of three major journals of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE): IEEE Transactions on Power Electronics, IEEE Transactions on Industrial Electronics, and IEEE Journal of Emerging and Selected Topics in Power Electronics and the IET Power Electronics. He is also a peer review college member of Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC), United Kingdom.

Research focus: power electronics for sustainable energy and transportation

2016

Tegegne WONDOWOSSEN
Ethiopia
PhD Student in Climate Change and Tourism Development, Griffith University, Australia

Current position: Working on Climate Resilient Programme, Department for International Development, United Kingdom government mission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tegegne is studying the nexus between climate change and the development of tourism in protected areas. Through his interdisciplinary research, he aims to establish cooperation between tourism, agriculture, local communities, and nature conservation in the face of growing climate change. In his PhD research, Tegegne analyses the role of tourism in agricultural development in the Simien Mountains National Park, a World Heritage Site in Ethiopia, his home country. His study offers new perspectives on sustainability research. It explores the potential advantages of expanding tourism as a means of facilitating development as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation. He also investigates the cause-and-effect relationship among variables of development and points out which subsystem must be sustainable to maintain the system as a whole. The outcomes of this research may have implications for policies in developing countries, such as the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), the National Adaptation Programs (NAPs), and the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+).

Research focus: understanding climate change and tourism nexus by investigating the possibility of tourism as a driver of climate compatible development using Ethiopia as a case study

2016

Dr Wai Fen YONG
Malaysia
PhD in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

Current position: Associate Professor at Xiamen University Malaysia, Malaysia

In her research, Wai Fen is discovering new and improved ways to perform the process of gas separation. Specifically, she is using her molecular knowledge of membranes to develop gas separation mechanisms that produce fewer waste products, use less energy, and ultimately leave a lower carbon footprint. Wai Fen extends her expertise to the fields of economics and policy as she works to implement her membrane-based techniques at the industrial level.

Wai Fen has received multiple prestigious recognitions for her contributions to the fields of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, including the Elias Klein Travel Award and the Emerging Polymer Technologies Summit Travel Award from the North American Membrane Society and The International Innovative Research Network and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia, respectively. She holds patents for her groundbreaking work.

Research focus: developing sustainable materials and membrane technologies for biogas separation, industrial air purification, haze removal, air quality control, and water treatment

2016
2015 Green Talents

Applications total  574
Application countries  87
Winners  27

Dr Heyker Lellani BAÑOS DÍAZ
Cuba
PhD in Agricultural Science
Current position: Aggregated Researcher, Head of Entomology Laboratories at National Center for Animals and Plant Health (CENSA), Cuba

The search for alternative pest management is a top priority for agricultural science in Cuba. By reducing economic losses in crop yields and developing resistance to pests and pollution in the agro-ecosystem, sustainable food can be produced. Heyker recognised the need to develop new healthy products for pest control because of today’s growing demand for food.

Due to the importance of her research, she has been highly recognised by the media and has received awards from several institutions, such as the Academy of Sciences of Cuba, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Science’s Technology and Environment.

Research focus: conservative biological control of agricultural pest

Bishal BANIYA
Nepal
PhD Student
Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney, Australia

Bishal is researching on emerging growth and policy paradigms, and the dynamics of International Environmental Agreements with resource productivity-oriented policies as a core research theme to achieving sustainable futures. Bishal’s research is exploring the empirical evidence from the past to come up with an integrative policy approach that will ultimately bolster system thinking, and will provide opportunities for policy coherence to leverage the synergetic effect of resource efficiency-oriented policies.

Bishal’s research is built on his learnings from nine years of professional and research experience with government, non-government international organisations, and research institutions in Nepal, Sweden, South Korea and Australia. He is researching on the fundamentals of emerging growth and policy paradigms that aim to reconcile the economy-environment tension.

Research focus: resource efficiency policies, green growth, and resource productivity-climate mitigation nexus

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Research focus: resource efficiency policies, green growth, and resource productivity-climate mitigation nexus

Research focus: resource efficiency policies, green growth, and resource productivity-climate mitigation nexus
Renaldo BELFON  
Trinidad and Tobago  
MPhil in Soil Science  

Current position: Research Assistant at the University of Guelph, Canada  

Renaldo’s research has focused on the use of conservation agriculture practices, which conserve the soil, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ultimately lower the cost and physical demands of crop production, which allows for a greater participation of women in agriculture.  

2016  Conservation Agriculture for Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean Research Grant  
2013  Award of Excellence for Research, Faculty of Food and Agriculture, University of the West Indies  

Research focus: soil and water nutrient management  

Dr Geraldine BRENNAN  
Ireland/South Africa  
PhD in Strategic Management and Sustainable Development  

Current position: Circular Economy Lead at Irish Manufacturing Research (IMR), Ireland  

Geraldine’s applied research focuses on supporting manufacturers and their supply-chains transition to a zero-carbon economy through designing and piloting circular business models and systems innovation demonstration projects.  

Geraldine has lectured extensively on circular business models and scaling circular innovation. She holds honorary visiting positions at Imperial College London, Middlesex University Business School, and with the United Kingdom Economic and Social Research Council Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity.  

2016-2019  Research Fellow, United Kingdom Economic and Social Research Council Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity  
2016  Visiting Researcher at Centre for Entrepreneurship, Technische Universität Berlin, Germany  
2015-2016  Postdoctoral Researcher, Imperial College London, United Kingdom  

Research focus: circular economy, circular business models, sustainable supply-chains; sustainable production systems; systems change  

Dr Meng Fai CHOW  
Malaysia  
PhD in Civil Engineering  

Current position: Senior Lecturer at the National Energy University, Malaysia  

Meng Fai’s doctoral research focused on quantification and modelling of urban stormwater pollution from different types of land use in Malaysia. After graduation, he began working as a postdoctoral fellow at Academia Sinica in Taiwan and is currently a Senior Lecturer at the National Energy University in Malaysia.  

He started to develop a guideline on sustainable urban environment for Malaysia. This guideline aims to protect the hydrological and ecological value of the urban landscape while providing resilient and adaptive measures to deal with flood events.  

2016  Outstanding Young Academician, National Energy University, Malaysia  
2011  National Science Fellowship scholarship of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Malaysia  

Research focus: urban stormwater management, flood modelling, and water resources management  

Dr Meng Nan CHONG  
Malaysia  
PhD in Engineering  

Current position: Associate Professor at Monash University Malaysia, Malaysia  

At Monash University Malaysia, Meng Nan is exploring the possibilities of interfacing nanotechnology with photoreactor engineering, to develop innovative Photo-FuelCell technology to improve energy and water environmental-related issues.  

In 2016 Meng Nan was awarded the prestigious Newton Advanced Fellowship from the Royal Society of the United Kingdom. The fellowship together with a research grant allows Meng Nan to work collaboratively with researchers from the University College of London on solar hydrogen energy production through photoelectrochemical technology.  

2016  International Society of Electrochemistry Travel Award for Young Electrochemists  
2015  Established the Water Conservation Science & Engineering Journal as Editor-in-Chief  

Research focus: nanotechnology, environmental photocatalysis, sustainable and water technology, water resources management and sustainability  

Renaldo’s interest in the area of agro-environmental science was sparked after witnessing the effects of slash-and-burn land clearing and intensive tillage on the environment while growing up in Trinidad and Tobago.  

Renaldo’s research has focused on the use of conservation agriculture practices, which conserve the soil, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ultimately lower the cost and physical demands of crop production, which allows for a greater participation of women in agriculture.  

2016  Conservation Agriculture for Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean Research Grant  
2013  Award of Excellence for Research, Faculty of Food and Agriculture, University of the West Indies  

Research focus: soil and water nutrient management  

2015  Green Talents Alumni 2015  
2015  Green Talents Alumni 2015
Research focus: organic electronic materials and devices

Dr Iordania CONSTANTINOU
Cyprus
PhD in Material Science and Engineering
Current position: Junior Professor at Technische Universität Braunschweig, Germany

Iordania has extensive experience in the design, fabrication, and characterisation of organic semiconductor optoelectronic devices as well as an in-depth understanding of fundamental device physics. The main focus of her PhD research was the development of highly efficient organic solar cells.

Her work with organic solar cells has become extremely valuable for increasing the use of solar power as a renewable energy resource. Iordania was the Chair of the Student Safety Council in her department where she worked with students, teachers, and researchers to improve the culture of safety in laboratories.

2011 Fullbright Scholarship from the Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, United States of America

Research focus: water sensitive urban design

Dr Catalina Codruta DOBRE
Romania
PhD in Art of Building and Urban Planning
Current position: Researcher at the Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

In her doctoral research, Catalina investigated the transition of urban areas towards sustainable or water-sensitive environments. Her work provides new insights into sustainable water management by exploring alternative actions co-produced as the result of the interaction between state actors and the civil society.

In addition to her doctoral studies, Catalina is a founding member of the Risk and Architecture Workshop Association, where she organises conferences and workshops on the role of urban design in flood protection and mitigation. Currently, Catalina is working on the participatory action research project entitled “Brussels sensitive to water” (Brusseau). The project explores the different forms in which citizens can become engaged in stormwater management.

2014 Research Fellow PhD scholarship, Fund for Scientific Research FRS, Belgium
2013 1st Prize Poster, International Student Conference on Environment and Sustainability, Tongji University, China
2013 Mini-Arc PhD scholarship, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

Research focus: agroecology, agroecosystems, animal production, sustainable management in the Amazon region

Paula DE CARVALHO MACHADO ARAUJO
Brazil
MSc in Organic Agriculture
Current position: Head Veterinary Technician at the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development, Brazil

Paula completed her Master’s degree in organic agriculture at the Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, whilst simultaneously working at the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development. Paula analysed native plants used as food for cattle and buffalo, applying participatory methods with local communities in a Protected Area in the Amazon region.

She featured plants with characteristics that act as a stable forage resource, reducing the need to use exotic plants in pastures. She devised an innovative questionnaire procedure to survey the experiences from local cattle ranchers associating this knowledge with literal findings, revealing unique insights into the management of natural resources in pastures.

Research focus: environmental electrochemistry and water treatment technologies

Dr Sergi GARCIA-SEGURA
Spain
PhD in Electrochemistry
Current position: Assistant Research Professor at the Arizona State University, United States of America

During his PhD, Sergi constructed a flow plant equipped with solar panels for water treatment and carried out an engineering study of electro-chemical filter cells. He was awarded with the International Society of Electrochemistry (ISE) Prize for Environmental Electrochemistry in Switzerland in 2014, and the Antonio Aldaz Award from the Electrochemistry Group of the Royal Spanish Society of Chemistry (RSEQ) in 2016.

2017 Electrochimica Acta and ISE Travel Award for Young Electrochemists, International Society of Electrochemistry
**Dr Andrea GUTIERREZ**  
Bolivia  
PhD in Mineral Processing Engineering  
Current position: Research Associate at the German Aerospace Center (DLR), Germany

Andrea’s academic approach focuses on the development of new concepts for thermal energy storage with phase change materials (PCM) as a medium of storage. The systems should operate at high temperature and at high energy storage density levels. In addition, the investment costs need to be reduced, as a consequence the adaptation of low cost/highly available materials as storage medium is a crucial task on her position at German Aerospace Center (DLR). Furthermore, she currently deals with the management of a new International Energy Agency (IEA) Energy Conservation through Energy Storage (ECES) Annex 36 on Carnot Batteries, where DLR is the operating agent. The IEA ECES Annex 36 aims to establish a platform that brings together experts from the industry and academia, to systematically investigate, assess, and strengthen the potential role of Carnot Batteries in the future energy systems gaining international attention.

During her doctoral research, she developed new low-cost thermal energy storage materials with wastes from the non-metallic mining industry in Chile.

- 2016 DLR/DAAD Postdoctoral Fellow, Germany  
- 2015 Research Stay Funding from the Ministry of Education of Chile - Energy Programme

**Research focus:** new concepts for thermal energy storage with phase change materials; adaptation of low cost/highly available materials for applications at high temperatures and high energy storage density.

**Shougat Nazbin KHAN**  
Bangladesh  
MTech in Green Energy Technology  
Current position: Founding Director of H.A. Digital School and College, Bangladesh

Shougat’s research focuses on different types of collector grid configurations for large photovoltaic parks. Her Master’s study was fully funded by the prestigious UNESCO Madanjeet Singh Fellowship. During her Master’s studies in Green Energy Technology, she concentrated on solar photovoltaic technology. She has done comprehensive research in wind-solar hybrid systems, grid-tied and standalone photovoltaic systems, solar PV irrigation systems, and thin film solar cells.

- 2016 Patent for a laundry dryer comprising a lint filter  
- 2015 Jean Monnet Fellowship by European Union for Environmental Studies

**Research focus:** different types of collector grid configurations for large photovoltaic parks.

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**Bükra KALAYCI**  
Turkey  
PhD Student in Textile Engineering  
Istanbul Technical University, Turkey

Bükra researches sustainable textiles and the fashion industry, responsible production and consumption, with a focus on closed-loop textile business models for a circular economy.

- 2015 Pioneer Women  
- 2015 Asia Young Person of the Year  
- 2017 Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia: Pioneer Women  
- 2016 Selected as one of the four global winners at Commonwealth Youth Award for Excellence  
- 2016 Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia: Pioneer Women  
- 2015 Leadership Fellowship by the Prince’s Trust International

**Research focus:** sustainable textile and fashion business, compliance standards, responsible production and consumption.
Kseniia KRAVCHENKO
Ukraine
PhD Student
Institute for Biology, Department of Evolutionary Ecology at Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW), Germany

As a biologist, Ksenia wants to shed light on the question of how animals react to human-induced changes to global ecosystems such as climate change or processes of urbanisation. In her case study, she focuses on the migratory behaviour of bats in Eastern Europe, especially around the Black Sea region. She has received grants from Bat Conservation International and Eurobats for her research.

Like migratory birds, many bats fly thousands of kilometres to escape to warmer climes during the winter. But how are they being affected by global warming? These are the kind of questions that Ksenia is exploring. For years she has been studying the common noctule, one of the most widespread species of bats in Europe.

Ksenia’s research focuses on the development of nanomaterial for artificial photosynthesis, i.e. sunlight-driven water splitting and CO₂ reduction to generate sustainable hydrogen and other energy-rich fuels. The aim of her academic approach is to offer alternative, clean, sustainable and storable solar-fuels to consumers and businesses alike.

Research focus: global climate change and migratory animals, sustainable biodiversity management in urban areas, bat migration in Eastern Europe

Dr Golam KIBRIA
Bangladesh
PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering
Current position: Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Toronto, Canada

Golam’s research focuses on the development of nanomaterial for artificial photosynthesis, i.e. sunlight-driven water splitting and CO₂ reduction to generate sustainable hydrogen and other energy-rich fuels. The aim of his academic approach is to offer alternative, clean, sustainable and storable solar-fuels to consumers and businesses alike.

Research focus: artificial photosynthesis, photocatalysis, electrocatalysis, CO₂ reduction, nanomaterials, solar-fuel devices

Dr Arun Prasad KUMAR
India
PhD in Field Spectrometry, Hyperspectral Image Analysis and Applications
Current position: Assistant Professor at Department of Geography, Central University of Tamil Nadu, India

Arun’s research focuses on applications of contemporary remote sensing techniques for landscape monitoring, especially coastal wetlands. His doctoral research focused on species level discrimination of mangrove species in Bhitarkanika National Park at the Indian east coast.

In 2016 he worked as a Visiting Scholar at the German Remote Sensing Data Center (DFD) at the German Aerospace Center (DLR). During that period, he along with his host Dr Claudia Künzer, Head DFD-DLR, wrote a proposal to apply for the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt International Climate Protection Fellowship. He was awarded the postdoctoral fellowship during the year 2017 and continued his postdoctoral research at DFD-DLR from March 2017 to May 2019.

On his return to India, he joined Central University of Tamil Nadu as a Faculty at the Department of Geography where he teaches Remote Sensing and GIS.

Research focus: remote sensing of wetlands

Larissa MARCHIORI PACHECO
Brazil
PhD Student in Business Strategy
Fundação Getulio Vargas’s São Paulo School of Business Administration [FGV/EAESP], São Paulo, Brazil, and Northeastern University, Boston, United States of America

With her research, Larissa focuses on the corporate social responsibility of European multinational corporations operating in Latin America. Larissa also studies the growing demands of a green economy, pointing out that Brazilian energy companies need to react rapidly to change in the energy sector by exploring renewable sources.

She is working as a Teaching Assistant at FGV/EAESP and participating in a research project in partnership with Global Compact to investigate the integration of Sustainable Development Goals in the business strategy of firms in the Brazilian electricity sector. During her research stay at the Ecologic Institute in Germany, she gave support to ongoing projects related to smart cities, water resources management, resource efficiency, and other related topics. This experience allowed her to be in touch with advanced knowledge on topics that are still underdeveloped in her home country.

2014 Incluir Project – Case studies writing on Inclusive Businesses in Brazil, with support from the United Nations Development Programme

Research focus: corporate social responsibility and sustainability under the perspective of institutional theory and behavioural strategy
Dr Mohammad MOGHIMI ARDEKANI  
Iran  
PhD in Engineering  
Current position: Lecturer at Design and Engineering Department, Staffordshire University, United Kingdom and Extraordinary Senior Lecturer at Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering Department, University of Pretoria, South Africa  
With his academic research Mohammad aims to optimise concentrated solar power (CSP) plants for maximum optical and thermal efficiencies and minimum generated electricity cost. By reducing the price of the production of solar power, he hopes to further promote investment in renewable energy among governments and citizens alike.

Dr Maria E. MONDEJAR  
Spain  
PhD in Thermodynamics of Fluids  
In Maria’s PhD project, she focused on the thermophysical characterisation of gaseous fuel mixtures with the aim of extending the knowledge on behaviours of biogas and other non-conventional gases. Currently, she conducts research on innovative fluids for power generation from industrial waste, heat, and renewable energy. After her participation in the Green Talents programme, she was granted European funding to pursue her research project.

Dr Amir MOSAVI  
Iran  
PhD in Applied Informatics and Data Science  
Current position: Research Fellow at Thuringian Institute of Sustainability, Research Fellow at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Germany and Assistant Professor at School of the Built Environment, Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom  
Amir believes in the extensive potential of Predictive Models. From simulating the extreme events to informing policy analysis to generating hazard maps, these models eliminate much of the simulation costs as well as trial and error in the crucial task facing sustainable developments. Amir’s technological advancement aims at providing effective tools to organisations to predict and visualise the results and consequences of their decisions. So better policies are made and more sustainable actions are taken. Amir’s further research interests include hydrological and earth systems modelling, machine learning, deep learning, atmospheric science, hazard modelling, climate models, and time series prediction.

Dr Kapil MOOTHI  
South Africa  
PhD in Chemical Engineering  
Current position: Associate Professor and Head of Department of Chemical Engineering at University of Johannesburg, South Africa

For his PhD work on the conversion of coal into carbon nanotubes (CNTs), Kapil was granted a provisional patent. Based on his research outcomes, products that enable the cleaning of wastewater using a carbon nanotube-infused polymer composite membrane as a filtration medium are under development. He hopes that his research in investigating the role of nanotechnology in environmental engineering for the treatment of water and wastewater will help in supporting the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Research focus: new sustainable working fluids for small-scale thermal power generation

Research focus: solar energy, concentrating solar power, optimisation, computational fluid dynamic, ray tracing

Research focus: nanotechnology, water treatment, carbon nanotubes, membranes, green chemistry and synthesis

Research focus: climate change and extreme events modelling
Dr Paulo Tarso S. OLIVEIRA
Brazil

PhD in Hydraulics and Sanitary Engineering

Current position: Professor of Hydrology and Water Resources at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Paulo’s investigations have led to a better understanding of the mechanisms of hydrological and soil erosion processes, approaching aspects of the relationship among hydrology, human activities, and the environment. He has worked with the development and improvement of models and data analysis by using hydrometeorological data, which includes a range of spatial scales (plots, hillslope, watershed and continental) and sources, such as experimental field, laboratory, and remote sensing. Water security aspects have been studied through the conjunctive analysis of changes in land use, climate, and hydrological processes for ensuring the soil and water conservation, watershed-energy-ecosystems services nexus, and a more efficient agriculture production, in addition to a sustainable development of the country.

Research focus: mechanism of hydrological processes and soil erosion in different landscapes

2019
- Honor – Eng. Frederico Valente Award, the Brazilian Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering
- Fellow of the Brazilian Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq)

2018
- Outstanding Lecturer Award – Professor of Environmental Engineering at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Dr Shujuan ZHANG
China

PhD in Environmental Science

Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at Southeast University, China

Shujuan’s research contributes scientific findings to arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and its possible applications. In her PhD thesis she developed an innovative way to reduce the loss of nitrogen and phosphorus from paddy fields in Northeast China using these fungi. During that time, she also studied the carbon and nitrogen economy of plants at the Australian National University, Australia.

Research focus: contributing scientific findings to arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi, using them to restore soil ecosystem functioning and sustainability

2014
- Received Grants from the United Kingdom’s New Phytologist Trust

2012
- Awarded a 2-year Scholarship from the Chinese Scholarship Council

Dr Naim RASHID
Pakistan

PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering

Current position: Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering at COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Pakistan

Naim is working as Fulbright Research Scientist at Arizona State University, United States of America and as Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering at COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Pakistan. His research focuses on the water-energy nexus: bio-energy production from waste materials and microalgae, water and wastewater treatment. He is aiming to promote bio-energy research in his country by strengthening the liaison between industry and academia.

Research focus: water-energy nexus, waste mitigation, and sustainable development

2017
- Selected as Member of the Global Young Academy

2015
- 2014/2015 ASEAN Science and Technology Fellow
- United Kingdom Royal Academy of Engineering Newton Leaders in Innovation Fellowship
- Outstanding Young Scientist Award by the National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines

Dr Joey D. OCON
Philippines

PhD in Environmental Science and Engineering

Current position: Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines Diliman, Philippines

Joey is currently working as Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines leading the laboratory of Electrochemical Engineering.

His childhood experiences in rural areas of the Philippines made him realise how crucial technology can be in improving human living quality, and how resilience to natural forces is crucial for people’s livelihoods. In his research he focuses on efficient electrode materials and processes in electrochemical technologies for energy and environmental applications.

Research focus: electrochemical energy storage, heterogeneous catalysis, green technology and renewable energy, science and technology policy

2018
- 2018/2019 ASEAN Science and Technology Fellow
- United Kingdom Royal Academy of Engineering Newton Leaders in Innovation Fellowship
- Outstanding Young Scientist Award by the National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines

2016
- 2015
- 2014
- 2013

Dr Samuel ZIPPER
United States of America
PhD in Freshwater and Marine Science

Current position: Assistant Scientist, Groundwater Hydrology, Kansas Geological Survey, University of Kansas, United States of America

Samuel’s research is situated within the field of Ecohydrology, which focuses on the feedback between vegetation and the water cycle. He believes that local solutions are required to achieve global sustainability goals and that working across disciplines is an essential part of the modern scientist’s toolbox. He also writes about Ecohydrology on the WaterUnderground blog.

Samuel has worked closely with a far-reaching set of collaborators from institutions including the National University of San Luis, Argentina, the International Water Centre, Australia, and the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Germany.

2016   James R. Villemonte Excellence in Research Award, University of Wisconsin-Madison, United States of America
2014   Fellowship by National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center

Research focus: ecohydrology
Research focus: developing robust nanostructured materials that can repel or attract fluids

Dr Adrianus ARIA

Indonesia

PhD in Aeronautics

Current position: Lecturer at Cranfield University, United Kingdom

After obtaining his PhD from the California Institute of Technology in Aeronautics, Adrianus decided to continue his specialization in nanotechnology materials – his trump card to help make the world more sustainable.

Understanding the characteristics of nanomaterials could lead the charge in advancing sustainability in developed and developing countries. Adrianus is looking to develop nanostructure materials with extreme wetting properties. By making materials extremely hydrophobic, water is repelled more effectively, making the materials self-cleaning, long-lasting, and more efficient over time. In practice, these materials could be used for a sewage or drainage system. On the other side of the spectrum, by making materials extremely hydrophilic, water is attracted more strongly. These materials could, for instance, be used for a moisture collector or water heating system.

Research focus: sustainable development and green infrastructure

Sergio BARAVALLE

Argentina

MSc in Agricultural and Biosystem Engineering (Fulbright Fellow)

Current position: Director for the Development of Sustainable Opportunities at the National Ministry of Social Development, Argentina

Sergio demonstrates an exceptionally multi-disciplinary approach in his quest for innovative solutions in the scientific sector. With a molecular biology background, he has worked as a business developer for multinational companies.

Sergio explored the viability of renewable energies as a sustainable business model whilst studying for his Master’s degree in Argentina. After his MSc in Biological and Agricultural Engineering at Washington State University, he also studied logistics and Supply Chain Management (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT) and Project Management (Washington State University, WSU). Combining his business and science backgrounds, he develops sustainable solutions using technologies such as pyrolysis, gasification, composting, and anaerobic digestion.

Research focus: feasibility analysis with local government and multinational corporations for the application of the bioequality concept

Kerry BOBBINS

South Africa

PhD Student in Development Planning

University College London, United Kingdom

Through her research Kerry tackles issues related to equitable and sustainable resource provision, and aims to raise awareness around the benefits of incorporating ecosystem services and green infrastructure in urban areas.

Kerry’s PhD project aims to describe the understanding and use of green infrastructure concepts in Johannesburg, South Africa. Kerry investigates how histories, actors and the local context shape the way policy concepts are translated and used in practice. This includes a framing of the use of green infrastructure concepts at the city and project level. Knowledge generated from her project will contribute toward understanding the way environmental concepts gain meaning in cities through planning and management processes. As mentioned above, the findings of her PhD research will contribute knowledge on urban policy for supporting the development of sustainable urban infrastructure in future.

2018 Royal Geographical Society Dudley Stamp Memorial Award

2017/18 Afrisam SAA Award for Sustainable Architecture + Innovation

2016 Commonwealth PhD Scholarship

2015 Mail & Guardian’s Top 200 Young South Africans

2015 International Social Science Council World Social Science Fellow

Research focus: sustainable development and green infrastructure
Dr Heather BUCKLEY  
Canada  
PhD in Green and Inorganic Chemistry  
Current position: Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering and Adjunct Professor of Chemistry at the University of Victoria, Canada

Heather’s interdisciplinary research team at the University of Victoria tackles challenges at the interface of Green Chemistry, Civil Engineering, and Public Health, centering their efforts around creating tools for better monitoring of drinking water contaminants and the design of safer alternative technologies in water treatment.

Heather sees technological interventions as one piece of the puzzle for empowering communities globally. Her doctoral and postdoctoral work at the University of California, Berkeley, have taken her to Poland, Jordan, India, and Germany to perform outreach, field work, and research. She has worked in non-platinum fuel cell catalyst design, air-sensitive metal chemistry, and drinking water remediation, as well as in the development of safer building materials for low-income communities, and alternative preservatives for home and personal care products. Heather has started her own research group with a faculty position in the University of Victoria’s Green Civil Engineering programme in January 2018.

2014  International Fulbright Science and Technology Fellow

Research focus: safe drinking water through energy-efficient fluoride removal.

Dr Burak GUZELTURK  
Turkey  
PhD in Electrical and Electronics Engineering  
Current position: Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Stanford University, United States of America

Burak’s research focuses on the development of semiconductor nanomaterials with tailored optical properties to accomplish energy-efficient next-generation optoelectronics, which will strongly contribute to the sustainable development of the world.

2015  Photonics21 Student Innovation Award  
2015  IEEE Photonics Society Graduate Student Fellowship  
2013  SPIE Optics and Photonics Education Scholarship Award

Research focus: nanotechnology, photonics, academics

Dr Jian-Yuan LEE  
Singapore  
PhD in Sustainable Earth  
Current position: Project Manager/Research Scientist at Rolls-Royce@Nanyang Technological University Corporate Lab, Singapore

Jian-Yuan was a research scientist and Nanyang President’s Graduate Scholar focusing on Sustainable Earth at Nanyang Technological University. His research aim is to lower clean water production costs via applying Engineered Osmosis (EO), a state-of-the-art desalination process.

Jian-Yuan is currently working on 3D printed spacers using additive manufacturing technology to address the problem of external concentration polarisation, a ubiquitous problem occurring in all the membrane processes.

2016  Best Poster Award of Singapore International Water Week  
2015  Best Poster Award at Advanced Membrane Technology VI Conference  
2015  North American Membrane Society (NAMS) Student Fellowship Award  
2015  European Membrane Society (EMS) Best Paper Award and PhD Student Travel Award  
2012  Nanyang President’s Graduate Scholarship Award

Research focus: materials science and engineering, chemistry and biological chemistry, 3D printing, membrane technology

Dr Maksymilian KOCHANSKI  
Poland  
PhD Student in Sustainable Energy Engineering  
Warsaw University of Technology, Poland

Engineer Maksymilian is combining the use of technological advances and behavioural science to optimise energy systems for public buildings. His current research aims at minimising environmental impacts of energy systems thanks to the development and application of novel machine learning tools.

During his studies, Maksymilian has been able to spend a substantial amount of time at international institutions, studying a semester a piece in the United States of America, Denmark, and Australia. Thanks to participation in the Green Talents programme, he also participated in a research stay at E.ON Energy Research Centre in RWTH Aachen University in Germany. During this time he has had the opportunity to carry out experiments exploring the use of sustainable energy, electronics, IT, and industrial design in virtual environments mirroring public buildings.

2016  Best Poster Award of Advanced Membrane Technology VI Conference  
2015  North American Membrane Society (NAMS) Student Fellowship Award  
2014  European Membrane Society (EMS) Best Paper Award and PhD Student Travel Award  
2012  Nanyang President’s Graduate Scholarship Award

Research focus: energy efficiency, usage of IT for optimising environmental impact of energy systems
Dr Jing LIU
China
PhD in Chemical and Biomedical Engineering
Current position: Applications Scientist at Nanometrics Southeast Asia Pte Ltd., Singapore
With her postdoctoral research into microbial fuel cells (MFC’s), Jing is improving one of the most promising green technologies for electricity production and waste remediation. She designed and fabricated a graphene-based, hierarchically porous MFC anode by integrating nanotechnology and architectural engineering. She also constructed a unique genetically engineered Escherichia coli strain that exhibits an unprecedentedly high metabolic activity towards glycerol.

Dr Lovanomenjanahary MARLINE
Madagascar
PhD in Biological Sciences
Current position: Postdoctoral Fellow at the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Lova is working in a field that links plant biology, ecology and conservation. She has been focusing her research on bryophytes, a poorly studied group of plant in tropical ecosystems. They are a difficult group of plant and, consequently, poorly known in Africa and neighbouring islands. However, their maintenance in ecosystems is of prime interest for tropical forests where they play a key part in nutrients cycling and water retention. The study of bryophytes (as of other small organisms) is, consequently, of particular interest and of great need to better understand tropical forest functioning in a changing environment.

Kennedy MBEVA
Kenya
MSc in Environmental Management and Sustainable Development
Current position: Research Fellow at African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), Kenya
Kennedy’s current research focuses on the effectiveness of climate finance regimes, within the broader context of climate policy and governance. For his Master’s thesis, he conducted a study on the effectiveness of international public climate finance in Kenya.

Dr Asad MEHMOOD
Pakistan
PhD in Energy and Environmental Engineering
Current position: Visiting Scientist at Korea Institute of Science and Technology, South Korea
During his PhD at the Korea Institute of Science and Technology, Asad investigated the catalyst materials and electrode structures of low temperature fuel cells, in order to find ways of making this innovative technology more commercially viable by boosting durability and reducing cost.
Currently, as a Postdoctoral Fellow, he is working on the development of non-precious metal catalysts for advanced energy systems.
Tatianna MELLO PEREIRA DA SILVA
Brazil
PhD Student in International Development
University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Tatianna holds an MSc in Public Policy and an MPhil in International Law and is currently a PhD student in International Development at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. For her PhD, Tatianna seeks to understand how the recycling economy for PET (polyethylene terephthalate) is configured in Brazil and how and in what ways this configuration is unfavourable to waste pickers. Her research is based on a 7-month-long fieldwork journey that started in one of the biggest dumpsites in Latin America and progressed until the point where PET bottles were repurposed into a new product for the consumer market.

She is currently working as an independent consultant in Brazil providing strategic advice to clients in the public, private, and third sectors on how best to engage with communities and design human-centred solutions for their problems. The last project she was involved in was commissioned by Vale S.A., a multinational mining company, and consisted on an evaluation of its reparation measures following the Brumadinho dam collapse that killed over 250 people and impacted over 120,000 people.

2013 Panperfect Storm Scholarship awarded by the Leverhulme Trust
2013 Granted Chevening Scholarship and a Lemann Fellowship

Research focus: waste, poverty, empowerment, adverse incorporation, and development

Dr Patricio MENDOZA-ARAYA
Chile
PhD in Electrical Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at University of Chile, Chile

Patricio holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering. His research focuses on the improvement of microgrids by using a novel approach to their stable operation. With his academic work he aims to promote the adoption of a sustainable, renewable energy supply in both developing and developed economies.

During his PhD studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, United States of America, Patricio worked on the so-called ‘Microformer’, an alternative power distribution transformer mainly built using the transformer from a post-consumer microwave oven.

Following the Green Talents award in 2014, he worked as a researcher at the Institute for Drive Systems and Power Electronics (IAL) at Leibniz University in Hannover, Germany. Together with his team, he developed hardware and software tools for microgrids and renewable energy evaluation.

2011 Winner of IEEE Distinguished Student Humanitarian Prize, Presidents’ Change the World competition
2008 Fulbright Scholarship for a doctorate program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Research focus: microgrids development, renewable energy integration, microgrid stability

Dr Nikolaos MOUSTAKAS
Greece
PhD in Photocatalysis/Artificial Photosynthesis
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at the Leibniz Institute for Catalysis at the University of Rostock (LIKAT), Germany

Nikolaos has a keen interest in interdisciplinary research connecting physics, chemistry, and material science. He focuses on designing and synthesising nanomaterials based on metal oxides (for example, titanium dioxide) and using them as photocatalysts in CO₂ conversion into fuels (solar fuels, for example, methane) in a process often referenced in literature as artificial photosynthesis. In his research, he tries to understand the underlying mechanism of this conversion and strategically design efficient nanomaterials to carry out this process. With his academic approach, he contributes to solving the energy crisis and tackling the greenhouse effect.

2013 Second place in the Falling Walls Lab Competition, Greece
2014 Winner of the 2014 Famelab Greece National Science Communication Competition and representative of Greece in the International Famelab Competition 2014 in Cheltenham, United Kingdom

Research focus: photocatalysis, artificial photosynthesis, solar fuels, synthesis of advanced nanomaterials

Dr Femeena PANDARA VALAPPIL
India
PhD in Agricultural and Biological Engineering
Current position: Technical Consultant and Engineer for BAI Group, LLC in State College, Pennsylvania, United States of America

Femeena developed a modelling framework to determine environmentally and economically sustainable cropping patterns to achieve food and biokilowatt production targets while minimising water pollution.

Femeena was awarded a Green Talent due to her ideas, which have the potential to be implemented on a large scale to eradicate food security issues while also protecting the environment. Her research stay with Dr. Fohrer at the University of Kiel, Germany, proved to be very beneficial for her career. Dr. Fohrer is part of her PhD research committee and invited her back to Kiel for data collection in 2016.

2019 Selected for UNLEASH Innovation Lab
2019 2nd Place in Boyd-Scott Graduate Student Paper Competition at American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) meeting in Boston
2019 New Face of ASABE Professionals
2016 Ethics Video Competition award by ASABE
2014 Berkner Fellowship by American Geophysical Union

Research focus: in-stream water quality modelling
Dr Muhammad Saif UR REHMAN
Pakistan
PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Pakistan

In his research, Muhammad focuses on improving the sustainable production process of biokraft to optimise the recovery of valuable by-products, such as biosorbents, which can be used in wastewater treatment. Rice is one of the world’s most abundant crops, leaving an annual residue of up to 900 million tonnes of rice straw after harvest. Muhammad is researching the development of a rice straw biorefinery (RSB), which will recover multiple products simultaneously, such as bioethanol and biomaterials like silica and biochar from residual biomass. His ideas promote cleaner production, improve resource recovery and crucially reduce costs by consolidating various processes in one biorefinery.

Paribesh PRADHAN
Nepal
MSC in Physical Geography and Master of Advanced Studies in Sustainable Water Resources
University of Zurich and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich, Switzerland

Paribesh is interested in the impact of climate change on runoff and river flows, its associated risks and vulnerabilities, and how they subsequently affect water security. He further focuses on high mountain hydrology and climate along with their impact on communities and environmental ecosystems. He has more than seven years of professional experience in international cooperation and development which spans working at the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the Mountain Forum Secretariat in Nepal, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in Thailand, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Switzerland.

In previous research, Paribesh has been working on glaciers, gaining field based experience and knowledge in collecting in-situ data in remote areas of Swedish Lapland and Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia.

Research focus: applied glacial hydrology and water resource management in alpine regions

Dr Irene REIZMAN
United States of America
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, United States of America

Recently, Irene has been more involved in undergraduate education. She was part of an interdisciplinary team which developed a new course at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology called Global Engineering and the Social Context. In this course, students consider the practice of engineering in a global context and consider the implication of their design choices with respect to local environment, culture, and stakeholder needs. The course includes an on-campus component and a design experience abroad. Parts of the course were conducted in Germany with partners at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg and Hochschule Esslingen.

In her research, Irene’s focus is on strategies to engineer microorganisms for renewable chemical production to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She works with the microbe Escherichia coli to help facilitate solutions based on biotechnology for glicaric acid production from glucose. Her findings and developments will be beneficial in the fields of bioreactors, global food production, and environmental improvement.

Dr Juan David SEPÚLVEDA CHAVERRA
Colombia
PhD in Sustainable Development
Current position: Executive Director at Fundación Enerstud, Colombia

With a background in industrial engineering, Juan is focusing his talents on the field of low-carbon landscape development and energy planning. The focus lies on the interaction between social systems and ecosystem services within a particular landscape, between living, developing communities, and their environments.

His concepts are taking the technological, as well as the human, social, economic, and environmental dimensions into account. Those concepts could influence policy-making tools to promote low-carbon landscape development, which have a great potential in achieving sustainable rural communities.

Research focus: metabolic engineering of microorganisms for renewable chemical production, biochemical engineering education

Research focus: energy efficiency and landscape development

Juan is focusing on sustainable energy access and efficiency in rural communities.

Dr Irene Reizman is interested in renewable energy sources. Her research focuses on metabolic engineering of microorganisms for renewable chemical production to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She works with the microbe Escherichia coli to help facilitate solutions based on biotechnology for glicaric acid production from glucose. Her findings and developments will be beneficial in the fields of bioreactors, global food production, and environmental improvement.
Melissa SIKOSANA
Zimbabwe
PhD Student at Institute of Biofunctional Polymer Materials
Leibniz Institute for Polymer Research Dresden, Germany

Melissa’s latest research explores the feasibility of using bio-responsive antimicrobial coatings for water purification in developing countries. She is Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow.

Melissa is one of the very few chemical engineers in Southern Africa who is trained in biomimicry and has held multiple research positions over the last few years. She aims to link scientific solutions to societal innovations.

Her ultimate goal is to use biophilic design to create functional and simple, socio-technological interventions that improve how people and communities function.

2018 3rd Place Award Marie-Curie Falling Walls Lab Director and Co-Founder of Asili Pty Ltd: Biophilic Systems Design
2015 Generation of water recycling model for the restoration of ecological function of hydrological cycles in urban cities for developing economies

Research focus: feasibility of using bio-responsive antimicrobial coatings for water purification in developing countries

Dr NiKodem SZUMILO
Poland
PhD in Real Estate Finance
Current position: Associate Professor at University College London, United Kingdom

Tackling the main concern holding back investment into sustainable real estate — a lack of reliable evidence for financial return on sustainable buildings — Nikodem is addressing this important issue in his research.

As 40 percent of energy consumption in the developed world takes place in buildings, sustainable development in the property industry is extremely important. Not only do environmental concerns play a central role here, but businesses, investors, and the economy also stand to profit from sustainable real estate.

Nikodem seeks to remedy this information gap and hopes to help overcome the most common reasons for the reluctance to invest in sustainable real estate. These holdbacks have been identified as a mixture of unwillingness to be swayed by merely theoretical arguments (as opposed to empirical evidence of financial returns); additional evidence that is required by financial institutions for investment backing of sustainable real estate; and the lack of evidence establishing the optimal use of financial and physical resources in such projects.

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2015 Generation of water recycling model for the restoration of ecological function of hydrological cycles in urban cities for developing economies

Research focus: financial and investment advantages of sustainability in real estate markets

Dr Li WEI
China
PhD in Control Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at Tongji University, China

In her current research, Li focuses on the management of an energy storage system and its application in electrical vehicle and traction power systems. With her academic approach, she aims to improve the efficiency of supercapacitors and their reliability, durability and safety as large-scale sustainable energy storing systems.

Li was elected to the Youth Elite Programme of her university in 2015. With this financial support, she studied the ageing behaviour of supercapacitors and their application, for which she was granted two patents in 2016.

2016 Presentation of paper in IEEE Industrial Electronics Conference (IECON)
2015 Presentation of paper in IEEE Applied Power Electronics Conference (APEC)

Research focus: management of an energy storage system and its application in electrical vehicle and traction power systems

Dr Huai WANG
China
PhD in Electronic Engineering
Current position: Associate Professor at Aalborg University, Denmark

Huai has a keen interest in reliable and sustainable power electronics for efficient appliances and renewable energy applications.

In his PhD thesis he focused on energy-efficient power electronics converters, for use in electric public transport methods (metro, high-speed trains, trams, and buses) in Hong Kong.

He participated in research stays at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, United States of America, and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH Zurich), Switzerland. He has received several academic awards.

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2011-2014 Filed four patents on innovative capacitive DC-link solutions

Research focus: reliable and sustainable power electronics for efficient appliances and renewable energy applications

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2011-2014 Filed four patents on innovative capacitive DC-link solutions

Research focus: reliable and sustainable power electronics for efficient appliances and renewable energy applications
Research focus: climate change impacts and adaptation in various climate sensitive economic sectors in Africa

Dr Nkulumo ZINYENGERE
Zimbabwe
PhD in Environmental Science

Current position: Young Professional at World Bank’s Agriculture and Food Global Practice, United States of America

Nkulumo’s latest research focuses on the impact of climate change, specifically in climate-sensitive sectors in Africa. During his PhD thesis, he and his research team developed a large-scale case study of five localities spread across the region (Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe) and tested localised farming strategies and their potential contribution to adaptation.

In 2017, Nkulumo published a book titled ‘Beyond Agricultural Impacts – Multiple Perspectives on Climate Change in Africa’ together with his research stay supervisor and co-editor Professor Ifejika Speranza.

2013-2014 Global Environmental Change Research in Africa Award (System for Analysis, Research and Training)
2012-2013 African Climate Change Fellowship Program Award (International Development Research Centre)

Current position: Young Professional at World Bank’s Agriculture and Food Global Practice, United States of America

Green Talents 2013

Applications total  431
Application countries  79
Winners  25
Dr Sohail AHMAD
India
PhD in City Planning
Current position: Humboldt Research Fellow at Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change (MCC) GmbH, Germany and Research Fellow at University of Glasgow, United Kingdom
Research focus: exploring low-carbon urban development options in South Asian cities

Dr Ram AVTAR
India
PhD in Forest Remote Sensing
Current position: Research Fellow at United Nations University, Japan
Research focus: global change and resilience, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and ecosystem services

Dr Heinrich BADENHORST
South Africa
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Director of Research and Development, CarbonScape, New Zealand
Research focus: carbon and graphite from sustainable and waste resources

Dr Ksenija BUNJAK
Serbia
PhD in Architecture
Current position: Architect and Co-founder of EAT group (Eco Art & Theory), Serbia
Research focus: sustainable urban and rural development
Dr Jae Wook CHUNG
Korea
PhD in Water Technology
UNESCO-IHE, Delft Institute for Water Education, the Netherlands

Chung wants to make sustainable water development a reality in less developed communities. He devoted his graduate studies to the idea that new technology should be developed based on locally available resources, pointing out that while there are several commercial decentralised water treatment units that utilise advanced technologies, they are far too expensive for the people who truly need them. Also, the low-cost appropriate technologies such as biosand filtration, ceramic filter, solar disinfection, and coagulation-chlorination have limited efficiency on viruses.

This inspired Jae Wook’s PhD research, titled “Removal of viral contaminations by hydrothermal carbonisation (HTC) materials in water treatment”. His studies focus specifically on evaluating low-cost carbonaceous material as a virus adsorbent in water treatment.

Dr Oscar Gerardo CASTRO ARDILA
Colombia
PhD in Wind Energy
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at DTU Wind Energy, Denmark

Oscar’s research focuses on a progressive structural damage developed in wind turbine blades called fatigue. He works on the development of fatigue test methods and damage-based fatigue prediction models for wind turbine blades. His aim is to contribute to reducing the operational expenses of wind turbine systems by improving the structural performance and fatigue predictability of wind turbine blades.

Oscar works on research projects whose partners include leading European wind energy companies and research centres, such as Siemens Gamesa, Vestas Wind Systems A/S, LM Wind Power A/S, Fraunhofer IWES, and Leibniz University Hannover.

Dr Hector DE LA HOZ SIEGLER
Colombia
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at University of Calgary, Canada

Hector’s academic approach focuses on the optimisation and intensification of bioprocesses through the systematic control of the cellular environment, with application to the production of chemicals, clean energy, and functional foods. He believes that industrial biotechnology has the potential to become the core processing technology to create commodities needed in society.

Research focus: microalgal bioprocessing and other biological and biomimetic systems for carbon capture, reuse, and permanent sequestration.

Dr Mita DASOG
Canada
PhD in Materials Chemistry
Current position: Assistant Professor at Dalhousie University, Canada

Mita’s independent research focuses on developing sustainable nanomaterials for renewable energy production, improving food security, and solar desalination. In her doctoral work she conducted research on nanomaterial made of silicon, which is widely available and could transform computers and cell phones into more energy-efficient gadgets.

Mita received the Green Talents award, which gave her the opportunity to study carbon dioxide sequestration during her two-month research stay at the Technical University of Munich, Germany. Afterwards, she worked on mesostructured earth abundant materials for fuel generation at the California Institute of Technology, United States of America. Mita was awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship by Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada in 2014 to carry out her work at Caltech.

Research focus: nanomaterials for renewable energy.
Dr Huihui HUANG
China
PhD in Microelectronics and Solid-State Electronics

Asal IBRAHIM
Jordan
MSc in Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development

Dr Ali KHARRAZI
Japan
PhD in Sustainability Science

Alexandr ISCENCO
Moldova
MSc in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics

Research focus: solar energy

Research focus: design of low dimensional materials and devices for energy harvesting

Research focus: synergy of psychology, technology and ecology for sustainable development

Research focus: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), resilience, water-energy-food nexus, trade, water, and energy networks, big-data for sustainable development
Dr Ngoc Lieu LE
Vietnam
PhD in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Current position: Lecturer at the School of Biotechnology at International University, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Ngoc Lieu’s research has covered a wide range of interdisciplinary research fields focusing on the areas of energy generation from renewable sources such as biofuels and ocean energy, waste water treatment to be recycled and/or to reduce environmental impacts, utilisation of food waste or by-products as a resource to produce value-added products, and utilisation of under-valued agricultural plants to produce biodegradable materials to replace plastics.

Research focus: membrane materials and technologies for water and energy sustainability

Congying LI
China
PhD Student in Hydrology and Water Resources Science
University of Melbourne, Australia

Congying’s research in the field of ecohydrology is about assessing the effect of catchment-wide implementation of stormwater control measures on urban streamflow.

2013

Research focus: urban ecohydrology, sustainable urban stormwater management, waterway ecosystem protection, and statistical modelling

Dr Jun Wei LIM
Singapore
PhD Student in Environmental and Water Resources Engineering
Department of Environmental and Water Resources Engineering, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

After earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Chemistry and Biological Chemistry at the Nanyang Technological University, Jun Wei went on to study Environmental Engineering with a focus on Sustainable Energy. During the course of her doctoral studies, she attended numerous international conferences and earned various awards for her work in energy recovery through anaerobic digestion.

Jun Wei’s research work on decentralised and anaerobic treatment of domestic wastewater provides a major contribution to the development of sustainable cities in the future.

Research focus: optimisation of an anaerobic co-digestion process of brown water and food waste for clean energy recovery

Dr Dânia Elisa C. MAZZEO MORALES
Brazil
PhD in Biological Sciences
Current position: Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University Estadual Paulista (UNESP), Brazil

Dânia’s academic work focuses on the investigation of the bioremediation potential to detoxify sludge from Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP and WWTF). She aims to discover ways to decontaminate sewage sludge and sludge from water treatment plants, providing more sustainable and safe reuse for these wastes, especially for agricultural purposes.

The Green Talents award provided an attractive platform and helped her to make valuable contacts with professionals, such as environmental managers and agriculturalists who could benefit from her work. The award represented an exciting experience, which was followed by São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) and Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), two of the most important research agencies in Brazil, funding her postdoctoral projects.

Research focus: low cost and environmentally friendly technologies for detoxifying sewage sludge and sludge from water treatment plants

Research focus: membrane materials and technologies for water and energy sustainability

2013

Dr Congying LI
China
PhD Student in Hydrology and Water Resources Science
University of Melbourne, Australia

2013

2013

2013

2013
Dr Umarah MUBEEN
Pakistan
PhD in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at Max Planck Institute of Molecular Plant Physiology (MPIMP), Germany

Dr Anthony OYEOGBE
Nigeria
PhD in Agronomy
Current Position: Senior Lecturer in Agronomy and Environmental Management at Benson Idahosa University, Nigeria, and Research Associate at the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at University of Rostock, Germany

Research focus: agroecosystem sustainability, sustainable agronomy, precision/digital agronomy

Research focus: designing and implementing laws and policies for biodiversity conservation, sustainable management of fragile ecosystems, protection of endangered species

2013

Research focus: regulation of cellular growth signalling in Chlamydomonas

Bruno MONTEFERRI
Peru
MPhil in Conservation Leadership
Current position: Director of Conservamos por Naturaleza, Peru

Dr Intan Suci NURHATI
Indonesia
PhD in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
Current position: Researcher at the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Indonesia

Research focus: climatology and oceanography

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Research focus: designing and implementing laws and policies for biodiversity conservation, sustainable management of fragile ecosystems, protection of endangered species
Dr Divya PANDEY
India
PhD in Environmental Science
Current position: Research Associate at Stockholm Environment Institute, University of York, United Kingdom

Divya’s research assesses the sustainability of cultivation practices and stigmatises the carbon footprints of different agricultural systems in the Indo-Gangetic plains.

She aims to identify new practices to gain better economic returns, conserve resources, and help manage global warming more effectively, while also improving those currently in place. She is also investigating the impact of ozone pollution on carbon sequestration in cropland soils.

Research focus: interaction of agriculture with climate change, assessing ozone risk on soil carbon sequestration

Dr Shu-Yuan PAN
Taiwan, China
PhD in Environmental Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at National Taiwan University, Taiwan, China

Shu-Yuan was awarded the Young Scholars Fellowship (the Einstein Programme) by the Taiwanese Ministry of Science and Technology in 2019 and the Honorary Member by the Phi Tau Phi Scholastic Honour Society (2016). His current research group focuses on the GREAT (Green Research for Environmental and Agricultural Technologies) work, including (1) valorisation of agricultural waste by energy-efficient electrokinetic separation processes, (2) development of advanced waste-derived materials in green infrastructure for enhanced removal of nutrients from stormwater, and (3) optimisation of food-water-energy-land nexus by spatial life cycle assessment.

He is the author of a book entitled “CO2 Mineralization and Utilization”, published by Springer in 2017, and holds seven issued patents and has four more pending.

Research focus: precision separation, agriculture and the environment, water-energy-food-land nexus, circular bioeconomy

Dr Paulo SAVAGET
Brazil
PhD in Engineering
Current position: Assistant Professor at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Paulo has over 10 years of professional experience, working either as a lecturer, consultant, entrepreneur, or researcher committed to finding innovative solutions towards a more socially inclusive and environmentally resilient world. As an entrepreneur, Paulo co-founded an award-winning startup, which received funds from a Brazilian innovation grant to develop an LED solution for public lighting. As a consultant, he worked on multiple projects, including for an intergovernmental organisation (i.e. OECD), several large companies of different sectors in Latin America, non-profits, and government agencies. He has taught several courses at Fundação Dom Cabral, the best business school in Latin America, where he is now a Visiting Lecturer, tutored at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge, and has been committed and actively engaged with social entrepreneurship in Latin America and Africa.

He has been granted the IBM Business of Government Award and the Oldham Award from the University of Sussex, and has received multiple scholarships for his studies, such as from the Gates Trust, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, and the Brazilian Council for Science and Technology.

Research focus: sustainability hacking and system change for socioenvironmental impact

Dr Ivan SUDAKOV
Russia
PhD in Applied Mathematics
Current position: Assistant Professor at the University of Dayton, United States of America

Ivan has a strong commitment to interdisciplinary interaction between mathematics and climate science and works to develop a nonlinear theory of climate systems. By improving projections his research offers important contributions to understanding the climatological and ecological role of sea ice in the climate system.

Ivan has been awarded several prestigious fellowships, such as the Isaac Newton Institute Visiting Fellowship, the Ed Lorenz Postdoctoral Fellowship and the Nansen Fellowship.

Research focus: climate, environmental, statistical, and nonlinear physics

Dr Green Talents Alumni 2013
Tayebeh ZINATI SHOA
Iran
PhD Student
Technical University of Berlin, Germany

Tayebeh is looking to use her knowledge and creativity to improve and help to further sustainability in an often overlooked, but important, sector: Water Resource Management. She has set herself the goal of using her expertise in Water Resource Engineering to think up new technologies that help to discover, use, and distribute water resources more efficiently and in a sustainable manner.

Research focus: integrated water resources management, with the goal of developing innovative water resource management technologies in urban areas

GREEN TALENTS 2012

Applications total 403
Application countries 68
Winners 25
Dr Daria Camilla BOFFITO
Italy
PhD in Industrial Chemistry
Current position: Assistant Professor in Chemical Engineering at Polytechnique Montréal, Canada

Daria’s research targets process intensification of heterogeneous catalytic processes to transform biomass into chemicals and fuels. She also adopts ultrasound to synthesize catalysts and advanced materials. Daria’s research focuses on the significance of biomass as an alternative to fossil fuels, especially non-food biomass materials. Besides research, Daria has co-authored and published a book in 2013 on how to write scientific papers and prepare presentations and posters and provides guidance for professors, students, and other researchers in the STEM fields (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics).

Dr Alina Mariana BALU
Romania
PhD in Fine Chemistry
Current position: Assistant Professor at Department of Organic Chemistry, University of Córdoba, Spain

A young leader in the field of Green Chemistry, Alina is optimizing processes for biomass valorisation, environmental remediation, and the production of advanced second generation biofuels. Alina combines her innate sense of sustainability with a PhD in Fine Chemistry and an extremely strong academic record in analytical, physical, and organic chemistry. Her work focuses on alternative and greener methodologies in chemistry, including novel technologies for materials preparation, the production of biofuels, and photocatalysis – a greener alternative for the production of chemicals and energy.

As part of her PhD thesis, Alina brought together three important disciplines – nano-materials, energy, and environment – and led a multidisciplinary team to develop more sustainable processes for the preparation of supported nanoparticles. Alina and her team prepared and optimised green designer nanomaterials for various energy and environmental applications. This included the production of advanced second generation biofuels and high added-value chemicals as well as biomass valorisation and environmental remediation.

Dr Suraphon CHAIWONGSAR
Thailand
PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology
Current position: Vice President for Research and Academic Services at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna, Thailand

Suraphon’s academic approach focuses on community development, climate change mitigation, and adaptation for the agricultural sector. His interests include rice breeding, especially phytochemical methods. Suraphon has broad scientific experience in ecologically farming, and his research addresses Thailand’s three key agricultural challenges: achieving economic sustainability in the face of low profitability, falling farm-gate prices, and low productivity.

Suraphon has coached his students to compete in different community development projects hosted by Red Bull or Siam Commercial Bank, which they have won several years in a row.

Dr Viktor BRUS
Ukraine
PhD in Solid State Electronics
Current position: Project leader at the Center for Polymers and Organic Solids of the University of California Santa Barbara, United States of America

Viktor holds a PhD in Solid State Electronics and was a Georg Forster Postdoctoral Fellow at the Helmholtz-Center Berlin, Germany. With a background in semiconductor physics and material science, he is helping to develop a new generation of electronic and photovoltaic devices. After receiving the Green Talents award in 2012, Viktor continued his research as Assistant Professor and Postdoctoral Fellow at Chemnitz University, Ukraine and the University of California Santa Barbara, United States of America. He received a scholarship from the President of the Ukraine in 2013 and became an editorial board member for ‘Scientific Reports’ (Nature Publishing Group, London, United Kingdom) in the field of electronics, photonics, and device physics.

2018 American Chemical Society (ACS) Editors’ Choice Award
2015 Outstanding Reviewer for ‘Materials Science and Engineering B’ and ‘Solar Energy’ (Elsevier)
2014 Georg Forster Postdoctoral Fellowship from Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
Dr. Alexandros Gasparatos
Greece
PhD in Ecological Economics

Current position: Associate Professor of Sustainability Science at the Institute for Future Initiatives (IFI), University of Tokyo, Japan

Evaluating the potential for cleaner, greener, and more sustainable industrial processes is central to the research of Dr. Gasparatos. He is using his multi-disciplinary depth to drive green growth. He has conducted research on various different topics, including sustainability assessment, energy policy, and urban metabolism to biofuels, food security, and ecosystem services valuation. His current research focuses on the development, refinement and application of sustainability assessment and ecosystem services valuation tools. Alexandros has applied these tools in different topics such as biofuels, food/energy security, energy policy, green economy, natural disasters, and urban metabolism, in geographical contexts as diverse as Brazil, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Philippines, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Dr. Bernardo Del Campo
Uruguay
PhD in Mechanical Engineering and Biofuels

Current position: President of Advanced Renewable Technology International Inc., United States of America

Bernardo’s academic approach focuses on activated carbon and biochar production from biomass feedstock. Biochar is a high-carbon by-product from the conversion of biomass to biofuels. It can be added to soil to improve water quality, increase crop yields, and sequester carbon dioxide in the soil for centuries. Bernardo’s innovative computer-automated tool for monitoring carbon dioxide emissions makes it possible to assess the storage shelf life of agricultural biomasses and biochar stability. As a scientist, activist, educator, and proven innovator in biofuel processes, Bernardo is leading the way to make biofuel production even greener.

Dr. Dongdong Gu
China
PhD in Material Processing Engineering

Current position: Professor at the Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, China

Dongdong has a keen interest in laser-based additive manufacturing and 3D printing (AM/3DP) of high-performance materials. With the aid of advanced laser technology, he is developing a clean, green, non-waste industrial process known as rapid manufacturing/remanufacturing. His research has made important contributions by developing processes that save in both energy and material wastage.

Dr. Alexander Golberg
Israel
PhD in Bioengineering

Current position: Associate Professor at the Tel Aviv University, Israel

Alexander’s research focuses on offshore biorefineries. During his doctoral studies he developed advanced biotechnologies and bioengineering products to advance health and environmental engineering. His PhD thesis was a breakthrough in the production of bioelectricity from the electrolysis of biological matter and received worldwide media coverage. After graduating he began his postdoctoral work at the University of California, Berkeley and Harvard Medical School, Boston, United States of America.

Research focus: sustainability assessment and ecosystem services valuation

Research focus: offshore biorefineries

Research focus: activated carbon and biochar production from biomass feedstock

Research focus: laser-based additive manufacturing and 3D printing (AM/3DP) of high-performance materials
Dr Oswald JUMIRA
Zimbabwe
MSc in Electrical Engineering
Current position: Group Head of Innovation Partnerships, Liquid Telecom Group, South Africa

Oswald’s role is in designing, developing, and deploying Internet of Things (IoT) solutions across 15 African markets. His latest research interests focus on the Internet of Things, solar renewable energy, and low power wide area networks for IoT and cloud computing, working towards energy efficiency and energy harvesting techniques for embedded wireless communication systems. He started working as an Executive Assistant to the CEO of Econet Services International, based in Zimbabwe in 2012, and he was a board member at Muxanda Hub, Zimbabwe from 2014 to 2015. In 2013 Oswald published a book with Dr Sherah Zeaodaly entitled “Energy Efficiency in Wireless Networks”, which presents state-of-the-art energy-efficient techniques, designs and implementations that pertain to wireless communication networks.

Research focus: Internet of Things, solar renewable energy

Dr Dr Sabaa Ahmad KHAN
United Kingdom
PhD in Law/International Environmental Law
Current position: Attorney Member of the Barreau du Québec, Canada and Senior Researcher at the Center for Climate Change, Energy, and Environmental Law, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Sabaa holds a Doctorate in Law with specialization in International Environmental Law from the Faculty of Law at McGill University where she was an O’Brien Doctoral Fellow of the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism and Member of the Labour Law and Development Research Laboratory. Her research focuses on the interaction between environmental, trade and labour law systems in the context of transboundary movements of ICT commodities and wastes, global recycling chains and Arctic climate change.

Research focus: international environmental and trade law, arctic governance, short-lived carbon pollutants, climate change law

Dr Aung Ko Ko KYAW
Singapore
PhD in Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Current position: Associate Professor at Southern University of Science and Technology, China

In his research, Aung focuses on the design, architecture, and fabrication of excitonic solar cells. His academic approach is a significant contribution to the future economic viability and sustainability of solar energy. Within the scope of the Green Talents programme, he joined the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research (MPiP) in 2013. Thanks to his research stay in Germany, he was able to initiate a collaborative study between the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) and MPiP. His prize-winning PhD work led him to a postdoctoral fellowship under Nobel Laureate Professor Alan Heeger at UCSB.

Research focus: perovskite solar cells, organic solar cells, thermoelectric generators

Dr Joni JUPESTA
Indonesia
PhD in Management Science and Technology
Current position: Senior Researcher at Sinar Mas Agribusiness and Food, Indonesia

As a Senior Researcher at one of the largest palm oil producers in the world, Joni is working on life cycle assessment (LCA) to address the environmental issues in the agricultural sector (greenhouse gas emissions, water use efficiency, biodiversity, and ecosystem changes). He is also active as Board of Director for Indonesian Life Cycle Assessment Network (ILCAN) and Lead Author for the forthcoming Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Assessment Report on Working Group III (Climate Change Mitigation). One of the world’s major emerging economies, Indonesia changed its status from net oil exporter to net oil importer in 2004 and was responsible for about five percent of global greenhouse gas emissions by 2005. It boasts the world’s largest palm oil industry but faces massive deforestation and big questions about the sustainability of its growth. As Indonesia’s transition to a low-carbon economy takes on increasing urgency, Joni is helping drive its green-growth evolution.

Formerly a JSPS-UNU Postdoctoral Fellow at the United Nations University, Joni contributes to policy briefs on green economic growth, climate change governance, and poverty alleviation in Indonesia, which draws on his multidisciplinary research across the forestry, agriculture, and energy sectors.

Research focus: transition to green growth in emerging economies with focus on Indonesia

Green Talents Alumni 2012
Green Talents Alumni 2012
Dr Yuan LI
China
PhD in Physics

Current position: CEO at Benewake Ltd. Co., Beijing, China

Yuan has been working on optoelectronics field for over ten years and started up a technical company in 2014, called Benewake Ltd. Co. The company concentrates on LiDAR (light detection and ranging) for smart products, making it available in obstacle and slam avoidance for drones (unmanned aerial vehicles, UAV), robots, and driverless cars (advanced driver-assistance systems, ADAS). With his scientific work, he is leading the development of the next generation of LiDAR (called DE-LiDAR), which is 10 millimeters in size, weighs 100 grams, has a range of 100 meters and an all-weather applicability.

Yuan has also published the book “Three Dimensional Solar Cells based on Optical Confinement Geometries”. 2016 DE-LiDAR won the Demo God award at the Demo China Summit.

Research focus: LiDAR for drones (UAV), robots, and driverless cars (ADAS)

Dr Rachel MIUGAI
Kenya
PhD in Civil Engineering

Current position: Senior Lecturer at Department of Civil Engineering Science, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

In her award-winning research, Rachel focuses on practical design and construction solutions to minimize the cost, energy requirements, and environmental impact of South Africa’s infrastructure. As part of her PhD work, she developed a model that uses secondary and recycled materials for buildings as sustainable alternative to raw materials.

Research focus: sustainability of construction (Green Building), durability design of reinforced concrete structures, service life modelling, concrete deterioration, non-destructive testing techniques

Dr Muhammad Farrakh NAWAZ
Pakistan
PhD in Environmental Sciences

Current position: Assistant Professor at the Department of Forestry and Range Management, University of Agriculture in Faisalabad, Pakistan

In his studies, Muhammad investigates the environmental services of trees, such as climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration by integrated land use and the impact of mechanised operations in forests. His research aims to promote sustainable forestry management in his home country.

Research focus: forestry and agro-forestry, climate change, forestry and environment, afforestation of degraded lands

Dr Sarah Louise NASH
United Kingdom
PhD in Political Science

Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher at the Institute for Forest, Environment and Natural Resource Policy (InFER), University for Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Austria

Sarah is the holder of a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship of the European Commission for the project CLIMACY (Climate Diplomacy and Uneven Responses on Climate Change and Human Mobility), with the project running from March 2020 for two years. Her first book “Negotiating Migration in the Context of Climate Change. International Policy and Discourse” was published in 2019 with Bristol University Press.

During her research stay in Germany, she established contact with experts in her academic field. The following year she received a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service for her PhD at the University of Hamburg, where she defended her thesis on the topic of international policymaking around the climate change and migration nexus in January 2017.

Research focus: climate change politics and policy, climate change and human mobility
Research focus: biosynthesis of noble metal nanomaterials and nanoparticles by living organisms

Dr Adam SCHRÖFEL
Czech Republic
PhD in Material Science
Current position: Full-Time Staff Scientist at the Vlaams Instituut voor Biotechnologie (VIB), Belgium

Adam is finding nature-inspired solutions for some of the world’s biggest challenges. He is applying his expertise in the life sciences to developing biosynthetic nanomaterials. In his research, Adam is trying to show that a deeper understanding of structures of biogenic materials and cellular energy production can lead to cleaner energy production, biodegradable materials, and reduced soil and water contamination.

Adam, who helped build up the bionanotechnologies laboratory at VŠB-Technical University in Ostrava, Czech Republic focuses on biosynthesis, employing nature-derived processes to create nanomaterials. Unlike chemical approaches, it is low cost, energy efficient, and environmentally benign. His work has led to the synthesis of a functional nanomaterial containing diatom silica shells that can be used in the catalytic removal of nitrate pollutants. It also has decontamination applications, such as the hydrolytic decomposition of extremely dangerous nerve agents.

Research focus: regulation of abiotic stress in plant system by applying some viable and sustainable techniques

Dr Anita SINGH
India
PhD in Botany
Current position: Assistant Professor at the Center of Advanced Study in Botany, Banaras Hindu University, India

Anita’s research focuses on the assessment of physiological and biochemical changes in soil and plants and the synchronised detoxification of harmful reactive oxygen species by their antioxidant defence mechanisms under abiotic stress. She is now going to develop some strategies to reduce the impact of abiotic stress such as pesticide, drought and salinity on plant physiology by applying some viable techniques that can be easily implemented in the agricultural fields to reduce their toxic impact on plants.

As a postdoctoral researcher, she has also worked on nanotechnology by applying some nanonutrient like Zinc oxide and Copper(II) oxide to increase the yield and other metabolic activities of plants by increasing the nutrient efficiency of plants.

Research focus: food sustainability, water, climate technology, renewable energy, agriculture and business development

Dr Dr Antonio Otavio PATROCINIO
Brazil
PhD in Chemistry
Current position: Associate Professor at the Institute of Chemistry of Federal University of Uberlandia, Brazil

In his research, Antonio investigates molecular approaches to solar energy conversion and aims to find ways to boost the conversion efficiency of devices such as artificial photosynthetic devices for water splitting, CO2 reduction, and biomass valorisation.

He explores the fundamentals of electron transfer processes and the excited state properties of metal complexes both in solution and on metal oxide surfaces for application in light-induced devices investigations. Particularly, he is interested on how the chemical and physical properties of various materials affect the efficiency of the light-induced processes.

2016  Alexander von Humboldt’s Fellowship
2010  Brazil’s Best Doctoral Thesis in Chemistry

Research focus: development of new materials and devices for solar energy conversion into electricity and fuel

Dr Raymond SIEBRITS
South Africa
MSc in Environmental and Geographical Science
Current position: Manager at Klein River Cheese, South Africa

Raymond’s work focuses on water research, sustainability, and enterprise development.

His Master’s thesis attracted the interest of South Africa’s Water Research Commission, which then funded a team to further develop his work. He went on to gain valuable business development and enterprise building skills while working for a number of startups.

Research focus: development of new materials and devices for solar energy conversion into electricity and fuel

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Dr Supriya TIWARI  
India  
PhD in Botany and Environmental Science  
Current position: Assistant Professor at Banaras Hindu University, India

Supriya’s research focuses on mitigation of ozone-induced stress in plants in order to screen ozone-tolerant cultivars that can be useful to promote sustainable agriculture. With her studies she is helping her country offset potentially devastating yield losses by furthering the scientific community’s understanding of the impact of ground-level ozone on plants.

2012 Young Scientist Medal by the Indian National Science Academy

Research focus: mitigation of ozone-induced stress in plants to promote sustainable agriculture

Dr Javier SOLANO  
France  
PhD in Electrical Engineering  
Current position: Associate Professor at the Universidad Industrial de Santander, Colombia

With his research, Javier aims to create sustainable transport systems in an effort to reduce energy consumption and its environmental impact. In his PhD he proposed innovative energy management solutions for hybrid electrical vehicles and has successfully validated these control laws in real-time on a full-scale hybrid vehicle and in a freight train.

After his research stay at the Technical University of Berlin, Germany, he changed his research area and has been working on rural electrification and micro grids since then.

2013 Participation in Falling Walls Lab, Bucaramanga, Colombia
2013-2016 Organisation of Falling Walls Lab, Berlin, Germany
2016 Invited Professor at University of Caen, Normandy, France

Research focus: energy consumption reduction in road and railway transport

Research focus: sustainable natural resource management with a particular focus on river basin governance

Dr Dhanya VIJAYAN  
India  
PhD in Natural Resource Management  
Current position: Postdoctoral Fellow at Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research, Germany

Dhanya’s latest research focuses on tropical forest conversions and its impact on indigenous population with a special focus on Western Ghats in India. In her research she combines geospatial technologies together with livelihood assessments and participatory approaches.

Since 2016, Dhanya serves as a member of the Board of Directors at the Foundation for Environmental Research and Innovation, India. Besides, she has been a research fellow at the University of Bremen, Germany, and the National Centre for Earth Science Studies, India.

2013 Participation in Falling Walls Lab, Berlin, Germany
2014 German Chancellor Fellowship from Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
2015-2016 Organisation of Falling Walls Lab, Bucaramanga, Colombia
2019 DAAD-Deutscher Forschungsstipendium
2019-2021 Young Geographer Award from National Association of Geographers, India

Research focus: sustainable natural resource management

Dr Komalirani YENNETI  
India  
PhD in Geography and Environmental Sciences  
Current position: Lecturer and New Generation Network Scholar in the Faculty of Built Environment, University of New South Wales, Australia

Komali has extensive research, policy and advocacy experience in climate change adaptation and mitigation and energy, and is helping create sustainable communities and cities in the Asia Pacific. Her current research involves more than 25 government and industry partners as full-partners to co-create solutions for improving living conditions of people and to develop knowledge exchange partnerships for achieving the sustainable development goals.

Komali has served in research, advocacy and advisory capacities for The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Das Deutsche Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Chinese Academy of Sciences in China, LandCom University Roundtable in Australia and the Commonwealth Youth Climate Network (CYCN). She is keen on early career researcher development, and is the founding chair of International Geographical Union’s Young and Early-Career Geographers Task Force.

2011 Young Geographer Award from National Association of Geographers, India
2012 DAAD-Deutscher Forschungsstipendium
2013-2016 Organisation of Falling Walls Lab, Berlin, Germany
2014 German Chancellor Fellowship from Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
2016 Chinese Academy of Sciences President’s International Fellowship Initiative (two-year research grant)
2016 National Natural Science Foundation of China (one-year research grant)

Research focus: energy transitions and sustainable urbanism in the global south
Dr Zilong ZHANG
China
PhD in Human Geography
Current Position: Deputy Director of Geography
Department, Lanzhou University, China

Already an established leader in the field of circular economy, geographer Zilong has helped Gansu Province in north-western China to become the nation’s first official model for circular economy acceleration. China’s rapid industrialisation has come at a high price – resource depletion, environmental pollution, and major ecosystem degradation. To turn this trend around, China has launched a green growth initiative. Zilong, a lecturer in Circular Economy at Lanzhou University, is part of the process, helping China’s Gansu Province to establish a new paradigm for sustainable economic growth and development.

His interdisciplinary research on circular economy implementation has won him not only several academic awards but also the co-authorship of the Master Plan for Developing Circular Economy in Gansu Province, making him the go-to man for transforming the conventional linear economy into an efficient, closed-loop system where resources are reused and recycled to sustain growth.

Current Position: Deputy Director of Geography Department, Lanzhou University, China

Research focus: industrial ecology and circular economy, coupled relationships between economic and environmental systems

2012

Green Talents Alumni 2012

Applications total 331
Application countries 58
Winners 20
Dr Ana Paula BORTOLETO  
Brazil  
PhD in Urban Environmental Engineering  
Current position: Assistant Professor at the University of Campinas, Brazil

Research focus: life cycle assessment, social analysis, behaviour modelling and computational models using autonomous agents.

Ana’s research focuses on life cycle assessment, social analysis, and life cycle assessment. Though her interests are broad, Ana is keen on the effects of consumer behaviour and public policies on solid waste management and in the manufacturing and product’s design actively involved in this process. In 2015 Ana published the book ‘Waste Prevention Policy and Behaviour’, which outlines how waste prevention policies enter the private, domestic sphere, offering insights for generating behavioural change at the household level and, thus, moving larger communities towards sustainable waste management.

Dr Liudmila CHAMBERS (née NAZARKINA)  
Russia  
PhD in Management  
Current position: Principal Consultant at Verisk Maplecroft, United Kingdom

Research focus: growth strategies of sustainable lifestyle industry.

Liudmila’s research focuses on growth strategies of entrepreneurial firms in the sustainable lifestyle industry. Sustainability entrepreneurs pursue a range of growth strategies, including organic and acquisitive growth, strategic alliances, franchising, and equity sales to strategic investors. However, some of these strategies, such as equity sales, are often perceived as a sell-out of sustainability values by organisational stakeholders. Liudmila is investigating the inconsistency demonstrated by many entrepreneurs by choosing growth strategies that make business sense but are incompatible with stakeholder expectations for a business with a sustainability-driven identity. Her research aims to provide recommendations as to the most sustainable ways of growing an entrepreneurial firm in the sustainable lifestyle industry.

Dr Cristian Guillermo GEBHARDT  
Argentina  
PhD in Engineering Science  
Current position: Head of the Group ‘Coupled Dynamical Systems’ and Lecturer at the Institute of Structural Analysis, Leibniz University of Hannover, Germany

Research focus: coupled dynamical systems in wind energy.

Cristian’s academic approach focuses on coupled dynamical systems in wind energy. During his doctoral research, he developed a fully non-linear code to simulate the fluid-structure interaction of mechanical systems immersed in low-speed vortex-dominated flows. Using this tool, he predicted sub-critical, critical, and post-critical behaviour and zero-stability margins for wind turbines.

Dr Ting GUAN  
China  
PhD in Public Administration  
Current position: Assistant Professor at School of Government at Beijing Normal University, China

Research focus: policy implementation, Global Governance, Sustainable Development Goals.

Besides her position as Assistant Professor at the School of Government at Beijing Normal University in China, Ting is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Industrial Development and Environmental Governance at Tsinghua University in China. She has a solid understanding of the transformation process in China and has undertaken work in various research projects in that topic. After finishing her PhD in 2015, Ting was working at the Mercator Institute for China Studies in Germany as a visiting academic scholar. Later she was a post-doctoral researcher at the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany, as well as at the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University, China.

2011

Research focus: life cycle assessment, social analysis, behaviour modelling, and computational models using autonomous agents.

Research focus: growth strategies of sustainability entrepreneurs.

Research focus: coupled dynamical systems in wind energy.

Research focus: policy implementation, Global Governance, Sustainable Development Goals.
Dr. Owen Horwood
South Africa
PhD in Water Resource Governance
Current position: Non-Executive Director at Johannesburg City Parks & Zoo and Specialist Advisor at Gauteng Provincial Government and South African National Biodiversity Institute, South Africa

Owen holds a PhD in Water Resource Governance, with his thesis addressing the challenge of implementing South Africa’s national water policy particularly from a governance perspective. Green Talents offered him an exceptional opportunity for international interaction and knowledge exchange. Moreover, he had the chance to visit Heidelberg University’s Centre for the Environment as a Research Fellow. He presented his work at different conferences in London (2012) and Bonn (2013), and subsequently participated in the South African-German Year of Science collaboration. Owen has also lectured at the Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia, at the invitation of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability.

2003-2005 Rhodes Scholarship South Africa-at-Large
2003 South African Association for Advancement of Science Medal
2000 Merck Gold Medal for Interdisciplinary Excellence

Research focus: environmental policy and governance with emphasis on integrated, sustainable natural resource management

Dr. Jenny Jin Zhou
China
PhD in Environmental Engineering
Current position: Lecturer in Environmental Engineering, Department of Civil Engineering, Monash University, Australia

Jenny’s research focuses on indoor pollutant dynamics, bioaerosols, and building sustainability. In her PhD thesis she improved life cycle assessments for the water industry in Singapore.

2016 CoPI in Advanced Ventilation System for Tropical Urban Environment grant awarded by SINOBCA
2016 Award from Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Singapore
2012 Research Exchange Fellowship from the Lloyd’s Register Foundation, Singapore

Research focus: indoor environmental quality, cycle analysis, and risk assessment

Nnaemeka C. Ikegwuonu
Nigeria
MSc in Cooperation and Development
Current position: Executive Director Smallholders Foundation and Founder/CEO ColdHubs Ltd., Nigeria

Nnaemeka’s research focuses on agricultural extension services and solar-powered refrigeration. For his master’s thesis he wrote about the links between poverty reduction and sustainable environmental management.

After his participation in the forum, he began researching solar-powered cooling with his technical partners, the Institute for Air Handling and Refrigeration in Germany. His research led to the construction of a prototype for a solar-powered cold room, specifically designed for smallholder farmers, wholesalers and retailers. Moreover, Nnaemeka is a farmer, innovator, leading social entrepreneur, and has received more than 20 awards during his professional and academic career.

Research focus: solar energy, batteries, inverters, air conditioning, cold room design and refrigeration

Andrés Ibáñez Gutiérrez
Colombia
MSc in Construction
Current position: Teacher at the National University of Colombia, Colombia

Andrés holds a Master’s degree in Construction from the National University of Colombia, where he also works as a teacher in the fields of architectural design, technology, and eco-productive architecture. In his Master’s thesis he developed a local green roof system, made out of recycled and locally sourced materials, with the aim to make Bogotá a more ecofriendly city. His research aims to develop tools to improve the assessment of eco-productive buildings.

Over the past years, he has worked alongside the World Green Infrastructure Network and the Colombian Network of Green Infrastructure RECIVE to promote building greening in crises, as an effective way of generating environmental services.

Research focus: eco-productive architecture

Green Talents Alumni 2011
Green Talents Alumni 2011
Dr Rafael LUQUE
Spain
PhD in Organic Chemistry
Current position: Professor in Organic Chemistry at the University of Córdoba, Spain

Rafael is particularly interested in recycling biomass residues and waste resources, such as food waste, for producing materials, chemicals and energy. Rafael’s research is mainly applied in the field of advanced biocatalysis production, where he developed new ways to trim feedstock, such as waste frying foils, into fuels. His academic work has even resulted in the foundation of a spin-off company from the Organic Chemistry Department.

Rafael is a member of the Editorial Board of prestigious journals including Chemical Society Reviews (RSC), Catalysts Communications (Elsevier) and Sustainable Chemical Processes (Chemistry Central) as well as Editor-in-Chief of the Porous section of the journal Materials and Series Editor of Topics in Current Chemistry (Springer).

Research focus: biomass/waste valorisation, nanoscale chemistry, heterogeneous catalysts.

Dr Yangfan LI
China
PhD in Environmental Planning and Management
Current position: Professor in the College of the Environment & Ecology at Xiamen University, China

Yangfan studied Urbanisation, Environmental Change, and Sustainability at Nanjing University, China and Cornell University, United States of America. With his academic research, he aims to develop an early warning resilience system in urban coastal wetland areas. His goal is to help mitigating the impact of rapid urbanisation and global environment change, to influence political decision-making in China. Thanks to the Green Talents competition, he has gone on to work in the area of coastal resilience and integrated land-sea management.

Research focus: coastal resilience and land-water-biodiversity nexus, urbanisation and environmental studies, urban region and landscape ecology.

Dr Najwa OBEID PITIOIS
United States of America
PhD in Environmental Engineering and Sciences
Current position: Water Resources Analyst at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, United States of America

Najwa’s work focuses on water supply reliability planning in drought-prone Southern California, which currently relies on more than 50 percent in imported water for its water supply. She works with multiple local agencies assisting them in water supply reliability planning under uncertain future conditions. Her work also involves analysis of how integrated management of storm-water, recycled water, and groundwater can help increase local water resources reliability.

Research focus: integrated water resources management, water supply portfolio modelling and planning, water resources systems analysis.

Research focus: climate change and energy in the field of industry and trade.

Dr Pham Van QUAN
Vietnam
PhD in Environmental Engineering

Pham is currently working as an official in Human Resource Development at the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Vietnam. His latest research focuses on climate change and energy in the field of industry and trade. Before that, he worked as a lecturer in the Environmental Engineering Department at Hanoi Architectural University, where he researched energy-saving techniques to mitigate climate change, involving his former university in Tokyo.

Pham previously focused on understanding and managing cities as comprehensive units, with a focus on the water-energy nexus. He is also interested in a broader range of issues, receiving financial backing from the government.

Research focus: climate change and energy in the field of industry and trade.

Research focus: coastal resilience and integrated land-sea management.

Dr Yangfan LI
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Research focus: climate change and energy in the field of industry and trade.

Research focus: coastal resilience and integrated land-sea management.
Dr Alanna Jane REBELO
South Africa
PhD in Biology
Current position: Postdoctoral Researcher in the Conservation Ecology & Entomology Department at Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Alanna's research focus is on ecosystem services provided by wetlands, using a combination of applied remote sensing techniques, field measurements, and hydrological modeling. She is currently involved in research into the hydrological benefits of investing in ecological infrastructure, including alien clearing from mountain catchments, and wetland rehabilitation and revegetation.

A wetland ecologist by training, Alanna is a member of the International Society for Wetland Scientists as well as a member of the local South African Wetlands Society, the Freshwater Ecosystem Network, and her local wetland forum is also part of the RoseAct NGO in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg.

Research focus: ecosystem services, valley-bottom wetlands, ecohydrology, remote sensing applications

Dr Dyllon RANDALL
South Africa
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Senior Lecturer at the University of Cape Town, South Africa

Dyllon is an accomplished South African Research Engineer. His PhD focused on developing a brine treatment protocol using a novel technology called Eutectic Freeze Crystallisation. Dyllon has previously worked in consulting as a Process Engineer and on “Reinvent the Toilet Challenge”, a project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He is specifically focusing on sustainable sanitation and recovery of valuable nutrients from waste streams. His research stay in Germany also piqued his interest in nutrient recovery research.

Research focus: resource recovery from wastewater

Research focus: solar fuel generation and nanomaterial

Dr Victor SIM
Singapore
PhD in Environmental and Water Resources Engineering
Current position: Head of Resiliency (ESD), Sustainability and Resiliency Office at Surbana Jurong, Singapore

Victor is a Process Engineer by training with deep expertise in state-of-the-art polylactic and ceramic membrane treatment systems. He is interested in the intertwined needs of social, economic, and environmental concerns that include but are not limited to water, power, environmental, social, and security matters affecting the urban development and city landscape. He is tapping into Industrialisation 4.0 where digitalisation enables the interaction of multiple layers of data to generate insights and predictions.

Research focus: design considerations and process options for drinking water systems

Dr Yatendra S. CHAUDHARY
India
PhD in Chemistry
Current position: Principal Scientist at the CSIR Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology, and Associate Professor at Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research, India

Yatendra's academic research focuses on solar fuels and nanomaterial. Among others he has designed enzyme semiconductor-based photocatalysts for visible light driven CO2 reduction and H2 production. He earned his PhD for the research work focused on nanostructured photocatalysts for solar-driven water splitting.

His research accomplishments in the area of nanomaterial and solar fuel research have brought him many recognitions such as the CSR Young Scientist Award 2013 in the Chemical Sciences section from the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), India and the prestigious Marie Curie Fellowship by the European Union (2010-2012).

Yatendra is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Nanoscience and the International Journal of Photoenergy. Besides, he has edited a book “Solar Fuel Generation” which offers an overview of the promising approaches to solar fuel generation, including the direct pathways of solar H2 generation and CO2 photoreduction.

Research focus: design considerations and process options for drinking water systems
Dr Bing XUE  
China  
PhD in Geography  
Current position: Professor at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, China

Bing’s research interests mainly focus on the interactions analysis on human-environmental system and climate change governance, based on the techniques of urban and environmental computing and employing the transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. For his PhD thesis, he studied the mechanisms of regional circular economy development. Bing is currently serving as a Professor in Industrial Ecology and Sustainability Management as well as the Principal Investigator of the Research Center for Industrial Ecology & Sustainability at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. He is also a Research Fellow/Associate at the Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) in Potsdam, Germany. He is also voluntarily serving in various organisations and scientific communities, and as a consulting expert for Chinese local governments.

2013 Awarded the International Climate Protect Fellowship by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

2015 Selected as a member of the Youth Innovation Association at the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Research focus: industrial ecology, human-nature relationship, and sustainability governance in climate change and environment

Dr Rajeev Pratap SINGH  
India  
PhD in Botany  
Current position: Visiting Research Associate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, United States of America

Rajeev did his PhD work at the Department of Botany of the Banaras Hindu University in India, where he examined how municipal sewage sludge can be used in land applications. Following this, he did his postdoctoral work at Universiti Sains Malaysia. Afterwards, he started to work as an assistant professor at the Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development at Banaras Hindu University. The Green Talents award was a turning point in his career, and the first international recognition for his research.

2016 Water Advanced Research and Innovation Fellowship (WARI) ProSPER.Net-Scopus Young Scientist Award in sustainable development from United Nations University, Tokyo and Scopus

2012 ProSPER.Net-Scopus Young Scientist Award in sustainable development from United Nations University, Tokyo and Scopus

Research focus: solar fuel generation and nanomaterial

Dr Sandra Patricia ZAPATA PORRAS  
Colombia  
PhD in Engineering  
Current position: CEO at Ecolflora Cares S.A.S., Colombia

Sandra has worked at Ecolflora Cares S.A.S. since 2002 developing natural colur technologies for the food and personal care industries with an emphasis on sustainable and socially responsible environmental practices. Ecolflora Cares is a leader and pioneer in technological solutions development, bio-products, and services derived from biodiversity for food industries, cosmetics, personal and home care.

Sandra secured four international patent families on extraction and processing including: Genipa americana, Swinglea glutinosa, and Sapindaceae family.

2010-2014 NATSYS-UPaRF Fellowship (Natural Systems for Waste-water Treatment and Reuse: Technology Adaptations and Implementation in Developing Countries – UNESCO-IHE Partnership Research Fund), the Netherlands

2009 Women in Science Award by L’Oreal-UNESCO

Research focus: development of biodiversity-derived products for the food and personal care industries involving sustainable management, fair trade, and legal access

Dr Maribel ZAPATER PEREYRA  
Peru  
PhD in Environmental and Sanitary Engineering  
Current position: Expert in water and wastewater technology at Latinka e.V., Germany

Maribel’s research contributes to increase the quality and quantity of water resources, while guaranteeing a natural treatment and an appealing green space. Currently, she is working as an advisor in a sanitation and environmental Paraguayan-German project that tries to find a solution for a vulnerable community in the surroundings of Lima. The project involves the implementation of ecocan technologies that could solve the lack of sanitation in the area.

In recent years, Maribel has taken on a new topic: social and environmental entrepreneurship. In late 2017 she co-founded an initiative in Peru called Tejiendo Puentes, which is an online platform that accelerates the visibility of social and environmental entrepreneurs. This way the entrepreneurs can be known at the national level (and sometimes international level), which increases their potential to solve more social and environmental problems.

2015 Top 20 Percent of the annual PhD cohort, the Netherlands

2010-2014 NATSYS-UPaRF Fellowship (Natural Systems for Wastewater Treatment and Reuse: Technology Adaptations and Implementation in Developing Countries – UNESCO-IHE Partnership Research Fund), the Netherlands

Research focus: sustainable water sanitation

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Research focus: sustainable water sanitation
Dr Tirthankar BANERJEE
India
PhD in Environmental Science

Current position: Assistant Professor at Banaras Hindu University, India

During his doctoral research, Tirthankar quantified the source-specific contribution of aerosols and trace gases from a large industrial estate using several air quality models.

Being affiliated with the Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development at Banaras Hindu University, Tirthankar has continued his scientific research on satellite remote sensing of aerosols and trace gases particularly over the Indo-Gangetic Plain of South Asia. Through measurements of atmospheric trace gases and aerosols from various observational platforms, he aims to predict changes in atmospheric constituents and its repercussions on the regional to global climate. Tirthankar has very active and productive research collaboration with many research institutions across the world. His research group was a pioneer in identifying many contemporary environmental issues especially in identifying aerosol sources, aerosol transport and its health impacts over the region.

2019 Visiting Professor, Laboratory of Physico-Chemistry of the Atmosphere, University of the Littoral Opal Coast, Dunkerque, France

Dr Sukalyan BHADRA
India
PhD in Chemistry

Current position: Senior Scientist at Inorganic Materials and Catalysis Division, Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSIR), India

Sukalyan’s research interests revolve around developing new methods for metal-promoted organic synthesis and asymmetric catalysis that lead to complex molecular structures in a sustainable manner.

After receiving the Green Talents award, he stayed in Germany for more than two years at Technical University Kaiserslautern as a Postdoctoral Associate. Subsequently, he moved to Chubu University, Japan, as a postdoctoral fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). In 2016, he returned to India and joined Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSIR), Bhavnagar, to start his independent research career.

2016 DST-Inspire Faculty Award, Government of India
2013 JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship, Japan
2009 Participation at the 59th Nobel Laureate meeting Lindau, Germany
**Dr Alexander GUSEV**  
Russia  
PhD in Political Science  
Current position: Project Scientist at the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) Potsdam, Germany

Dr Alexander GUSEV was selected as one of the Top 10 Women in Science in Sub-Saharan Africa as part of the L’Oreal/UNESCO-Women in Science Programme. He holds numerous bursaries and also a Golden Key Chapter Award for outstanding Academic Achievement. Under the supervision of Professor Carlo Rubbia, the Nobel Prize Winner in Physics, Alexander has been working on the future role of natural gas in energy transition, electricity markets, and the international governance of renewable energy during his PhD studies. Prior to joining the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, Alexander worked as a visiting researcher at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin and as an Assistant Professor at the Higher School of Economics in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.

Research Focus: future role of natural gas in energy transition, integration of renewable energy into future electricity markets

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**Dr Jeanne DE WAAL**  
South Africa  
PhD in Agriculture, Entomology and Conservation Ecology  
Current position: Technical Manager at Phylogro SA (Pty) Ltd., South Africa

Throughout her research career Jeanne focused on finding environmentally friendly solutions for pest management in commercial agriculture. The integration of these solutions at farm level ensures the safe and sustainable production of food to meet market requirements and help feed a growing population. Jeanne was selected as one of the Top 10 Women in Science in Sub-Saharan Africa as part of the L’Oreal/UNESCO-Women in Science Programme. She holds numerous bursaries and also a Golden Key Chapter Award for outstanding Academic Achievement.

Research focus: integrated pest management, commercial agriculture, nematology, entomology, biological control

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**Dr Indumathi JEYACHANDRAN**  
India  
PhD in Water Resources Engineering, Remote Sensing & GIS  
Current position: Assistant Professor at San Jose State University, United States of America

Indu’s research focuses on the observation and modelling of techniques for sustainable urban infrastructure planning. In her PhD thesis, she developed a modelling framework to estimate urban heat fluxes and helped establish an urban water and energy observation network in the Salt Lake Valley. Afterwards, she did her postdoctoral research at Tennessee Technological University, United States of America.

Research Focus: modelling and observations techniques for sustainable urban infrastructure planning

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**Dr Zhen (Jason) HE**  
China  
PhD in Environmental Engineering  
Current position: Professor at the Department of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering, Washington University in St. Louis, United States of America

Jason’s interests include biological wastewater treatment, sustainable seawater desalination, and bioenergy production. He became Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin in 2009 and completed a postdoctoral training period at the University of Southern California. Since then, he has established a research programme in environmental biotechnology and was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Virginia Tech in 2013. In 2017 he was promoted to full professor. He established the Center for Applied Water Research and Innovation (CAWRI) and became its inaugural director. He took over the position of Director for Virginia Tech Water/Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators Short School, a professional training programme. In 2020 Jason started a new position as professor at the Department of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering, Washington University in St. Louis.

Current position: Professor at the Department of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering, Washington University in St. Louis, United States of America

Research focus: biological wastewater treatment, bio electrochemical systems, sustainable seawater desalination, and bioenergy production

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Current position: Technical Manager at Phylogro SA (Pty) Ltd., South Africa

Research focus: integrated pest management, commercial agriculture, nematology, entomology, biological control

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Current position: Professor at the Department of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering, Washington University in St. Louis, United States of America

Research focus: biological wastewater treatment, bio electrochemical systems, sustainable seawater desalination, and bioenergy production
**Research focus: reuse of waste as an alternative raw material to ceramic products**

**Dr Janaína Accordi JUNKES**  
Brazil  
PhD in Materials Science and Engineering  
Current position: Professor and Researcher at Centro Universitário Tiradentes, Brazil

Janaína’s academic approach focuses on waste treatment, the reuse of waste material, conserving resources, particularly raw materials, and offers a solution to the problem of waste disposal. Together with her team, she found a way to reuse mineral waste from industrial processes, such as mollusc shell, sugarcane bagasse ash within the ceramic industry.  

After receiving the Green Talents award, she completed three postdoctoral research programmes in Germany and Brazil and was hired as a professor by a private university in her home country. Janaína also conducts engineering classes for undergraduate and graduate students and is the head of the Laboratory of Environmental Analysis (LANA) at her university.

**Research focus: water technology and waste management**

**Dr Tonni KURNIAWAN**  
Hong Kong, China  
PhD in Applied Chemical Technology  
Current position: Associate Professor at Xiamen University, China

Tonni’s research focuses on water treatment, solid waste management, and renewable energy as well as the application of state-of-the-art water technologies for environmental protection. As one of the world’s best talents in his field, he participated in the 60th Interdisciplinary Nobel Laureates Meeting in Lindau (Germany) in 2010.  

In 2011 he received the Waste Management Award from Air & Waste Management Association (A&WMA), United States of America, and the Young Scientist Award from World Economy Forum in 2013. Since 2014 he has been a Young Global Leader of World Economy Forum.

**Research focus: tactical urbanism for urban sustainability and vulnerability reduction strategies**

**Dr Adriana Patricia LOPEZ VALENCIA**  
Colombia  
PhD in Environmental Sciences  
Current position: Assistant Professor at Universidad del Valle, Colombia

Adriana has a keen interest in sustainability of informal settlements. She captures economic, ecological, and social components of an area or urban space as a basis for land-use planning.  

Thanks to her Green Talents participation, she worked as a visiting researcher at the United Nations University in Bonn, studying urban vulnerability to climate change in informal settlements. Following this, she started joint research projects on community participation and participatory urban design to reduce vulnerability and adaptation to climate change from a local perspective by using approaches from tactical urbanism.

**Research focus: natural capital assessments, sustainability certification systems and climate change risk assessment**

**Paul William JORGENSEN**  
South Africa  
MSc in Environmental Science  
Current position: Head of Climate Action Planning Africa for C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Johannesburg, South Africa

Paul serves as Head of Climate Action Planning Africa for C40’s Climate Action Planning Programme. In this role he leads the delivery of the Africa programme supporting 11 African megacities in developing ambitious, inclusive, and integrated climate action plans. Prior to joining C40, Paul worked as an environmental consultant for SRK Consulting, assisting a diverse client base in providing advisory services and solutions for environmental and social challenges. This included developing climate change policies, strategies, and implementation plans for the private sector and city governments.  

Paul’s research work focuses on natural capital, ecosystem services, climate change, and sustainability certification systems in mining and agriculture.

**Research focus: tactical urbanism for urban sustainability and vulnerability reduction strategies**

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**Research focus: natural capital assessments, sustainability certification systems and climate change risk assessment**
Dr Bee Ting LOW
Singapore
PhD in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Current position: Senior Research Engineer, Membrane Technology and Research, Inc., United States of America

Bee Ting has earned a Doctorate in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, with a specialization in membrane science and technology for pre-combustion CO₂ capture. Such membranes have obvious real-world applications as the ability to filter CO₂ from exhaust gas is vital for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., from power plants that burn fossil fuels). As such, it plays a direct role in fighting global warming.

The goal of Bee Ting’s doctoral research was the development of membrane technology for the purification of hydrogen and natural gas, a project funded by the Singapore National Research Foundation. While earning her doctorate, Bee Ting worked as a research engineer at the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at National University of Singapore (NUS). She continued her research as a postdoctoral research fellow for the Nanoscience and Nanotechnology Initiative of the Faculty of Engineering at NUS. In that role, she was actively involved in a project aimed at designing polymeric membranes for CO₂ capture from flue gas funded by Singapore’s Agency for Science, Technology and Research.

Research focus: membranes for CO₂ capture

Andrew MARCH
United States of America
MSc in Pollution Chemistry and Environmental Risks
Current position: CEO at Power Pay, Inc., United States of America

After extensive research and partnerships in Madagascar, Andrew developed a revolutionary electricity grid management system that will allow microgrids and larger electricity grids to grow sustainably and exponentially. In 2013 he founded his own company Power Pay, which provides reliable, transparent energy solutions to emerging markets.

Andrew conducted research for the Association pour le Développement de l’Energie Solaire, a nonprofit organisation in Madagascar, where he studied the impact of cooker use upon the deforestation rate. At the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, he investigated drivers of greenhouse gas emissions within densely populated urban centres.

Research focus: methods to increase electricity access and provide reliable, transparent energy solutions to emerging markets

Dr Daniela MORAIS LEME
Brazil
PhD in Biological Sciences
Current position: Professor, Department of Genetics, Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), Curitiba-PR, Brazil

During her PhD, Daniela worked on the genotoxicity and mutagenicity of water contaminated by biofuels. With her research, Daniela aimed to evaluate the whole production chain of biodiesel, including raw material sources. According to her findings, water and soil contaminated with biodiesel can induce adverse effects on living organisms, including cytotoxic and genotoxic effects.

Since 2011 Daniela has focused on developing new in vitro approaches to detect genotoxics for humans and aquatic organisms. In the design of these in vitro alternatives, she takes into account not only their similarities with in vivo conditions, but also their high-throughput performance, which can help Green Chemistry achieve its goals in promoting sustainable chemicals.

Research focus: environmental monitoring, environmental hazard assessment, genetic toxicology, immunotoxicology, alternatives to animals (in vitro methods)

Dr Julia NIKITCHENKO
Ukraine
PhD in Biological Sciences
Current position: Research Assistant National Aviation University, Ukraine

Julia’s scientific work focuses on waste and resource recuperation, specifically that of scrap tyres. She approaches this problem in an interdisciplinary way, which allowed her to improve the technology used to process scrap tyres. In effect, this reduces time and amount of energy needed while also eliminating associated air pollution and secondary waste. The process does improve the quality of recycled products as well.

Beyond purely technical aspects, Julia has developed a scrap tyre management system for dealing with collection and transport of scrap tyres. In addition, she has designed a method of accounting for all tyres sold and collecting them at the end of their lifecycle. She has also calculated ecological and economic effects of such a centralised collection and treatment system for scrap tyres.

Julia is also the founder of the “Scientific and Technical Association of Chemmottol- ogists”. This organisation was formed to propagate information about the rational use of fuels and lubricants and to investigate alternative energy sources, the efficient use of natural resources, and other environmental topics.

Research focus: recycling of scrap tires and application of secondary raw materials

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Research focus: recycling of scrap tires and application of secondary raw materials
Research focus: molecular assembly and charge transport in organic electronic and biomedical devices

Dr Hung PHAN
Vietnam

PhD in Materials Chemistry

Current position: Founding Faculty, Fulbright University, Vietnam

Hung’s most current research involves understanding the nanoscale properties and device physics of organic electronic materials and devices. Hung’s PhD research contributed to the comprehension of molecular assembly and charge transport in Organic Field-Effect Transistors (OFETs). The development of OFETs for electronic devices is important because their low temperature and high throughput processing can reduce the energy consumption for manufacturing, compared to its inorganic counterparts.

In previous research, he focused on waste-water treatment, especially desalination, which contributes to assuring a sustainable municipal and industrial water supply and helps terminate disease and deaths related to unsafe water.

Dr Mike OTIENO
Kenya

PhD in Civil Engineering

Current position: Senior Lecturer at University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Mike’s research focuses on the development of a model that will help engineers predict the rate of corrosion-induced deterioration in reinforced concrete structures. This will allow them to develop efficient, sustainable maintenance and repair strategies for buildings.

With this background, Mike has worked as a civil engineer for several consulting and engineering firms in Kenya and Australia, and is lecturer in construction materials, including strength of materials, at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

2010 Carnegie scholarship to his PhD in South Africa

Research focus: concrete durability, service life prediction, steel corrosion in reinforced concrete structures, and repair and rehabilitation of concrete structures

Dr Binita SHAH
India

PhD in Environmental Science

Current position: Research Scholar at National Institute of Industrial Engineering, India

Binita’s research focuses on the impacts on the environment and social issues arising during the process of power generation, more precisely on life cycle assessment of electricity from coal-fired thermal power plants in India. She has overseen various environmental aspects of real estate, commercial services and construction industries, and gained expertise in environmental impact assessments and green building certification.

Binita conducted her research stay in Germany at the United Nations University in Bonn, working on measuring risk and vulnerability associated to natural hazards.

Research focus: sustainable consumption and production, green supply chain, environmental, social, and governance research, life cycle assessment, environmental impact assessment, and green buildings

Mercedes VALDERRAMA-VERNAZA
Colombia

BSc in Biology

Current Position: Director of Laboratory and Analyst, PSL Proanalisis Ltda., Colombia

Mercedes is especially interested in interdisciplinary ecosystem research and the relationship between man and nature. She actively promotes the protection of endangered species and the environment. She puts her activism into practice by performing scientific field research on the ecology of endangered species in Colombian nature preserves. A prominent example of this was her investigation of the conflict between the Andean Bear and cattle rearing in the high Colombian mountains.

Research focus: ecosystem research and sustainable land use

Dr Mike OTIENO
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Research focus: sustainable consumption and production, green supply chain, environmental, social, and governance research, life cycle assessment, environmental impact assessment, and green buildings

Mercedes VALDERRAMA-VERNAZA
Colombia

BSc in Biology

Current Position: Director of Laboratory and Analyst, PSL Proanalisis Ltda., Colombia

Mercedes is especially interested in interdisciplinary ecosystem research and the relationship between man and nature. She actively promotes the protection of endangered species and the environment. She puts her activism into practice by performing scientific field research on the ecology of endangered species in Colombian nature preserves. A prominent example of this was her investigation of the conflict between the Andean Bear and cattle rearing in the high Colombian mountains.

Research focus: ecosystem research and sustainable land use

Dr Hung PHAN
Vietnam

PhD in Materials Chemistry

Current position: Founding Faculty, Fulbright University, Vietnam

Hung’s most current research involves understanding the nanoscale properties and device physics of organic electronic materials and devices. Hung’s PhD research contributed to the comprehension of molecular assembly and charge transport in Organic Field-Effect Transistors (OFETs). The development of OFETs for electronic devices is important because their low temperature and high throughput processing can reduce the energy consumption for manufacturing, compared to its inorganic counterparts.

In previous research, he focused on waste-water treatment, especially desalination, which contributes to assuring a sustainable municipal and industrial water supply and helps terminate disease and deaths related to unsafe water.

Research focus: molecular assembly and charge transport in organic electronic and biomedical devices
Chao WANG  
China  
MSc in Mechanical Engineering  
Current position: Assistant Research Fellow at Beijing Union University, China

Research focus: waste treatment methods in urban precision management of smart cities and energy-saving applications in local residential communities.

During his studies, Chao designed industrial processes to treat and recycle urban waste. He has been granted ten patents for his work.

For his achievements, Chao was among the winners of the China University Energy Saving and Emission Reduction Competition in 2011 as well as at the Beijing Invention Contest in 2012. He is also a member of the China Invention Association and Beijing Engineering Research Center of Smart Mechanical Innovation Design Service.

2013  Beijing Technician Outstanding Innovation Award

Dr Dewei ZHAO  
China  
PhD in Electrical Engineering  
Current position: Professor at Sichuan University, China

Dr Dewei’s research focuses on perovskite solar cells, organic solar cells, quantum dots/organic hybrid solar cells, organic light-emitting diodes, co-doping phosphorescent OLEDs, quantum dots/Organic Hybrid LEDs, and desensitised solar cells. In his PhD research, he explored energy-related organic and inorganic optoelectronic devices and nano-devices.

After receiving the Green Talents award, he conducted his postdoctoral research in the United States of America, including research stays at the University of Michigan and at the University of Florida from 2012 to 2014. In 2014 Dewei started to work as a postdoctoral associate at the University of Toledo and was promoted to Research Assistant Professor in 2015. In 2019 he started his new position as full-time professor at the Sichuan University in China.

2012  Chinese Government Award for Outstanding Self-financed Students Abroad

Research focus: perovskite solar cells, organic/inorganic hybrid solar cells, quantum dot light-emitting diodes, and organic LEDs.
Dr Akintunde BABATUNDE  
**Nigeria**  
PhD in Civil Engineering  

Current position: Associate Professor at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom  

Akintunde is an expert in systems and processes for sustainable water engineering and associated links with bioenergy. He has received funding for his research from various sources including the water industry.  

After his participation in the Green Talents programme, he received the prestigious Irish Research Council Marie Curie Fellowship award (2010) and was appointed a Member of Council of the Society of Environmental Engineers, United Kingdom, in 2012. He was re-elected in 2016.  

2012 Selected as Welsh Crucible  

Research focus: sustainable water engineering and bioenergy

Dr Antonio Carlos CAETANO DE SOUZA  
**Brazil**  
PhD in Mechanical Engineering  

Current position: Assistant Professor at Faculty of Engineering, Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados, Brazil  

Antonio’s research focuses on the generation of hydrogen on the basis of biogas and its association with fuel cells. He has a particular interest in the conversion of glycerol, a by-product of the biodiesel production, into hydrogen for energy generation. This kind of technology is particularly relevant in Antonio’s home country: Brazil is one of the largest ethanol producers in the world, so such a technology would have huge potential for the future, as it would make fuel production more environmentally sustainable and economically viable.  

Thus, Antonio works as a teacher for disadvantaged young people. He not only teaches them geography, but also discusses current issues of sustainability with them, taking into account the subject of conflicts over resources.  

Research focus: fuel cells and the use of biomass as a renewable energy source

Dr Saumita BANERJEE  
**India**  
PhD in Biotechnology  

Current position: Technology Associate at NineSigma Inc., Bangalore, India  

Saumita’s research work focused on the production of bioethanol from lignocellulosic biomass, one of the most promising options for greenhouse gas reduction as it comes in a variety of forms, such as wood residues and paper waste. Hence, such a technology could help to solve both waste disposal and energy supply problems.  

Through her work in Germany, Saumita managed to enrich her dissertation and broadened the subject to an area she would have otherwise left unconsidered.  

The Green Talents programme helped expand her knowledge of environmental technologies and also taught her about future trends in her field of research. She then joined Siemens Corporate R&D as a research engineer to work in an area closely aligned with her PhD work. In her current role, Saumita is helping organisations accelerate their innovation cycle by helping them find new solutions, knowledge, and partners, from beyond their organisational boundaries.  

Research focus: open innovation

Dr Juliana ARISTÉIA DE LIMA  
**Brazil**  
PhD in Chemistry  

Current position: Research Engineer at Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, France  

Juliana’s academic approach focuses on the development of biodegradable polymers blends, which are ubiquitous in modern-day life, most notably in the form of plastics. In addition, she has deep experience, skills, and knowledge in the production and characterisation of nano-composites, block copolymers, polymer blends, materials structuring, materials interfaces, microscopy, and spectroscopy.  

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Research focus: sustainable management in the chemical industry
Dr Nuwong CHOLLACOOP
Thailand
PhD in Materials Science and Engineering

Current position: Head of Renewable Energy Laboratory at the National Metal and Materials Technology Center, National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), Thailand

From 2010 to 2016 Nuwong has been Research Leader in the Japan-Thailand collaboration project “Innovation on Production and Automobile Utilisation of Biofuels from Non-Food Biomass”. Here, H-FAME (partially hydrogenated fatty acid methyl ester) technology was developed and adopted in Thailand’s Alternative Energy Development Plan. He was recently appointed as an expert for granting Thailand’s Energy Conservation fund.

2018-2019 ASEAN Science and Technology Fellow
2016 Participated in the 1st ASEAN Science Leadership Programme awarded by the Global Young Academy Scholarship from German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)
2010 Elected Country Expert for Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia

Dr Caetano DOREA
Brazil
PhD in Environmental Engineering

Current position: Associate Professor at the University of Victoria, Canada

Caetano’s research focuses on water, sanitation, and health, with applications varying from the characterisation of functional microbial ecology of biological treatment processes to the development and evaluation of water and sanitation technologies.

Before he relocated to the University of Victoria in 2017, he held academic positions at the Université Laval (Quebec City, Canada) and at the University of Glasgow (Glasgow, United Kingdom).

After the award, he established the Water, Sanitation & Health (WASH) research group at the Université Laval and later established his current research group, the Public Health & Environmental Engineering (PH2E) Lab, at the University of Victoria. His interests and expertise are at the crossroads of environmental and public health engineering including the development and evaluation of technologies, and approaches for safeguarding the health of the public and the environment. He has recently received a competitive NSERC Discovery Accelerator Supplement in recognition of the quality and potential of his WASH-focused research programme.

Research focus: water, sanitation, and health

Dr Kerem GÜNGÖR
Turkey
PhD in Biological Systems Engineering

Current position: Environmental Engineer at the Department of Environmental Protection, Maine, United States of America

Kerem’s current position focuses on stormwater management, green infrastructure/low impact development, erosion, and sedimentation. In his PhD thesis, he studied animal waste, using lab-based tests and experiments, in the context of diffuse agricultural phosphorus pollution.

The Science Forum 2009 helped him to reassess his professional activities, which allowed him to make tangible contributions to the overarching goal of sustainability.

From 2009 to 2014, he worked as an Assistant Professor at the Abant Izzet Baysal University, Turkey where he led a project addressing the phosphorus dynamics of the shallow and eutrophic Yenicaga Lake in Turkey.

Research focus: stormwater management, green infrastructure, erosion sedimentation

Dr Natalia FISHER
Russia
PhD in Microbiology and Ecology

Current position: Senior Researcher at the Institute of Water and Ecological Problems, Far Eastern Branch of Russian Academy of Science, Russia

During her research stay in Germany at the Grundwasser-Zentrum Dresden, Natalia identified the ability of microorganisms to oxidise manganese. Collaborating extensive with other scientists, she became interested in groundwater pollution issues, which result in the disappearance of clean and safe drinking water.

She researches the biogeochemical features of pollution by hydrocarbons of surface water (small rivers), groundwater of industrial zones, and living sector of urban area in cold climate zone. Her research focuses on the cities of Khabarovsk and Komsomolsk-on-Amur (both located on the banks of the Amur River in the Russian Far East). She pays special attention to the features of microbiological processes of self-purification of surface water and groundwater in different seasons, especially during wintertime and in the period of snowmelt.

Research focus: biogeochemical processes in surface water and groundwater of urban territory in cold climate

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Research focus: biogeochemical processes in surface water and groundwater of urban territory in cold climate
**Dr Xingmao “Samuel” MA**  
**China**  
PhD in Civil Engineering  
Current position: Associate Professor at Zachry Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, Texas A&M University, United States of America  
   
Samuel’s research interests range from groundwater and land remediation to environmental nanotechnology. He has investigated the role of plants in enhancing contaminant removal from soil and groundwater and is currently expanding this effort to phytomonitoring—the use of plants to monitor contaminant plumes in soil and groundwater. In the field of environmental nanotechnology, he is studying the transport of nanoparticles in the environment, particularly the uptake, transport, and accumulation of engineered nanoparticles by various plants. One of Samuel’s goals is to understand the toxicity, accumulation, and bioavailability of nanoparticles to human beings through consumption of edible plants. He is also exploring the potential applications of nanotechnology in environmental clean-up efforts.

**Research focus:** Environmental health and safety of engineered nanomaterials, biogeochemistry of emerging contaminants, phytoremediation, ecosystem restoration, water reuse

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**Dr Carlos A. MARTÍNEZ-HUITLE**  
**Mexico**  
PhD in Chemical Sciences  
Current position: Associate Professor at Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil  
   
Carlos’ scientific work focuses on electrochemical advanced oxidation processes, such as electrochemical water treatment and electrochemical soil remediation. In collaboration with the Brazilian Petroleum Industry, he developed electrochemical oxidation processes in which the oxidants are generated using a flow electrochemical reactor to remove organic pollutants. Carlos’ research is especially important to Brazilian society since the country’s access to clean drinking water and water resources is limited in some regions. Carlos is coordinator of the Graduate Programme in Petroleum Sciences and Engineering. He participated as general chair of organizing committees of the XXI Simpósio Brasileiro de Eletroquímica e Eletroanalítica in 2017 and of the 4th Iberoamerican Conference on Advanced Oxidation Technologies in 2019. Currently, he is a visiting scientist at Mann University, Germany supported by Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

2016  
Editorial Board Member for Scientific Reports, Nature Publishing Group

2015  
Editorial Board Member for Applied Catalysis B: Environmental, Elsevier

2009  
ISE Oronzio and Niccolò De Nora Foundation Prize on Environmental Electrochemistry

**Research focus:** Electrochemical advanced oxidation processes for water treatment, electrocatalytic materials, electrocatalysis, photocatalysis and electroanalysis

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**Dr Aluwani NEMUKULA**  
**South Africa**  
PhD in Biotechnology  
Current position: Lecturer and Researcher at University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
   
In his research, Aluwani focuses on algae bio-products and renewable energy with special applications in aquaculture, production of biofuels, and pharmacueticals. He conducted his research stay at the Institute of Process Engineering in Life Sciences at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Germany. After this, he went back to his home country to continue working on microalgae biotechnology with the goal of developing an integrated process for sustainable and energy efficient production of renewable metabolites.

**Research focus:** Algal biotechnology, bio-products and biofuels

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**Dr Nihar SAMAL**  
**India**  
PhD in Water Resource  
Current position: City Research Scientist at the Office of Agency of Chief Engineer (OACE), The New York City Department of Environmental Protection, United States of America  
   
Nihar’s research focuses on water quality modelling in freshwater and wastewater systems. He is currently working on hydraulic capacity analysis of sewers and collection infrastructure across a broad range of modelling scenarios applying a hydrologic-hydraulic model and support long-term planning of system growth. The main focus is on the design and implementation of green infrastructure and low impact development to manage stormwater within New York City.

**Research focus:** Algal biotechnology, bio-products and biofuels

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**Research focus:** Algal biotechnology, bio-products and biofuels
Dr Sharifah Rafidah Binti WAN ALWI
Malaysia
PhD in Chemical Engineering
Current position: Director of Process Systems Engineering Centre (PROSPECT) at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Malaysia

Research focus: water technologies

For her PhD, Sharifah researched cost-effective reduction of water consumption using a specific network design. She has filed 14 patents, 22 copyrights, and developed 5 software products.

Sharifah specialises in process systems engineering with emphasis on resource conservation and is the co-founder of the corporate spin-off from UTM called Optimal Systems Engineering Sdn Bhd (OPTIMISE). She has also served as the Chairman for Malaysia IChemE Young Engineer Group (YEG) and is a member of Young Scientists Network, Academy of Sciences Malaysia (YSN-ASM) and Persatuan Saintis Muslim Malaysia (PERINTIS). Sharifah is a certified ASEAN Energy Management Scheme (AEMAS) Energy Manager trainer since 2009 and a Registered Electrical Energy Manager under Malaysia Energy Commission. She has been actively involved in securing AEMAS Energy Management Award from 1 to 3 Star and also the ASEAN Energy Award 2012.

Dr Bo YANG
China
PhD in Environmental Science and Engineering
Current position: Professor at College of Chemistry and Environmental Engineering, Shenzhen University, China

Research focus: water technologies

Bo is working on disposal technologies for typical organic pollutants in water using methods such as chemical reduction, UV oxidation, and others. He also designed water treatment specifically for industrial wastewater from printing and dyeing. Shenzhen is one of the world’s fastest growing cities and a major industrial centre with intense manufacturing. As a result, industrial wastewater is an important issue in the southern Chinese city.

Dr Minghua ZHOU
China
PhD in Environmental Engineering
Current position: Professor at College of Environmental Science and Engineering at Nankai University, China

Research focus: water and environmental engineering

Minghua studies methods to mineralise organic pollutants by advanced oxidation processes such as photocatalysis, ozonation, wet air oxidation, and electrochemical oxidation. These methods can break down the organic pollutants in wastewater into biodegradable ones or even further to a level where all that is left are water and carbon dioxide. These technologies are very efficient and environmentally sound.

The other area in which the Chinese researcher works is the recovery and reuse of wastewater using microbial fuel cells, for example, to generate power, which can then be potentially used to partially power the operation of wastewater treatment facilities. It combines disposal with a sustainable way of reducing energy costs.