

October 2022

ISUS Newsletter

International School of Urban Sciences, University of Seoul

What's inside?

<Graduation and Qualification Exam>

GC and SUD students participated in both graduation and qualification exams on October 14th at the Law School Building. ISUS requires students to pass both graduation and qualification exam to be able to graduate. All Master's degree candidates must pass the 2 or 3 subjects until graduation.

<Interview>

For October's interview, let us read about Sylvester Chisika NGOME (MGLEP 3), who is the assistant project manager at the Kenya Forest Service headquarters. He shared his experiences, and how the ISUS program has affected his career.

<2022 ISUS Field Trip >

The ISUS faculty, staff, and students enjoyed a fun-filled day of sightseeing and hiking along the trails of the Namsan last September 23, 2023. The hiking activity, organized by the ISUS staff, was based on the Namsan Mountain trail.

<Urban Infra Forum through offline & online>

From October, Urban Infra Forum will be held simultaneously offline & online. Students based at UOS are required to attend offline class directly. Online Zoom class is for the Alumni of ISUS.

Newsletter Interview Article: MGLEP Alumnus, Sylvester Chisika NGOME

ISUS presents a special series of interviews to share stories of ISUS members. For October's interview, let us read about Sylvester Chisika NGOME (MGLEP 3), who is the assistant project manager at the Kenya Forest Service headquarters. He shared his experiences, and how the ISUS program has affected his career.



Q1. Please introduce yourself.

Sylvester Ngome: My name is Sylvester Chisika Ngome. I am a Conservator of Forests with a keen interest in influencing socioeconomic and environmental development policies for human well-being. I am an Alumnus of ISUS, in particular MGLEP Cohort 3. I am currently based in Nairobi where I work for Kenya Forest Service. In my current position as a Project Officer with the National Tree Planting Campaign Project, my recent challenge has been how to participate effectively in steering the implementation of the National Strategy for Achieving and Maintaining 30% tree cover in Kenya by the year 2050. Through project activities, I have actively participated in introducing a number

of monitoring systems, including the online tree planting and seedlings voluntary online registration of private tree nurseries. These systems are currently in use in 47 counties across Kenya and have enhanced reliability as well as improved timely reporting on project success besides cutting huge administrative costs.

Q2. Please introduce Kenya Forest Service.

Sylvester Ngome: Kenya Forest Service (KFS) is a state corporation established under the 2016 Forest Conservation and Management Act, to conserve, and enhance sustainable development, management, and utilization of the country's forest resources for the equitable benefit of present and future generations. The National Tree Planting Campaign Project (NTPC) is in the Department of Drylands and Private Forestry Development Coordination in the Forest Conservation and Management Directorate.

Q3. What is the vision of the Kenya Forest Service?

Sylvester Ngome: The vision of KFS is to be an internationally recognized organization for excellence in knowledge-based sustainable forest resources management and conservation.



Q4. What is the most memorable project you have participated in and why?

Sylvester Ngome : Participating in the implementation of the NTPC Project has been the most exhilarating experience for me. The most memorable intervention of this project has been the "adopt-a-forest" initiative which is an innovative way of enhancing tree planting across the country. The initiative entails the adoption of a portion of a forest by both local and international partners and collaborators for rehabilitation, protection, and management for a period of 3 to 5 years. It is quite memorable because it has enabled Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to achieve the 10% tree cover target set by the 2010 constitution and bridging the KFS operational funding gap. Amongst the notable international partners who have expressed interest in the initiative include the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

Q5. What is the current project and what is its objective?

Sylvester Ngome: The NTPC project exists to hasten the achievement of the Presidential Directives of May 2018 on enhancing and achieving 30% tree cover by 2050. The project is implemented through a number of environmental and socio-economic interventions targeting increased tree-planting activities on private, community, and public lands.

Q6. What do you think about the most important issues in your field?

Sylvester Ngome: The twenty-first century threats to our environment, especially the triple global threats, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and air pollution are increasingly putting human populations on the brink of the precipice. As such, there has been a call to all earth governments by environmental consciousness pressure groups to either accept our collective suicide through inaction or scale up collective action against these existential threats.

Similarly, in Kenya, following the unprecedented climate change phenomena witnessed in the recent past through cyclic droughts, floods, landslides, and rising temperatures in the country, there have been efforts to promote

environmental sustainability for sustainable development. For instance, in 2018, His Excellency the President made a local and global commitment that Kenya will achieve and surpass the constitutional requirement of a minimum 10% national tree cover by 2022 which has now been revised to 30% by 2050.

However, it is my considered opinion that transforming these local and global environmental policies, goals, and commitments into actionable activities on the ground with long-lasting positive impacts on humanity requires a unique skill set and training amongst environmental stakeholders. Training and capacity building will provide actors with basic information about a variety of environmental issues, concepts, debates, and events and an in-depth analysis of the principles of sustainable development and sustainability. The MGLEP program is tailored to deliver these professional capacity requirements for sustainable development.



Q7. How the experience in ISUS helps you when you're working?

Sylvester Ngome: The skills, knowledge, and abilities acquired from studies and experiences at ISUS have always come in handy when undertaking my routine assignments. Immediately after I went back to Kenya after graduation, I was redeployed from a field-based office to the Kenya Forest Service headquarters and charged with the role of assisting the Project Manager and implementing the NTPC Project. Here, the analytical thinking, time consciousness, emotional intelligence, communication, collegiality, and evidence-based skills gained from ISUS study modules such as Seminar on Public Investment and Management, Seminar on Environmental Policy, academic writing, and decision support tools such as GIS are applied on a daily basis when preparing project monitoring and evaluation reports or representing the Project Manager in breakfast meetings or stakeholder meetings.

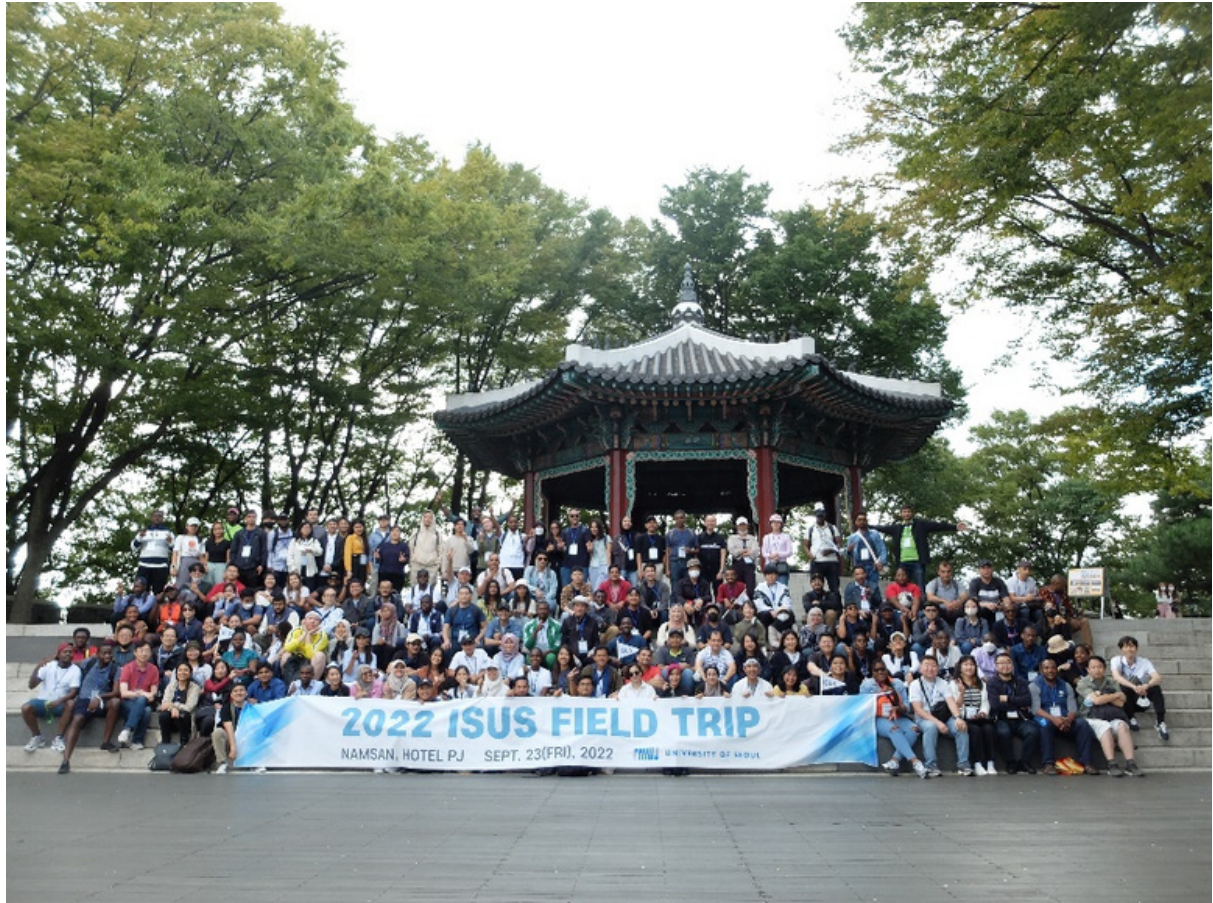
The most profound impact on my career to date is the research skills that were acquired from Thesis Seminar and Thesis writing. Due to research adeptness gained from ISUS I was appointed to participate in writing the National Forest Resource Assessment Report of 2021 by our CEO also called the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF). This report was used as the basis for declaring a new tree cover target of 30% by 2050 by the President of Kenya in 2022. To date, my research and collegiality skills have enabled me to write up to ten (10) scientific research articles in collaboration with Professor Chunho Yeom. I will always hold him in high regard because he showed me how to look at myself in the mirror to see greatness and then the untapped contribution to humanity.

To this end, ISUS has molded me to become an environmental sustainability analyst prescribing much-needed professional and technical advice towards sustainable development. I have never regretted; the future looks bright!

Q8. Do you have any other words to share with ISUS students?

Sylvester Ngome: Dear ISUS students, you have a rare opportunity to study at a prestigious world-class university. You now have the chance to acquire and exercise the values and exploit all the important professional networks needed for you to demonstrate your contribution to humanity. Let every moment count. Enjoy your daily life experiences in Korea. Finally, remember; effort is good but knowing where to put it is what makes the difference!

2022 ISUS Field Trip



The ISUS faculty, staff, and students enjoyed a fun-filled day of sightseeing and hiking along the trails of the Namsan last September 23, 2023. The hiking activity, organized by the ISUS staff, was based on the Namsan Mountain trail. The first part of the trail runs from Jangchungdan Park through the National Theater of Korea to Namsan Tower. It takes almost two and a half hours. Along the way, participants took delight in the sceneries brought by the natural landscape of Namsan Mountain, as well as the friendship amongst ISUS members.



After hiking, ISUS moved to Hotel PJ for dinner. The dinner party's MCs were Mr. Changbeom KWAK (GC) and Karla Mandujano (MGLEP). Two hosts elaborately led introduction sessions to welcome new ISUS members and to make each other more familiar from faculty and staff to students. All could enjoy a good dinner buffet and talk sitting around the table. The dinner party presented ISUS members with an immemorable night.



MIPD 5 Entrance Ceremony



On September 7, 2022, MIPD 5 entrance ceremony took place.

The ceremony started with congratulatory remarks from Dr. Hyeon Park, dean of ISUS. While congratulatory remarks were given by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT), and the International Contractors Association of Korea (ICAK). Later, Andres CAVERO, the representative of the MIPD 5, gave a speech to show his gratitude and his best disposition for participating in the MIPD program.

MIPD 4 students also participated and congratulated MIPD 5 students on their admission.

We sincerely congratulate you on becoming a MIPD student.
We hope students learn a lot and make pleasant memories during their journey.

ISUS 74th Urban Infra Forum



The ISUS 74th Urban Infra Forum (UIF), marked the first UIF of the 2022 Fall Semester, it was held on Thursday, September 8th, from 06:00 to 7:00 PM as a type of webinar via Zoom. This edition's topic was "AI: The past, Present, and Future", delivered by Wonki MIN currently Ambassador for Science, Technology & Innovation (MOFA).

Through the 74th UIF, participants were granted the valuable opportunity to listen to "The progress of AI technology, its positive and negative impacts on our society and its future prospects."

Home Deus: Progress of AI

AI HAS A LONG HISTORY OF BEING "THE NEXT BIG THING" ...



Timeline of AI Development

- 1950s-1960s: First AI boom - the age of reasoning, prototype AI developed
- 1970s: AI winter I
- 1980s-1990s: Second AI boom: the age of Knowledge representation (appearance of expert systems capable of reproducing human decision-making)
- 1990s: AI winter II
- 1997: Deep Blue beats Gary Kasparov
- 2006: University of Toronto develops Deep Learning
- 2011: IBM's Watson won Jeopardy
- 2016: Go software based on Deep Learning beats world's champions

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UIF is a discussion forum on Infrastructure, Sustainable Urban Development, Construction, Environment, or related issues with invited speakers. Participants are mainly ISUS members who consist of Foreign Public Officials and Domestic Practitioners with a combination of their expertise, the forum has served as a platform for international networking and mutual learning.

You can find the lecture materials of UIF on the website below.

http://isus.uos.ac.kr/freeTC/list.do?list_id=50018C7

ISUS homepage > community > Urban Infra Forum

UOS Campus in October



Autumn is a second spring when
every leaf is a flower.

-Albert Camus-



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