UNU-INWEH

The 'Water and Climate Dialogue Series'

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY
UNU-INWEH
Institute for Water, Environment and Health

McMaster Centre for Climate Change

McMaster University

A joint seminar series by UNU-INWEH, The School of Geography & Earth Sciences (SGES), McMaster Centre for Climate Change - McMaster University

UNU-INWEH Internship Seminar

19 Dec 2017

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm
UNU-INWEH boardroom

12:00 pm   Opening words- Nidhi Nagabhatla – Internship Coordinator

12:15 pm   First Presentation: Mr George Atim (15 minutes)

Mapping global vulnerability to water-related health risks: case of schistosomiasis

Abstract: Water-related health risks such as cholera, dengue, and schistosomiasis account for about 3million deaths annually, and are a threat to population wellbeing in most parts of the world. While mainly transmitted through exposure to contaminated water or vectors (such as mosquitoes, snails), lack of safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), uncontrolled urbanization, and rapid global environmental changes are further increasing the risk of infection. As global institutions implement preventative measures to reduce disease burden, interventions must respond to the needs of those who bear (or will bear) the greatest impact. This calls for enhancing understanding of disease determinants and dynamics, and their differential distribution. This presentation will highlight the utility of the Water Associated Disease Index (WADI), an innovative mapping tool in the context of UNU-INWEH activities to provide insights of global vulnerability to schistosomiasis. It will also draw attention to the key exposure, susceptibility and adaptive capacity factors that interact to shape schistosomiasis risk, and identify existing data sources critical to mapping out potential disease hotspots. In the face of limited resources, WADI provides an easily accessible, practical and cost-effective tool to visualize areas of vulnerability for schistosomiasis in order to inform public health policy and appropriate resource allocation.

About the speaker: George is an intern at UNU-INWEH since October 2017. He joined to gain knowledge and practical working experience on managing water-related health risks. His interests also include the rise of chronic diseases and migration as a strategy out of poverty in LMICs

12:30 pm   Second Presentation: Ms Gabriela Jimenez (15 minutes)

Fog-water harvesting as unconventional resource to alleviate water scarcity

Abstract: Fog-water harvesting emerges as an existent but underexplored unconventional water resource. This technology has been studied and implemented since 20th century in areas where fog events are frequent; however only few projects are currently operational. The fog collection systems are low-cost and low-maintenance; but in order to be sustainable over time, they usually require intensive community engagement, multi-stakeholders' involvement and external subsides for start-up and maintenance costs. The fog harvesting projects besides providing safe water access to the communities, they also offer multiple benefits in the form of improving health, fostering community development, enhancing livelihood conditions and increasing opportunities for gender equality, education and capacity building. However, limited policy framework and lack of institutional support challenge the expansion of this unconventional water resource. By addressing these challenges, fog-water harvesting systems could contribute to the 2030 agenda, specifically in the achievement of SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 5 (Gender Equality), 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). The work is a part of the UNU initiative: Uncover Resources.

About the speaker: Gabriela Jimenez, from Venezuela holds a B.S degree in Chemical Engineering. She recently completed a Master's degree in Development Practice from University of Winnipeg, Canada, with focus on Indigenous Development. She is also engaged with Evaluation and Monitoring Assessment for Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange at First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba.

12:45 pm   Third Presentation: Mr Gulliluame Baggio (15 minutes)

Adapting the SDG Policy Support System to national contexts - A tale of many countries

Abstract: National policy-makers have the challenge of putting Sustainable Development Goal 6 into action, and of measuring and reporting on their policy and implementation progress. As such, producing reliable data is an essential component of the 2030 Agenda. Indeed, fit-for-policy water-related data will allow a more comprehensive and integrated evidence-based policy, and a more effective and informed decision-making around water-related issues, which might lead us to a path towards a better understanding of SDG progress. The UNU-INWEH and partners have developed the SDG Policy Support System (SDG PSS) to allow governments to measure and report on the advancement of six critical policy components at indicator-level for the SDG 6. The evidence base will comprise all evidence that is critically needed to define policy on the water-related issues as defined by the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. The SDG-PSS is now undergoing trial in five countries: Republic of Korea, Costa Rica, Tunisia, Pakistan and Ghana. These countries have been providing critical and valuable insights on how the tool might be adapted to different national contexts.

Personal description: Guillaume Baggio holds a B.Eng. degree in Mechanical Engineering from Polytechnique de Montréal, Canada. Among his latest accomplishments, he joined a group of young professionals in a one-year project studying innovative sectors in Canada, Finland, and Baltic states. He's highly interested in investigating how to assure sustainability and wellbeing under different socio-economic scenarios. Guillaume spent the last six months working under the supervision of Dr Lisa Guppy and Ms Praem Mehta. His main responsibility was to assist in the development of the SDG Policy Support System.

1:00-1:20 pm   Open Discussion and Q/A's

1:20-1:30 pm   Closing Remarks by the Director