GlobalSeaweedSTAR Travel Fund

Completion Report

Awardee Details

Grant reference ID	GSS/TF/065
Full name/title	Loyiso Dunga
Position held	Master's student
Organisation	University of Cape Town

Details of Travel Activity

Name of activity	Daniel Jouvance-SU International School in Marine Biology
Date held	January 26th – February 1st, 2020
Personal contribution	Oral presentation

Report on Travel Activity

Objective 1: to learn more and acquire first-hand training from experts in marine biology and seaweeds.
Objective 2: to network with fellow young colleagues in the marine field and gain more understanding of burning questions related to marine ecosystem services.

This international summer school was an incredible opportunity, rich in knowledge and lessons, thanks to the holistic approach it took and having diverse experts. My scope was broadened beyond the technical mapping work that I had done for South African kelp forests. Key highlights from the lessons for me include

potentials from aquaculture, cultivation, genetics, and applications of chemical compounds. Amongst these are the examples from Tanzania seaweed harvesting for subsistence and commercial use.

Further lessons were on large marine ecosystems and delved into processes that govern the Benguela system. An interesting phenomenon discussed was the effects of the nutrients rich and cold water brought about by the Benguela Current associated with high productivity west of Africa compared to the east which is characterized by higher diversity and less productivity of seaweed species.

It was a delight to learn of the number of other initiatives that are in place along with GlobalseaweedsSTAR to help support furthering research on seaweeds.

Despite the brought scope and topics covered, I have drawn the following conclusion from this international school: firstly, the is a huge research scope in micro and macroalgae, secondly, seaweeds have important opportunities for economic development and human capital and thirdly, seaweeds are among the few natural solutions we have for combating climate change through carbon sequestration.