

# JEMES ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



March 2014, inaugural edition

## SAVE THE DATE!

The 2014 JEMES CiSu spring meeting will be held in Hamburg May 8-9.

There will be an Alumni dinner on Friday May 9<sup>th</sup>.

Save the date!



## WELCOME TO THE JEMES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

It is with great pleasure that I introduce to you the official JEMES Alumni Association. The alumni association will combine both the old JEMES and the new JEMES CiSu programmes. The goal of our association is to assure contact among graduates and current students and thus create a professional platform for networking and for sharing information.

If you are not a member of the LinkedIn group JEMES (CiSu) Alumni Association, please send me an email at [alumni.jemes.icta@uab.cat](mailto:alumni.jemes.icta@uab.cat). This platform has been created to share news, jobs, events such as conferences, documents and articles pertinent to our area of study. You are all encouraged to participate and post relevant Alumni-related information. I hope this association will grow and become a useful network which will help us to have a real impact in our common efforts towards making our planet more sustainable.

The Alumni Association will send out an annual newsletter containing news and updates of past and current JEMES students and the program. This is the very first edition. I hope you enjoy it.

Wim Debucquoy  
JEMES alumni coordinator  
JEMES CiSu student 2013-2015



Coventry City Council watercolour, Flickr Creative Commons



Dear readers,

In this first JEMES Alumni newsletter column it seems appropriate for me to focus on transitions. Currently, there are quite a few going on, one of the better ones – for a Dane, at least – the transition from Winter to Spring.

In the JEMES family, the transition from the first edition of the joint programme – JEMES - to JEMES CiSu (Cities & Sustainability) is also almost realised. The final students in our first Erasmus Mundus joint master's programme are now graduating, and in a few months we will see the first cohort of graduates from the new programme.

It's been quite a journey so far. Starting in 2005 when the consortium of universities was established and led by Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH). A successful scholarship application for the joint master in environmental studies realised the first inception and edition of

students in 2007. In 2009, the second phase of Erasmus Mundus began and we with it. Over the years, almost 150 students have graduated from JEMES. We hope to see as many – or more - in the coming years as well.

In 2011, the consortium decided to extend their collaboration beyond the JEMES programme and expand the consortium to also include overseas universities. The focus of the new programme was to be Cities and Sustainability, and in 2012 the first students started in this novel joint master's programme, now led by Aalborg University (AAU).

In the coming years, we will gradually see an expansion of the consortium from its current eight universities – four in Europe and four overseas in the US, Australia and China – to perhaps 10 to 15 partners in total, covering, hopefully, all continents. At the core, of course, are still Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), University of Aveiro (UA), Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH), and Aalborg University (AAU) who together guarantee excellence and high quality learning in stimulating and facilitating environments.

Many of you are probably working in or leading organisations where mutual benefit in closer collaboration between us is possible. We would like to realise this and in the coming months, a

further development in the JEMES CiSu programme is to include more overseas universities, research institutions, knowledge partners and practitioners.

It is a pleasure for me to be able to extend now this invitation to be part of the next transition of the JEMES family. A transition in which you, the JEMES Alumni, together with us, the JEMES universities, can play a vital role in providing learning opportunities to more students around the world. A transition in which you and your organisation can become an associated partner and provide learning and placement opportunities for focused studies and research, and through funding and grants can pave the way for entry to the programme for financially disadvantaged but highly qualified applicants.

I hope you would like to join us in this transition, welcome your feedback and ideas and look forward to enlarged engagement and interaction in the coming years.

Martin Lehmann

Associate Professor, Programme  
Director, JEMES CiSu

Department of Development &  
Planning

Aalborg University



# From JEMES to JEMES CiSu



## A NEW JEMES

Building on the success of the original JEMES programme, the 4 partner universities have reformed the Erasmus Mundus programme. The new Joint European Master in Environmental Studies: Cities and

Sustainability (JEMES CiSu) follows the worldwide trend towards rapidly growing metropolises, which requires an increased focus on environmental and climate issues in cities and towns. The JEMES CiSu programme runs since 2012 and has currently 40 students enrolled. In order to ensure increased inter-disciplinarily and a broader global scope, the consortium of European universities has linked up with universities in Australia, China and the United States of America, thereby bringing together strong expertise that encompasses the needs and opportunities in several continents and in developing as well as in industrialised countries. These academic collaborations include Beijing University of Technology, the

University of New South Wales, Beijing Normal University and Columbia University in the city of New York. JEMES CiSu students have the opportunity to go for a 3-month period to one of these partner universities to work on a research project. Like the old JEMES programme, the new programme is divided in two sub-themes: Sustainability Management & Planning (with AAU, and UAB) and Sustainable Technologies & Processes (with TUHH, and UA) but now has one overarching theme: **Cities & Sustainability**. The JEMES Alumni Association will connect both JEMES and JEMES CiSu students.



*Fall meeting 2013 in Barcelona with first year JEMES CiSu students and coordinators*



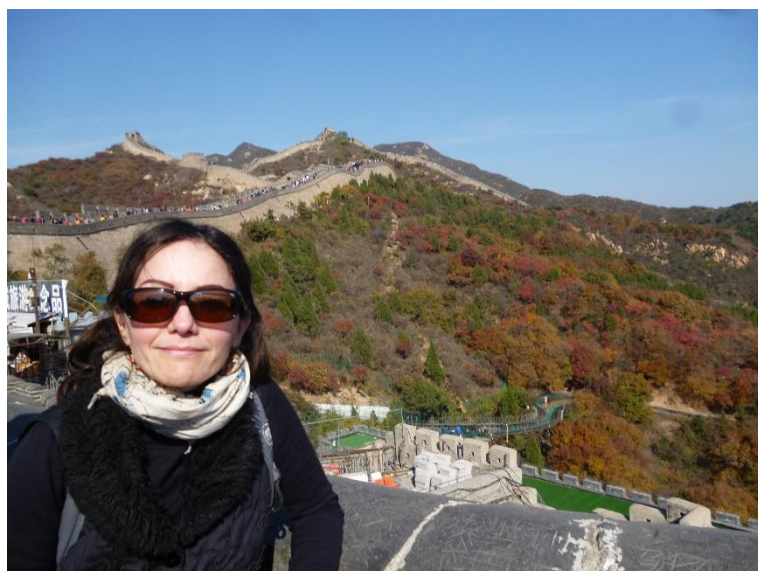


*Group of JEMES CiSu students in Sydney*

One of the students who went to BNU, Beijing is Lydia Botero. She did research on the methodology of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) where she compared the Chinese procedures for SEA with the ones of her own country, Columbia. Living in Beijing was quite a challenge as there was a big language barrier and some initial cultural shock to overcome. She lived with 3 other JEMES students in a typical Chinese neighbourhood with almost no foreigners. Lydia says she gained a lot of life experience in her 3-month stay in Beijing and it made her more aware of the complex relationship between economic growth, environmental protection, pollution and quality of life. It made her realise how big the challenges are in overcoming the huge environmental problems related to the fast development of countries like China. We asked her for some final advice when planning to go to Beijing: “take a course in crossing the street! There are more cars in Beijing than people. Well.. that’s actually not true, but that’s the feeling you get when walking around. Thanks for the tip, Lydia!

## PROJECT MOBILITIES

As part of the new JEMES CiSu programme, 7 students went to the University of New South Wales (UNSW, Sydney) where they worked on different research projects, ranging from Material Flow Analysis of Mercury to groundwater modelling for fluvial aquifers or heat wave adaptation in vulnerable communities in Sydney. The Beijing Normal University (BNU) hosted 4 students, who worked on strategic environmental assessments, membrane technology research or urban energy transition analysis. 3 students went to Columbia University (CU, New York) and worked on green roof farms and farming practices or climate mitigation and adaptation projects.



*Lydia Botero at the Great Wall of China*



*Jara Febrer at the Franz Joseph glacier in New-Zealand*

Jara Febrer is one of the students who went to UNSW, Sydney, where she worked in the school of Civil and Environmental Engineering on the project “Material Flow Analysis of Mercury in the Trade-related Flows between Australia and the European Union in the year 2010”. By building an inventory of mercury containing products and tracking its trade volumes, she was able to determine where most of the mercury traded was located and its final destiny. Outside her work she travelled a lot, exploring the beautiful nature of Australia and New-Zealand. Her visit to the Franz Joseph glacier in New-Zealand is one of her favourites. Another highlight without any doubt was swimming with a big turtle for 20 min in the Great Barrier reef according to Jara.

# Alumni in the spotlight

What happens to people who graduate from the JEMES programme? Where do they end up? And how did JEMES influence their (professional) life? We try to find out by putting a couple of alumni in the spotlight every newsletter. The first 2 ones are Ruben Beltran Palafox from Mexico and Johannes Langemeyer from Germany. Nice to meet you!



*Ruben Beltran Palafox, a JEMES graduate*

Hola. I am Ruben Beltran Palafox, from Mexico. I studied Industrial and Systemic Engineering at Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico. Then I studied master's degree in business management. I have worked for Charles de Gaulle Airports in Paris as joint venture manager and in the International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease as

capacity building manager before starting in the JEMES programme.

**Q: How did you experience the JEMES programme?**

A: The JEMES programme played a key role in understanding what I wanted to do professionally. Although I was inclined to study environmental science, meeting people from around the world and experiencing the demanding curricula of the programme provided me with a richer picture. I learned that I was capable to do what I wanted without quitting who I was or what I have

done before. This means that the JEMES programme, besides the adventure and challenge it represented, also helped me out figuring ways to do what I like while getting the chance to work in interesting places and countries. A win-win situation, no question about that, since I grew as a professional, but also personally, I met incredible people which are still very cherished friends.

**Q: What are you currently doing?**

A: I am working at the Embassy of Mexico in Egypt, but coordinating projects also as non-resident in Sudan, Syria and Jordan. Although my core activities are related to logistics, personnel management and general administration, I am also in charge of different development and sustainability projects local international partners such as UNIDO, UN-Women, JICA, Ford Foundation, UNDP and, of course, the Egyptian Government.

**Q: How did the JEMES programme help you to get where you are today?**

A: First of all, after a long process that included written and oral tests of all sorts, I am sure the international profile boosted by the JEMES programme helped me getting the job. At my arrival, I thought I would be working only in the management of the Embassy, but my supervisors knew about my previous studies and felt confident delegating me these projects. So, not trying to oversell, I am really sure that studying the JEMES programme gave me this opportunity, of not only coordinating projects or assisting to meetings but also being able to take control of the cooperation between Mexico and our partners elsewhere.



# Alumni in the spotlight



*Johannes Langemeyer interviewing an urban gardener (Photo: Marta Camps-Calvet)*

Hello. My name is Johannes Langemeyer. I am born in 1982 and originally from the country-side in North-West Germany. I started to 'professionalize' interests in environmental issues - which I have since my youth - while studying geography at the Humboldt University in Berlin. These studies also gave me the chance to complete various periods of volunteer work, studies and research in Latin America and Spain. With a

short stop-over in an environmental consultancy, my love for Latin languages, culture and people brought me to Barcelona.

**Q: How did you experience the JEMES programme?**

A: After arriving to Barcelona the JEMES programme provided a great opportunity to meet people with similar interests and to further deepen my knowledge in environmental issues.

When starting JEMES I was especially interested in economic and policy aspects of the environment – feeling these were crucial for implementing sustainability goals. The JEMES programme confirmed these feeling and opened a large new field of knowledge to me - ecological economics.

**Q: What are you currently doing and how did the JEMES programme help you to get where you are today?**

A: The PhD I am now doing at ICTA/UAB deals with the assessment of ecosystem services in urban environments. It is actually a direct continuation of my JEMES-thesis and builds upon theories and methods taught in the JEMES programme. For example, I use monetary and non-monetary approaches to value environmental goods and services and apply multi-criteria evaluation. But I also learned important soft-skills – being forced to continuously reading scientific papers and weekly presentations is sometimes annoying during the courses but helps a lot afterwards.

## Master theses 2013 Autonomous University of Barcelona

Name	Thesis title
Christina Licht	Global Substance Flow Analysis of Gallium, Germanium and Indium 2011: Quantification of Extraction, Uses and Dissipative Losses within their Anthropogenic Cycles
Ana Novkovic	Environmental Communication in Discourse and Practice: A Case Study in the Serbian city of Novi Sad
David Xiuollin Martinez Aceves	Domestic Rainwater Harvesting in Urban Areas: Water Saving Potential, Economic Feasibility and Environmental Impact Assessment from an LCA Perspective
Alfredo Santos Zea	Characterization of the Performance of a Full-scale Biotrickling Filter System for the Treatment of Odorous Emissions
Inez Silvy Yoanita Filtri	An Assessment of Stakeholder Participation in Companies' Environmental Performance Rating: The Case of Indonesia's PROPER program
Ee Zin Ong	Effects of Ocean Acidification and Warming on the Survivorship, Growth and Physiology of <i>Cotylorhiza tuberculata</i>

# Company partnerships

## ONDABLUE

The Fundación Ondablue was founded by the largest Spanish Self-Storage company: Bluespace. The foundation's main goal is to protect and improve the environment through the education of young children. The main focus is on WATER and to help children understand the scarcity of this resource and the need for respecting it.

Ondablue has a team of educators in both Barcelona and Madrid. The team travels to the schools in and around the cities with their own material to give out workshops. During the workshops, the children are highly involved in making and understanding the water cycle and how it is affected by different human interactions such as deforestation and contamination. In this part, each child is assigned a role in the water cycle (river, cloud, industry etc..) and is asked to form a circle. Together, the children and the educator will make the children move around until the cycle is completed, giving them a clear understanding of how each element is affected by the rest.

During the past semester, Helene from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the JEMES CiSu program in Barcelona has been working with Ondablue, where she has helped with the social media strategy and translating the workshops into English with the goal of being able to conduct the workshops in the many international schools in both Barcelona and Madrid.



*Ondablue workshop in local schools in Barcelona and Madrid*

## Contact Us

### JEMES Alumni Association

alumni.jemes.icta@uab.cat

and don't forget to join our LinkedIn Alumni group on

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/JEMES-CiSu-Alumni-Association-3502999/about>

## NEW WEBSITE

With the start of the JEMES CiSu programme, our website has also been updated. Check it out at [jemes-cisu.eu](http://jemes-cisu.eu) !

## INVITE OTHER ALUMNI

So far more than 65 graduates have registered for our new Alumni Association. Are you still in touch with other alumni? We're still trying to reach as many alumni as possible so please share and tell them about the existence of this new Alumni association! Alumni can contact [alumni.jemes.icta@uab.cat](mailto:alumni.jemes.icta@uab.cat) to register (completely free) and receive an invitation to our LinkedIn group.

## CALL TO ALUMNI

Finally, we'd also like to call out to Alumni to consider if they have interesting topics for project work, internships and/or thesis work. Let us know in case you want to work with JEMES students!