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Green careers guide

Mohammed Bakkali
France

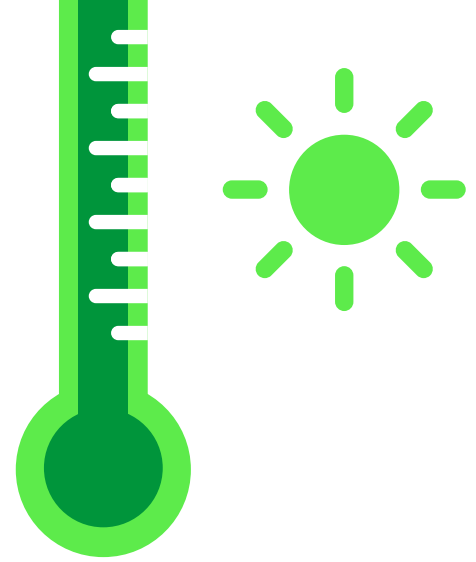


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What did you study?

I pursued an environmental design and engineering MPhil – PhD program at the Bartlett School of Environment, Energy and Resources in UCL, UK which was funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). In my research, I focused to learn through algorithms and physics how current and future constructions and land use decisions will affect climate change specifically in local areas, i.e. urban local climates. Therefore, I had the chance to be involved with different teams of scientists in software development and testing designed for this purpose in countries like the UK, Japan and Germany.

What inspired you to study your subject at university and to work in the green industries?

Prior to getting trained in such area of science and engineering, I was leading a career as an Architect and Urban Designer in France. We used to deliver consulting on land use and building density to different decision makers such as Mayors and so on so forth. We used to design diverse building programs ranging from housing to public facilities without being completely aware of their carbon footprints and energy efficiency. I was wondering if that was the right process to design the built environment. I was wondering what am I supposed to do to be able to contribute in designing more sustainable and resilient communities with regards to a changing climate and environment. These changes made our design process uncertain. This was the main inspiration to pursue such a subject and to be within the green industry.

Why does climate change matter?

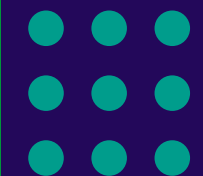
Climate change is triggered by human civilization, mainly in the last century through a growing population that lives in cities with increasing activities including the industry and a shift in land use from natural spaces and agriculture into artificial infrastructure and superstructure. The shift in land use is responsible for climate change because the surface of cities stresses the atmosphere immediately above called the atmospheric boundary layer or the urban boundary layer. Climate change brought so many uncertainties in terms of how weather, the environment, biodiversity and our civilization will evolve. Definitely, a balance needs to be re-established vis-à-vis the environment.

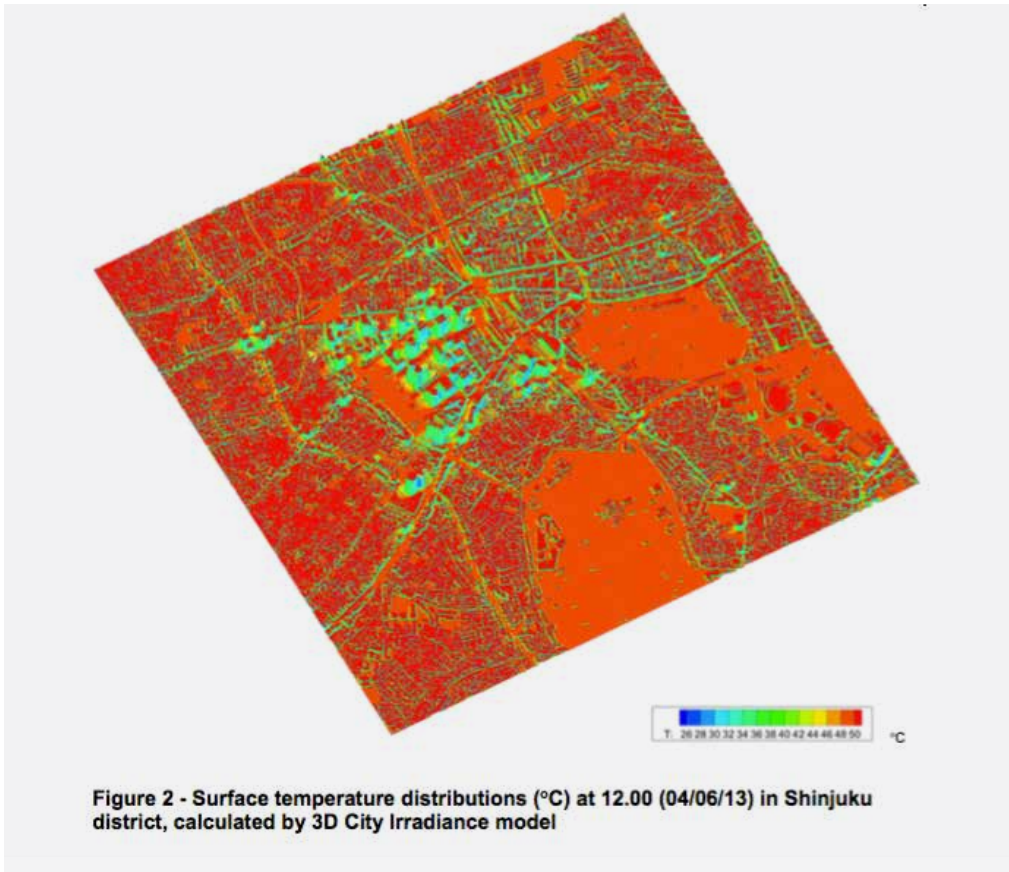
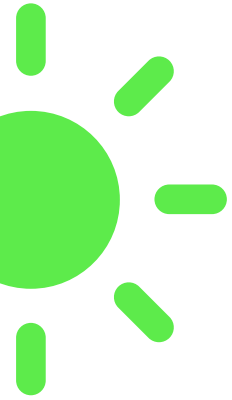
How did your studies help you get into the career you're in today?

Instead working barely with conventional design habits, nowadays I work with environmentally friendly design approaches that try to reconcile our economical and social development with the environment.

What other experiences and support have you had along the way?

I am a member of the International Association of Urban Climate and I do review scientific articles in the Journal of Urban Climate. I also benefitted from funds such as the research program on climate change adaptation in Japan.





What do you do now – what does your role involve?

Today, I run a business in London called Greenwish Sustainable Design and Consulting Ltd and I do train Architects and Engineers at the university in both environmental design strategies and environmental engineering.

What exciting projects have you been involved in?

I enjoy work with my students in my design studios designing buildings and masterplanning with a strong environmental awareness. We published so many works among which the impact of urbanisation on heat islands and temperatures.

Do you have any tips for people looking to pursue a career in your sector?

So many fields are of interest nowadays, from circular economy, social sciences to environmental sustainability. Strong awareness, motivation, determination, team work, communication skills and cross disciplinary collaboration are vital.

