

2020, Geography, Jesus College

The pieces of the puzzle have long been there, but it wasn't until I put them all together that I realised geography is what I would like to focus on for the coming years. The pieces I brought together were my devotion to fight climate change, my fascination for the complex material composition of Earth, and the way in which these physical conditions affect international development, especially that of lower-income countries. I prefer not to separate the subject into physical and human geography because I believe these disciplines together provide the tools with which the most challenging and exciting questions can be answered. I would like to determine how we could create a thriving ecosystem in the Arab Desert once again and how many trees it would take to reverse climate change using only afforestation while maintaining today's greenhouse gas emissions. The latter question is one I've been working on: Hungarians would need 2.8 billion trees to compensate for 5,8 tonnes of CO₂ emitted per year...

Living as a child in Bamako, Africa's fastest growing city in 2006, I witnessed the marks of the rapidly changing African continent daily: from droughts, water shortages and desertification, to pollution, overpopulation and ethnic conflicts. In Mali, a country which has seen its average yearly precipitation plummet by 30% in recent decades, I realized how unfairly climate change impacts those that are the least responsible for it. Subsequent readings, including publications by OECD's Sahel and West Africa Club have convinced me that alongside the effect of climate change, low adaptive capacities and unsustainable agricultural practices such as overgrazing and over-cultivation also contribute to the extreme vulnerability of Africa. To know more about how these challenges can be addressed, I read the policy recommendations of the European Commission related to this issue and realised how important land use management systems like agroforestry can be in the protection of depleted soils from erosion.

After leaving Mali and returning to Hungary, I co-founded the charity organization "Close to Africa". Last year I was part of a team who went to Mali to install tap water and basic sanitation facilities in a slum in Bamako. Alongside projects in Africa, I also give lectures in Hungary at schools or Africa-related events aiming to raise awareness of the issues in the Sahel and to call upon people to act against climate change. I am also currently taking part in the Naturvation research project at the Central European University which aims at unlocking the potential of nature in cities through innovation. I help with the collection and structuring of data for the development of a database to map the use and impact of nature-based solutions (NBS) in 100 European cities. This database will later be used to create an NBS Assessment Framework using machine learning and augmented reality which can help governments with the deployment of green infrastructure.

In school I take advanced level maths and history and am independently studying geography at a higher level to prepare for the Matura exam and the national geography competition (OKTV). I also learn languages as another tool to better understand the world. I study French and German and have entered numerous competitions. At Milestone Institute, an advanced studies program for high school students, I attended modules in statistics, economics and academic writing, where my final paper addressed the topic of whether we have evolved beyond human nature. Here I

am also involved in the MUN Society and the Rowing Club, after having competed in rowing for three years, winning the national championship once and coming second twice. I plan to further improve in rowing during my university years. I firmly believe that I have found my calling in Geography and that the more critical, individual style of teaching at UK universities could provide the best academic background for my future in this field.