AIBS Fellowship Report

Bangladesh is recognized worldwide as one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of global warming and climate change. The economy of Bangladesh is mainly based on agriculture, with two thirds of the population engaged directly or indirectly on agricultural activities. The impacts of climate change such as extreme temperature, drought and salinity intrusion are creating massive difficulties for the farmers to cultivate their crops, thereby affecting country's economy. Temperature and Rainfall changes have already affected crop production in many parts of the country and the area of arable land has decreased to a great extent. The salinity intrusion in the coastal area is creating a serious implication for the coastal land that was traditionally used for rice production. In addition, rural people in the coastal area are suffering from fresh drinking water. All of these problems combindly increase the social conflict in the rural area. In this regards, the participation on the summer course on sustainable environmental management at UC Berkeley under AIBS fellowship broaden my knowledge to solve the complex cross-sectoral environmental problems. The course was well designed with a combination of multiple lectures (environmental policy, climate change, sustainable development, soil enrichment, energy system, wild life conservation, agroecology, gender issues, forestry, ecosystem etc.), field trips (Muir Woods, Point Reyes National Seashore, Slickers farm park and North Richmond farm, Salinas) and case study on different environmental issues (drought, fresh drinking water, salinity etc.). Participating the lectures and the field trip at Muir woods and Point Reyes National Seashore educated me how to preserve endangered trees and marine animals in a sustainable way to keep balance in ecosystem. Field trip at Salinas valley, the California's biggest agricultural site helped me to understand the sustainable agricultural practice and supply chain. The different food processing industries are located at this agricultural site and supply foods all through the USA through air-conditioned vehicles within very short period. By using these techniques, Americans are getting fresh food which is unlikely in Bangladesh. Field trip at North Richmond Farm was unique experience because it was a desert and most polluted area due to industrialization and researchers at UC Berkeley are applying biotechnological tools (using beneficial microbes) to fertile the land again. The Google tour was fascinating to understand about supply chain and corporate social responsibility to form carbon-neutral Silicon Valley. Moreover, this 3-week summer course helped me to increase my research potential, interpersonal skills, networking efficiency and project writing capacity. In conclusion, this training program provided me a unique opportunity to interact with UC Berkeley, as well as the global peers, gave access to new information and tools, and helped me to develop the types of leadership skills that translate knowledge into effective action. I hope and confident that I would be able to analyse and solve the complex environmental problems in Bangladesh due to climate change through the acquired knowledge from the programme in near future.