My Life and Sustainable Development

Aaron Holloway

I have since I was young desired to do one thing: Help people. But I desired to do that not in the typical micro sense of the word, helping a single individual or even small group of individuals with their problems, though my family is filled with those who have and are currently participating in such truly meaningful public service and I am well aware of its necessity. I have seen the heroism of those who have done such work first hand, and there is no greater advocate.

Instead, since I was young I have desired to help people in a macro sense. Designing and improving systems, laws, rules, policies, and regulations to resolve problems that stem from externalities such as crime, pollution, disease, trade, and war that plague every national and local community. It is to this end that I have worked diligently to gain at least a basic knowledge of all of these by studying history, civics, law, crime, defense, sustainable development, and science to various degrees of success, and that is why I inevitably went to college to earn a Bachelor's of Science in Political Science. I viewed it as the microcosm of all of these interests, and I have not been disappointed.

That is why when I had the opportunity to meet with the Ambassador from Kenya to the United Nations, Macharia Kamau, co-chair and one of the original members of the U.N Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), I leapt at the chance. Because I am the co-managing editor of the undergraduate journal on sustainable mountain development (SMD) "Youth and the Mountains," I had the honor to participate in a special meet and greet before the event took place.

During this event student leaders and faculty advisors of the UIMF (Utah International Mountain Forum), the coalition of student clubs here at Utah Valley University interested in mountain development and SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals), informed the UN official how they promoted mountain targets among SDGs during last four years and SMD in North America since 2007. Many gave short statements and presentations on what the student coalition has been doing on campus and the successes we have had, among other things. After these

presentations were completed, the ambassador gave his brief presentation and accepted questions from the audience.

Christian Jensen, UIMF President presents a gift to Ambassador Macharia Kamau

His presentation, and my exposure to SDG's and the student initiatives around sustainable mountain development has impressed upon me the need for international cooperation on issues such as pollution, flora and fauna conservation, and land and water management which are themselves their own areas of study. It was there that I realized, that while good faith actors such as the European Union, United States, and the United Kingdom among others, are doing their part to decrease their contribution to these negative externalities, and that there is a need for more nations to put forward efforts in good faith and make their own contributions.

While I personally hold reservations about global climate change's severity and its connection to human activity, and what more developed nations can do without damaging our economic growth, it is clear to me that nations of all stripes must work together to adapt and minimize its effects. Global pollution and human impact on the environment within local biospheres, and those biospheres effect on their neighbors, is an undisputed fact; a fact that now more nations are willing both to acknowledge and to do something about.

My personal vision for the future of sustainable mountain development, and sustainable development in general, revolves around intercommunity cooperation and investment in cleaner,

higher technological infrastructure. This is what the Open Working Group that the ambassador chaired has been working towards, and it is what I hope to one day participate in on the international stage.

Aaron Holloway, student editor of the "Youth and the Mountains" journal and member of UIMF