

Dear TIF

Following the ISRE-39 Conference, it is with the utmost gratitude that I write this report. The conference was well organised. I would like to show special appreciation to Ayçıl Yeşilirmak who made me comfortable and came up with workable solutions to the many questions I had pre and post conference. Thank you again to the TIF for the travel grant and believing in me to come to Turkey and present some of my results.

The conference venue was remarkable. From the accommodation, food, to all the extra activities available to us after conference days made the attendance worth it. The location of the conference was also great as it provided a beautiful space to network and interact with other earth observation professionals.

Regarding the conference itself, the sessions were carefully curated and planned out per topic. The diverse topics that presenters had showcased the different ways in which big data or earth observation is being used from human needs to SDGs. I learnt a lot from the sessions, especially from the plenary talks and the guests that were invited to speak. One particularly interesting talk for me was how SAR radar is being used for agricultural practices and the benefit of the people to combat hunger. I mostly understood that we need contextual solutions to contextual problems, especially in African countries. I learnt that the use of remote sensing to monitor and achieve SDGs is of vast importance and cannot be ruled out. Additionally, it is evident that there are advances that have been made in remote sensing applications, technology and platforms, and these are being used effectively towards the achievements of the SDGs. Furthermore, I learnt that not only can we use remote sensing to assess the quality of ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation, we can use remote sensing to assess these for policy implementation and progress in different ecosystem contexts. Overall, my take away message from the symposium was to utilise the tools in their finest forms, for people and our planet, for sustainable development.

As I am approaching my 3rd and final year PhD studies this fall, this conference has set the scene for me. My project aims to quantify habitat quality and sediment retention in a transboundary protected area using earth observation techniques. I have learnt of radar and how I can use this to assess and model erosion or sediment retention. I have learnt of other data options and opportunities that I can use to improve and upgrade my thesis. I have also learnt of various EO products that can help me in this regard. Attending the ISRSE-39 conference also opened me to possible post-doctoral opportunities from the European Space Agency like the African Research Fellowship. I look forward to exploring this soon.

Finally, I made connections with remarkable people. Both professionals and fellow students. I hope to learn and benefit from our interactions in the near future. It is my hope that in future, the ISRSE is sponsored by many big companies so that other students like me get the opportunity to attend and have fruitful experiences too.



