



Chinese white dolphin

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Young scientist selected by world forum to promote marine research

Due to the quality of his research around the impact of human activities on marine animals, a Northumbria University environmental scientist has been selected as a member of the Global Young Academy (GYA).

The GYA is an organisation of 200 diverse researchers across disciplines who are selected for five-year terms based on their scientific excellence and their commitment to using their research to make the world a better place.

Dr Edmond Sanganyado, a recently appointed academic in the University's Department of Applied Sciences, has published extensively on the impact of synthetic chemicals, particularly pharmaceuticals, on marine animals when they find their way into our oceans.

While an academic at Shantou University, in China, Dr Sanganyado looked specifically at how this kind of ocean pollution has contributed to the rapid decline of Chinese white dolphins; a species of which there are estimated to be only 2,000 left in the wild.

"I can apply what I have discovered through my studies of the Chinese white dolphins to many other species of marine life," said Dr Sanganyado. "It is predicted that we will lose a further 75% of the population of these dolphins by 2050 if we do not take real action on reducing overfishing, water pollution and heavy marine traffic, along with coastal development.

"This is often the case with a lot of marine life, so it is vital that we understand what we can do as a society to help prevent the decline of these animals. I am interested in understanding how the chemicals we use every day to improve our quality of life - from aspirin to caffeine - affect environmental processes essential for supporting life on Earth.

"I combine fundamentals of environmental chemistry and microbial ecology to reveal the history of these chemicals, that is, where, when, and how they entered the environment. Such knowledge is important for developing strategies for mitigating chemical pollution and addressing environmental justice concerns."

Dr Sanganyado was selected as a member of the Global Young Academy (GYA) for a number of compelling reasons. As well as his internationally acclaimed work on the impact of human activities on marine mammals, he has also been appointed an editorial board member to several reputable peer-reviewed journals such as *Communications Earth and Environment*, *BMC Chemistry*, and *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management*.

In 2021, he was elected as a Fellow of the Institution of Environmental Science in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the field of environmental science and sustainability.

He is also the president of Zimbabwe Young Academy of Sciences (ZimYAS). During his tenure, ZimYAS has been involved in training young scholars on research process and design, promoting conversation between young scholars and industry, government, and academic leaders, as well as inspiring a new generation of media practitioners that are comfortable with encouraging public discussion around science, technology, and innovation.

Members of the GYA are sought from young, independent scholars who combine the highest level of research excellence with a demonstrated passion for delivering impact.

It presently has members and alumni from 94 countries, who are passionate about the role of science in creating a better world.

Speaking about his recent selection, Dr Sanganyado said: “I am honoured to be selected to such a prestigious group of emerging leaders. A vibrant community of emerging leaders is vital for informing public debate and tackling societal challenges. I look forward to working with other members of GYA to bring about positive change.”

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