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LINCOLN UNIVERSITY PRESENTS AT UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

Lincoln University research technician, Daniesh Panday was one of ten presenters chosen to speak at the 2015 Global Landscape Forum held in Paris this past December. The Global Landscape Forum is an event which brings thousands of negotiators, world leaders, researchers, media, civil society leaders, funding organizations, business leaders, practitioners and policymakers in agriculture, forestry and development. Held alongside the United Nations climate negotiations, this forum is the most influential event outside the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference for addressing global climate issue both domestically and internationally. With over 3000 people in attendance Danish was assigned to present at the “Youth in Landscapes” conference held at the forum. The 7 day conference saw 150 young innovators between the ages of 18 -35, unite to develop real-world solutions to land use challenges in partnership with organizations working on the ground. Mr. Panday was selected from an applicant pool of thousands to become a finalist presenter. Chosen off of the strength of his application, Mr. Panday proposed a concept to provide academic resources to address youth disparities within agriculture education and the importance of safe practices within soil management.

With representatives from over 25 countries, presenters were divided into one of five groups, each addressing current landscape challenges. These challenges ranged from appropriate regulations of anti-deforestation practices to transparency between smallholder farmers and the companies for which they produce raw materials. Currently the five landscape challenges related to the 2015 Global Landscapes Forum are finance and trade, education, rights and tenure, landscape restoration, and measuring success.

The weeklong event consisted of a series of workshops designed to develop group dynamics, identifying a specific problem within the context of landscape challenges, constructing a resolution with detailed metrics to measure effectiveness and pitching strategies for a final group presentation.

“We focused our work on the concept of ‘Education Landscape Academy’, why it is important and how solutions can be offered to manage the existing problems,” says Danish. “We agreed that a landscape professional should be able to understand changes in landscapes, be able to coordinate with individuals at the community and policy level and have experience with the realities within their respective contexts. Since the team was composed of diverse people from around the world, our brainstorming focused on ideas with concrete examples, from our different regions and realities, to back up our claims.”

The week culminated with the assembling of all five challenge teams to discuss their ideas to a panel of scientists, policy makers and CEOs known as the “Dragon’s Den”. “We defined competencies needed for mid-career professionals who want to enhance their knowledge, skills and attitude to be able to facilitate the integration and collaboration required to implement landscape approaches.” In addition Dr. Panday and his group developed an online learning platform consisting of free webinars and course modules developed in collaboration with other institutions and research groups to promote global climate awareness.

Originally from Nepal, Dinesh Panday holds a Masters of Sciences degree in Environmental Sciences with a concentration in Soil Science and is a member YPARD (Young Professionals for Agricultural Development). Currently a research technician for Lincoln University, Dinesh collaborates with the Dr. Jabulani Beza International Student Center to assist with diversity and youth agriculture education initiatives.

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