



## Science Dialogue

### Scientific Adventure by a French JSPS Fellow: “Be curious and explore the world”

Dr. Joan Perez

Ever since he was born in Paris, Dr. Joan Perez has not settled down anywhere. He went to elementary school in Bretagne, junior high school in French Guiana, and high school and university in the South of France. “Because my father was working for the military, my family and I had to keep moving,” Dr. Perez says. The real-life experience of spending his younger days in various cultures nurtured his curiosity about the world. That's why he went to Congo for his master's thesis and to India for his PhD.

Now he is in Tokyo doing research at The University of Tokyo as a JSPS Research Fellow. He specializes in quantitative geography, which adopts statistical and computational methods to seek and explain patterns and dynamics over geographic space. Results are used to provide recommendations for a more sustainable development of societies.

Dr. Perez prepared his Science Dialogue presentation for Tokyo Metropolitan Tama High School of Science and Technology with an expectation to induce the students to have a desire to discover other countries and their cultures. “I want them to understand that traveling to other countries can bring them a lot, by forever forging and sharpening their minds. Ultimately, it would be perfect if some of them were inspired by career opportunities in academics.”



On 18 July, 2018, more than 200 second-grade students welcomed Dr. Perez as a guest lecturer. At the start, he introduced his background and the work/daily life of a researcher, emphasizing the importance of mastering English to pursue an academic career, “Learning English multiplies career opportunities, and scientific literacy is not translated into local languages.”

Using colorful pictures and charts, he explained how fast our society and economy have developed, and how humanity will be facing environmental/food crises brought about by rapid growth and urbanization. After describing his own research — quantifying through computations of the similarities and dissimilarities among three of the world's metropolitan areas with strong cultural and

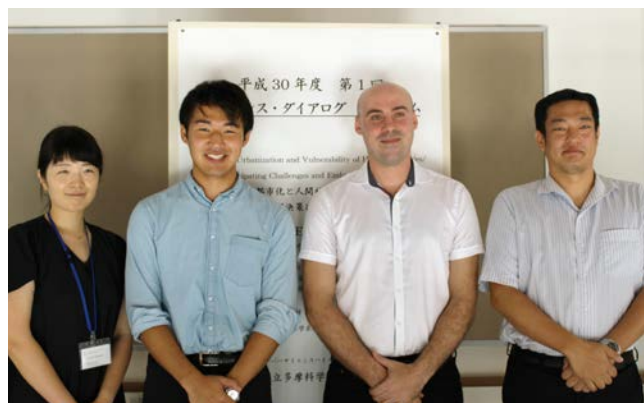


societal differences (Osaka, Marseille, and Rio de Janeiro) — he quizzed the students, showing them fascinating photos that he took all over the world. The students showed a great deal of interest and some of them even took the challenge to answer questions in English.

“It was a very attractive presentation, full of colorful images and photos,” one of the students said after the lecture, with his eyes shining, “I am inspired with the possibility of a career path as an environmental scientist.”

Just as he wished, Dr. Perez succeeded in giving a precious gift to the students.

Public Relations Office



Dr. Perez and his colleague, Mr. Yamano in the middle with Mr. Nishino and Ms. Kubo from Tama High School of Science and Technology