



L-Università ta' Malta
Institute of Earth Systems



Francesca Bajada

Graduated with a B.Sc. (Hons) in
Earth Systems in November 2016

“When I first heard about Earth Systems, I knew right away it was the degree I had always dreamt of pursuing. Having a background in environmental science, geography and the social sciences, and a strong appreciation for nature, it was just what I was looking for. With an earth systems perspective, human and nature are no longer studied as a dichotomy. The course offers a holistic approach to learning about the planet, with a diversity of subjects which allow for a wide range of opportunities for students to further their studies and specialize in topics they truly enjoy.

“I would recommend the B.Sc. course to anyone who is interested in environmental management. The skills you gain are a great foundation for life, from basic modes of scholarly writing, to GIS and data analysis, as well as multiple lab and fieldwork skills. Our group got to experience fieldwork in Iceland, and I participated in a summer internship with the Institute, during which I interviewed park managers of a national reserve in Maremma, Italy. I will always appreciate the course itself, the work I put into it, the friends I made, and the places I visited, and I'd like to give credit to the staff of the institute who continue to be very supportive even though I graduated way back in 2014.

“I knew I wanted to pursue a career in research and that I wanted to stay in Norway, as I'd fallen in love with the outdoor lifestyle. I took a gap year first, and focused on learning the Norwegian language while working as a tourist guide on a whale safari in the Lofoten Islands, above the Arctic Circle. Living so far north, experiencing the stunning northern lights in winter and the contrasting midnight sun in summer, and to top it all, swimming with killer whales in the wild, are memories I will cherish for life.

“I am currently employed as a Ph.D. candidate within the Geography Department of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), researching invasive alien plants species management and the issue of garden waste dumping in nature in Norway. I am one year through my Ph.D. and loving every bit of it. Besides the Ph.D., I have also become a keen trail runner and got a lot better at skiing. When I'm not in my office, I spend most of my time in the forest or on the mountains, and I wouldn't be here if I hadn't studied Earth Systems!”