The Summer 2024 programme at (IHS) in the Netherlands was an extremely rich and fulfilling learning experience. It was not just a simple learning process, but a meeting of minds, an expansion of horizons and a deepening of thinking. Through the weeks of course learning, field trips and workshop activities, I have gained significant gains and deep reflections in many aspects.

1. Learning of theoretical knowledge

At the beginning of the course, the concepts of sustainability and resilient cities were discussed in depth, which gave me a clearer understanding of these two seemingly grand but actually closely related themes. By listening to Dr Qian Ke, I not only understood the basic theoretical framework of sustainability and resilient cities, but also saw how these theories can be put into practice and applied in reality through the analysis of real cases. For example, in the lecture on the concept of ‘sponge city’, I realised the huge potential of innovative planning and natural solutions for urban water management, and at the same time appreciated the importance of combining theory and practice.

2. Use of strategies and tools

Through the lessons, I learned to approach climate change challenges as an urban planner/policy maker via role-playing, playing a chief negotiating for my people. I gained deep insights into climate strategies, including sponge cities, resilience tools, and NBS, offering practical paths. Sponge cities' concept integrating nature with urban planning inspired new views on water management and sustainable development. I mastered SWOT, FFA, Problem tree, and scenario tracing, enabling me to systematically analyse problems and propose solutions.

3. Gains from the field trip

The field trip to the Delta Project in the Netherlands gave me a deep impression of the wisdom and courage of human beings in coping with natural disasters. This kind of immersive learning makes me have a more intuitive understanding of water management engineering, and at the same time enhances my ability to solve practical problems. In the ‘Climate Adaptation Tools’ workshop, I learnt how to use the Adaptive Planning Support Toolkit to conduct rapid assessments, and this process of transforming theoretical knowledge into practical skills has greatly benefited me in improving my overall quality.

4. Enhancement of team capacity

During the course, teamwork tasks and challenges became an important driving force for my personal growth and capacity enhancement. These activities are not only frequently interspersed in all aspects of the course, but also presented in various forms, such as group discussion, case analysis, project collaboration and results demonstration, etc., which together construct a platform for exercising teamwork in an all-round way.

By analysing the case together, our group members learned how to look at the problem from different perspectives, brainstorming and integrating their own insights with professional knowledge. In this process, we inspired each other and collided sparks of thinking, which not only deepened our understanding of the course content, but also cultivated our critical thinking and problem-solving skills. When discussing solutions, we fully demonstrated the power of teamwork, and through effective communication and coordination, we jointly developed innovative and practical solutions.

5. Reflection and shortcomings:

Although the course learning is very fruitful, I am also clearly aware that I still have shortcomings in some aspects. For example, I still need to learn more deeply and systematically in terms of theoretical knowledge; in terms of practical experience, I lack sufficient project experience to support my theoretical learning; in terms of leadership development, I still need more opportunities to exercise and demonstrate myself.

6. Future Outlook:

Looking ahead, I hope to take this learning experience at IHS as the starting point of my career, and keep pursuing excellence and innovation. I plan to further deepen my knowledge of sustainable development and resilient city building, actively participate in related projects and practices, and continuously improve my professionalism and practical ability. At the same time, I will also endeavour to broaden my international horizons, communicate and cooperate with more professionals from different backgrounds, and contribute to the solution of global problems together.

In conclusion, this learning experience at IHS Netherlands is invaluable to me. It has not only improved my knowledge and ability, but also given me unlimited motivation and inspiration. I believe that in the future, I will continue to uphold this love and persistence, and continue to move forward and make progress.