

# WABES

## Supporting IPBES capacity building in West Africa



### THE WABES

### MASTER OF SCIENCE (MSC) PROGRAM ON

### “MANAGING THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA - SPIBES”

#### In cooperation with:

#UNIVERSITÉSENGHOR  
université internationale de langue française  
au service du développement africain



This initiative is supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

In support of the IPBES Work Programme



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## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Master of Science (MSc) in “Managing the Science-Policy Interface on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Sustainable Development in West Africa - SPIBES” is a 2-year interdisciplinary course designed to provide students with broad, high-quality information and skills needed to facilitate the operation of science-policy interfaces such as the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), as a means for achieving sustainable development goals in West Africa.

It aims to create experts capable of engaging in science policy interfaces such as IPBES on an international, regional, sub-regional and national level, specifically related to Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) policy-making and sustainable development pathways.

The MSC SPIBES is part of the project “West African Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (WABES)” which aims to build capacity to strengthen the West African contribution to the IPBES. It is supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI).

The program specifically will:

- (i) provide the students with a general understanding of BES and their relevance from disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- (ii) facilitate inter- and transdisciplinary thinking to create and enable a new generation of scientists to tackle global environmental challenges;
- (iii) generate knowledge on the functioning and set-up of (international) policy processes and decision making and;
- (iv) provide tools to translate research findings into policy relevant outcomes to support decision making.

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The course is designed for students that are passionate about the sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services (BES) to maintain suitable livelihoods for future generations. We like to address people who are keen about acting as science-policy managers and sustainability agents, translating scientific knowledge into meaningful and applicable concepts and tools, as well as channelling back policy requirements to the scientific community.

The Master degree will be offered by University Félix Houphouët Boigny (UFHB) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. It is placed under the umbrella of the graduate programme on Climate, Natural Resources and Innovation (FD-CRNI) in the Africa Center of Excellence on Climate Change Biodiversity and Sustainable Agriculture (CEA-CCBAD); and the Doctoral Studies Programme on Sociology (FDS) of the Department of Sociology of UFHB.

The program is implemented in collaboration with experienced and recognized international institutions dealing with biodiversity and ecosystem services at the science/policy interface, such as:

- the Center for Development Research (ZEF) at University of Bonn (Germany);
- the Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ) in Leipzig (Germany);
- the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in Cambridge (United Kingdom) and;
- the West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL).
- The programme is supported by the GIZ ValuES project, and is in partnership with the University Senghor of Alexandria (Egypt) and University Nangui Abrogoua (Côte d'Ivoire) and other international partners.

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## LANGUAGE

The WABES Master program on the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services (SPIBES) has English as the language of instruction. Accordingly, there are some minimum language requirements:

An intensive English language training course will be offered at the University Felix Houphouët-Boigny (UFHB), Côte d'Ivoire, for the selected francophone and Portuguese-speaking students at the beginning of the program. At the end of this English language course, students will have to prove their language skills.

French language courses will be also offered for non-francophone students at UFHB, as part of the program. The language courses are geared towards giving participants a comprehensive and practical understanding of both the English and French languages, different cultures and traditions so as to contribute to fostering international friendships particularly between the Francophones and the Anglophones.

## SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

The scholarship and research support will be provided following the criteria below:

- ✓ During the course curriculum phase, students will be required to develop a detailed research programme that is of policy relevance, including a budget that will have to be accepted by his/her committee, consisting of at least four graduate faculty members, and endorsed by the Graduate Council.
- ✓ During the project/research stage, students are expected to present their progress reports regularly and be evaluated accordingly.

All successful candidates will receive a stipend (of about € 350.00) per month for a maximum of 24 months. Each student will be provided with a laptop computer for supporting the courses and research activities. WABES will also provide a health insurance during the programme and take

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care of the registration fees. Research funds will also be made available to students after approval of their research budget by their supervisor and WABES.

The disbursement of research funds will be connected to the successful delivery of research work deliverables to be agreed upon between the project coordinator, the supervisor and the MSc fellow at the onset of the research work.

The program furthermore provides a learning environment with:

- ✓ relevant scientific knowledge;
- ✓ strong regional and international networks;
- ✓ quality teaching and research infrastructures;
- ✓ quality and accredited academic training programs;
- ✓ training through an approach centered on experimental learning;
- ✓ access to an online library and international journals;
- ✓ a strong connection with the professional world.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Candidates need to be nationals from one of the 15 ECOWAS countries with a Bachelor's or equivalent degree in environmental sciences (biology, ecology, climate, economics, law, sociology, and equivalent disciplines). If applicable, one candidate will be selected from each of the ECOWAS countries.

Other Requirements.

The candidates need to:

- ✓ provide a pdf version of their university degrees as well as the Bacallaureate or equivalent high school degree
- ✓ provide a CV and a supporting letter in answering this call;

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- ✓ provide the names and contacts of a reference person in their home institution;
- ✓ candidates must not be older than 30 years, except those who have demonstrated professional activity or who have given birth to children;
- ✓ post-enrolment candidates are required to complete the program. For this purpose, they must fill out an entry form.

## **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

All graduates from this international program qualify to apply to the WASCAL, CEA-CCBAD, FD-CRNI, FDS GRPs and worldwide PhD programs.

They will acquire skills that will make them scientific agents, natural resource and environmental politics managers in private sectors or academics. They also be involved in business of biodiversity and ecosystem services as consultant or advisor (startup).

They may be eligible for employment in international and sub-regional organizations, conservation agencies, land and forestry agencies, research institutions, nature reserves, overseas aid programs, international NGOs, ministries of environment, ministries of research, ministries of agriculture, ministries of water and forests and universities.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND CONTACT**

Candidates must proceed by online application via the webpage of WABES (<http://wabes.net>) where they can get the application form and upload a PDF containing all requested information.

For further information, please contact by e-mail to Mrs. CISSE Mabosso via [cmabosso@gmail.com](mailto:cmabosso@gmail.com), or Prof. KONATE Souleymane ([konatesoul\\_sn@una.edu.ci](mailto:konatesoul_sn@una.edu.ci)), or Dr KOUADIO Kouakou ([kk.kouadio@yahoo.fr](mailto:kk.kouadio@yahoo.fr)) or Dr SOMMER Jan Henning ([jsommer@uni-bonn.de](mailto:jsommer@uni-bonn.de))

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**Deadline: August 31, 2017, or until all positions are filled.**

The WABES Advisory Board, in collaboration with the FD-CRNI/FDS/WASCAL-GSP/CEA-CCBAD/ UFHB Pedagogic commission, will produce a shortlist of candidates. There may be a need for a final selection interview by phone, Skype or another Messenger. The date of the eventual interview will be communicated after the list of pre-selected candidates has been finalised.

The list of candidates definitively retained will be published on September 15, 2017 and the courses will start by November/December 2017.

Successful candidates need to show the originals of all their diplomas since the high-school degree for the formalities of their registration by UFHB.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For more details about the program please visit the WABES website at <http://www.wabes.net>

West African Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (WABES)