

Applications are now open for the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) International Postgraduate Programmes at the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR).

Deadline: March 24, 2023.

Background

Land is our foremost natural resource. The sustainable management of land is a prerequisite to unlocking the value of that land and spurring economic development. Thus, our ability to manage land resources will inure to the sustainable development of the country. However, many countries across the globe are currently grappling with land degradation challenges in all facets of resource development in urban and rural areas.

According to UNDP, land degradation occurs across the globe. Land degradation is occurring in even moist areas where it is accompanied by forest degradation and deforestation. According to the Ghana Country Environmental Analysis (CEA) report by the World Bank (2020), declining Net Primary Productivity (NPP), which is considered a proxy indicator for land degradation, shows land degradation is intensifying country-wide, most especially in the Savannah ecological areas. In these areas, land degradation is degenerating into desertification. Desertification also threatens the livelihoods of about 1 billion people in over 100 countries, and about 12 million hectares of arable land are lost to drought every year, globally. The trends must be checked at regional levels.

The sustainable land management requirements and challenges of Africa are evident in the policies and strategies of African State Governments and their agencies, and many allied state institutions mandated to promote sustainable operation and management of land and natural resources. Several actions and initiatives have also been taken by the UN and its various agencies, aimed at addressing the myriad of issues facing sustainable land management across the globe. Notwithstanding these initiatives, issues of land degradation remain.

In this context, a concerted global effort is needed to halt and reverse land degradation. This has been acknowledged in the UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, SDG Target 15.3 has been adopted and championed by the United Nations Commission to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Target 15.3 urges countries to: “... *combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world*”. This can be achieved through the design of tailored and relevant academic programmes

that would enhance the capacity of experts for monitoring, mapping, measuring, and reporting degraded lands and the trends, as well as planning for effective decision making on sustainable land management in all countries.

To this end, The Parties to the UNCCD have invited the support of Group on Earth Observation (GEO) in using Earth Observation for monitoring and reporting on LDN (the GEO-LDN Initiative). Based on this decision of UNCCD's Conference of the Parties, the GEO-LDN Initiative was founded and officially launched in 2018 with the aim to facilitate the provision of space-based information and in-situ measurements for sustainable land management and planning. Capacity Development is key to reach this goal. Hence, the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR), in collaboration with the GEO, and UNCCD, has designed the following international postgraduate programmes to help all countries address land degradation issues and build synergies between efforts:

1. Master of Science in Land Degradation Neutrality (MSc. – LDN)
2. Master of Philosophy in Land Degradation Neutrality (MPhil – LDN)
3. Doctor of Philosophy in Sustainable Land Management (PhD – SLM)

The programmes are enriched with emerging areas and trends in global land management. This would ensure that candidates are trained with state-of-the-art technologies and approaches that are equipped with up-to-date information. This enables the candidate to think critically and formulate place-based strategies to problem-solving in an increasing complex world of land degradation.

General Admission Requirements

1. MSc. – LDN (Duration; 1 year; 2 semesters)

Prospective applicant must:

- a. Be a graduate of any recognised accredited institution.
- b. Have a minimum of 3rd Class in the following relevant areas: Land Management / Economy, Geomatic Engineering, Geoinformation Science, Natural Resources, Environmental Science / Engineering / Management / Studies, Planning, Geography, Agricultural Science / Engineering, Earth Sciences, Geology, Mining, and Climate Science.
- c. Proven ability to undertake academic work in the ensuing semester

2. MPhil – LDN (Duration; 2 years; 4 semesters)

Prospective applicant must:

- a. Be a graduate of any recognised accredited institution.
- b. Have a minimum of 2nd Class (lower division) Honours in the following relevant areas: Land Management / Economy, Geomatic Engineering, Geoinformation Science, Natural Resources, Environmental Science / Engineering / Management / Studies, Planning, Geography, Agricultural Science / Engineering, Earth Sciences, Geology, Mining, and Climate Science.
- c. Proven ability to undertake scientific research within the stipulated duration.

3. PhD – SLM (Duration; 4 years; 8 semesters)

Prospective applicant must:

- a. Be a graduate of any recognised accredited institution.
- b. Have graduated with an MSc with research OR an MPhil in the following relevant areas: Land Management / Economy, Geomatic Engineering, Geoinformation Science, Natural Resources, Environmental Science / Engineering / Management / Studies, Planning, Geography, Agricultural Science / Engineering, Earth Sciences, Geology, Mining Engineering, Mining, and Climate Science.
- c. Proven ability to undertake rigorous research key relevant areas to specified by the faculty and its partners.
- d. Demonstration of previous or on-going research work of international, national or local relevance to sustainable land management.

Exceptional Second year MPhil/MSc students may be upgraded into the PhD programme upon recommendation from the programmes Coordinator and the Schools Board.

Admission and Selection

The School will shortlist some of the applicants for interview based on their qualifications and area of study. All shortlisted applicants will go through an

interview organised by the Department. Only candidates who are successful in the interview that will be admitted.

Mode of Delivery

Fulltime: Weekdays / Evenings (Monday – Friday); lectures, project works, field trips and seminars.

Job Prospects

Graduates of the LDN programmes shall have an added advantage to gain employment at all levels of the United Nations Agencies and Commissions, International Organisations and NGOs, State Governmental Agencies responsible for Land and Natural Resources, the Private sector and industries such as Mining, Agriculture, Forestry and Energy.

Subject to agency-specific naming conventions, graduates could be employed to perform roles such as Environmental Analysts, Resource Analysts, Land Managers, Project/Programme Managers, Monitoring and Evaluation technicians, etc.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. A candidate must purchase an eVoucher by paying an application fee of Two Hundred and Fifty Ghana Cedis (GH¢250.00) at the University Finance Office
2. Prospective International or foreign applicants should contact the **Finance Directorate on the whatsapp number (+233) 0246252192** to purchase and obtain their **eVoucher**.
3. Upon payment of the application fee, the candidate will receive an eVoucher containing an application number and PIN that will grant access to the online admissions portal.
4. The candidate should then proceed to the online admissions portal admissions.uenr.edu.gh and begin the application process.
5. Once the process has been completed, candidates must print out three (3) copies of the completed application form from the portal and submit together with all the following relevant documents by courier services to the address provided below:
 - ❖ certified copies of all certificates
 - ❖ original copy of transcript(s)

- ❖ two sealed referee reports
- ❖ Research proposal for MPhil and PhD Candidates

**Please mail your completed documents by courier services to:
The Secretary
School of Graduate Studies
UENR, Box 214
Sunyani-Ghana**

Deadline for the submission of application forms is, Friday, March 24, 2023.

Applicants must note that fees paid to the University are **NOT** refundable.

International applicants should call the Finance Directorate on 0246252192 to purchase the eVoucher.

For further details visit the university website on www.uenr.edu.gh or call the programmes coordinator on 0543311515 or the Graduate School on 0243648168 or email srgs@uenr.edu.gh