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

Deadline for Applications: May 30, 2024.

Commencement of First Semester: August 2024

Background

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

Several actions and initiatives have been taken by UN and its various agencies, aimed at addressing the myriad of issues facing sustainable land management across the globe. Notwithstanding these initiatives, issues of LD remain. In this context, a concerted global effort is needed to halt and reverse LD. 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".*

To this end, The Parties to the UNCCD 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, the GEO-LDN Initiative was founded, and launched in 2018, to facilitate the provision of space-based information and in-situ measurements for sustainable land management and planning. To consolidate this, the design of tailored and relevant academic programmes that 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 is critical. Hence, the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR), in collaboration with GEO-LDN Secretariat, and UNCCD, has designed the following international postgraduate programmes to help all countries address LD and build synergies between efforts:

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

The programmes are enriched with emerging 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 LD.

General Admission Requirements

1. **MSc. – LDN (Duration; 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: Environmental Science / Engineering / Management / Studies, Land Management / Economy, Geoinformation Science, Geomatic Engineering, Natural Resources, Planning, Geography, Agricultural Science / Engineering, Earth Sciences, Geology, Mining, and Climate Science.

c. Proven ability to undertake rigorous 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, Geomatics, Geoinformation Science, Natural Resources, Environmental Science/Engineering/Management/Studies, Earth Sciences, Planning, Geography, Geology, Mining, Agricultural Science/Engineering, and Climate Science.

c. In addition to clause 1c above, Proven ability to undertake scientific research within the stipulated duration.

3. **PhD – SLM (Duration; 3 years; 6 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.

Part-time: Weekends (Saturdays and Sundays only); lectures, Project works, field trips and seminars.

Modula: Twelve months; one module per month; full-time and part-time basis as above.

In addition, lectures could be conducted face to face or via virtual platforms.

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.

Mode of Application

Please, submit all relevant documents in a single PDF file to the School of Graduate Studies through the following email addresses:

1. srgs@uenr.edu.gh; copying the Head of Department via
2. rejoice.wireko-gyebi@uenr.edu.gh

Relevant documents include:

1. Certificate(s) of completion from previous studies
2. Transcripts
3. Two Referee reports / recommendation letters from current and previous institution/organisation.
4. CV
5. Any other

NOTE: For prospective foreign applicants, there is no requirement for online application.