

Applications are now open for both partly and fully funded Scholarships in support of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) International Postgraduate Programmes at the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR)

Deadline for Prospective Applicants: May 30, 2024

Commencement of First Semester: August 2024

Background

In order to halt and reverse the current trends in land degradation, there is an urgent need to enhance national capacities to map and measure degraded lands on one hand and identify and implement appropriate interventions and monitoring approaches on the other hand. Increased access to large Earth Observation datasets, targeted data products, improved analytical capacity and practical tools are needed, in this regard, to help countries set and implement targets to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).

To this end, The Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) partners with the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) on using Earth Observation for monitoring and reporting on LDN (the GEO-LDN Initiative). This is incorporated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Indicator 15.3.1 (“the proportion of land that is degraded over total land area”), for which UNCCD is the custodian agency. Based on this partnership, the GEO-LDN Initiative aims 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.

In 2022, Germany increased its support to GEO-LDN for five more years. The new global project “Geospatial Data for Development - Supporting the Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative of the Group on Earth Observations”, funded via German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and partners, will support GEO-LDN in its mission to help countries use geodata to monitor and implement LDN. The aim of the new project is to strengthen GEO-LDN through a sustainable secretariat that supports building a federated system of interoperable data and tools, ***increasing countries’ capacities via postgraduate programmes***, and knowledge exchange among UNCCD party stakeholders involved in planning, monitoring, and decision-making for achieving LDN.

There is the political will to pursue sustainable land governance in Africa. However, at the local level, implementation is beset with human resource challenges and robust knowledge deficits. Therefore, drawing on the over 10 years of experience and expertise of its staff, the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR) seeks to support Africa’s contribution to the objectives of SDGs Target 15.3.1 and the UNCCD by introducing LDN programmes at the postgraduate level.

In this context, UENR offers partly and fully funded scholarships to candidates from any part of the world. Successful candidates shall study and carry out relevant empirical and applied research projects that would enhance capacity and knowledge for monitoring, mapping, measuring, and reporting degraded lands, as well as planning for effective decision making on sustainable land management in all countries.

Applications are now invited for sponsorship. The Scholarship Awards are jointly carried out by UENR, GEO-LDN Secretariat in GIZ, Bonn - Germany, and the UNCCD. The Scholarships shall support prospective candidates to undertake any of the following postgraduate programmes:

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)

Eligibility (Merit-Based)

Prospective applicant must:

- a. Qualify for admission to the relevant programme.
- b. Have Evidence of application for admission.
- c. Have Proficiency in English Language (mode of delivery); Proficiency in French is an added advantage.
- d. Prove his/her ability to undertake academic work in the ensuing semester.
- e. Available for selection interview.
- f. Prove his/ her ability to undertake rigorous research in key relevant areas to be specified by the faculty and its partners.
- g. Prove his/her ability to undertake scientific research within the stipulated duration.
- h. Demonstrate previous or on-going research work of international, national, or local relevance to sustainable land management.
- i. For MPhil and PhD candidate, prove his or her ability to produce scientific papers to a high standard and to interact effectively with international scientific community.

Selection Process

Qualified applicants shall be shortlisted for interview at appropriate dates by a joint selection committee. Limited Scholarship Awards shall be granted to only candidates, who are successful in their application for admission.

Checklist

For MPhil and PhD candidates:

- Research Proposal
- CV with most recent publication list. Such document containing both the CV and publication list shall not be longer than 3 pages.
- Two Reference letters from former supervisor and/or immediate supervisor/line manager.

All other applicants:

- Copy of completed Admission application form.
- Copies of relevant Certificates earned till date.
- Letter of motivation.
- CV in EUROPASS format: <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>.

Submission of Application

All documents are to be submitted in English. Closing date for applications is May 30, 2024. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please send a single PDF file, with all relevant application documents combined, via e-mail to:

Dr. Abdul-Wadood Moomen: abdul-wadood.moomen@uenr.edu.gh.