



**REGIONAL POST-GRADUATE SCHOOL ON INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF  
TROPICAL FORESTS AND TERRITORIES**

**- ERAIFT -**

**Category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO**



**UNIVERSITÉ DE YAOUNDÉ I**  
Sapientia - Collativa - Cognitio



**INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR ENROLMENT IN THE REGIONAL  
MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME AT ERAIFT (4<sup>th</sup> COHORT)**

**This call is part of the project entitled:**

**Capacity building of biodiversity practitioners, scientists and policy makers for the sustainable  
management of protected areas and forest ecosystems in Africa**

**"Action DCI-ENV 2020/416-397" under EU funding**

**1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THIS TRAINING**

In the framework of the AGRINATURA-ERAIFT consortium, an international call for applications has been launched for the recruitment of the 40 scholarship holders who will constitute the **4<sup>th</sup> class of the ERAIFT regional masters**.

This call for applications is part of the project entitled: "*Capacity Building of Biodiversity Practitioners, Scientists and Policy Makers for the Sustainable Management of Protected Areas and Forest Ecosystems in Africa*" Action DCI-ENV 2020/416-397. The latter is part of the programme entitled: "*Knowledge-based Sustainable Management of Tropical Ecosystems*", under the European Union's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) No. 41928.

The programme has several components including the project "Capacity building of biodiversity practitioners, scientists and policy makers for the sustainable management of protected areas and forest ecosystems in Africa".

The overall objective of the project is "*To support environmental policies and investments for the sustainable, participatory and equitable management of protected areas and forest ecosystems in Africa*". The specific objective of the project is "*To contribute to the capacity building of biodiversity practitioners, scientists and policy makers in the production and use of information for the sustainable management of protected areas and forest ecosystems in Africa*".



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The target group of the project is "*biodiversity practitioners, scientists, civil society organisations (CSOs) and the private sector, as well as policy makers*".

The project area covers the Congo Basin and West Africa. The project is implemented by **AGRINATURA-EEIG** (= European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development) and the Ecole Régionale Postuniversitaire d'Aménagement et de Gestion Intégrés des Forêts et Territoires Tropicaux (**ERAIFT**). AGRINATURA-EEIG has also delegated the management of the project activities dedicated to it to **the University of Liege** (Belgium).

## II. KEY PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

### 2.1 AGRINATURA

AGRINATURA is consortium of 35 European universities and research organisations (Table 1) with a common interest in supporting sustainable agricultural development to improve people's lives, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. AGRINATURA pools its resources to work in partnership with international collaborators, particularly in developing countries. AGRINATURA promotes scientific excellence, through joint research, education and training projects; and development, through the provision of scientific expertise for the implementation of field projects and capacity building of stakeholders. The AGRINATURA European Economic Interest Grouping (AGRINATURA-EEIG) has been specifically set up to implement and manage projects that call on the expertise of several of its members. The group represents more than 10,000 researchers, teacher-researchers and engineers in the field of agricultural research for development, in permanent positions.



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**Table 1: Member institutions of AGRINATURA**

1. Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania	19. Georg-August University Göttingen, Centre of Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Use, Germany
2. University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Austria	20. Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany
3. Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Belgium	21. University of Hohenheim, Germany
4. Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium	22. Szent Istvan University, Hungary
5. Ghent University, Belgium	23. National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland
6. Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, University of Liège, Belgium	24. University College Cork, Ireland
7. Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Czech Republic	25. The University of Catania, Italy
8. Aarhus University, Denmark	26. Wageningen University and Research, the Netherlands
9. University of Copenhagen, Denmark	27. International Centre for development oriented Research in Agriculture (ICRA), the Netherlands
10. Helsinki University, Finland	28. Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Portugal
11. Agropolis International, France	29. Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Sweden
12. Montpellier SupAgro, France	30. Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland
13. Institute of research for development, France	31. Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, UK
14. Centre for international cooperation research and development in agriculture, CIRAD, France	32. Polytechnic University of Madrid, Spain
15. Agreenium, France	33. University of Reading, UK
16. Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech- University of Liège, Belgium	34. Natural Resources Institute Finland (LUKE), Finland
17. College of International Agro-Development (ISTOM), France	35. Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Netherlands
18. Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agraria (CREA), Italy	

## 2.2 ERAIFT

This Regional School was created on 10 April 1999. It is based on the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere project (MAB programme) which aims at sustainable human development in harmony with the environment. Since 2016, ERAIFT has had the status of a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO<sup>1</sup> and has contributed since its creation to building the capacities of managers and decision-makers from 23 French- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian Ocean region in the management of protected areas, as well as in the sustainable

<sup>1</sup> Category 2 centres and institutes contribute to the execution of UNESCO's programme through capacity-building, exchange of information in a particular discipline, theoretical and experimental research, and advanced training in specific fields of competence. They are under the auspices of UNESCO, but are not legally part of the Organization; they are governed by their own rules officially approved by the General Conference. These centres and institutes form an extensive network of associated centres in the fields of water, renewable energy, science policy, biotechnology, geosciences, basic sciences and remote sensing.



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development of tropical forests and territories (approximately 300 Masters, 28 PhDs and more than a thousand managers from the public and private sectors trained in the field of "forest-environment"). Its various management bodies (*the Conference of Member States, the Board of Directors, the Academic and Research Council (CAR) and the Management*) give the School an international governance ensuring institutional sustainability and viability. ERAIFT currently enjoys the status of a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO. In addition, in view of its smooth functioning, several collaboration agreements have been concluded at the national, regional and international levels with various technical and financial partners.

At the national level, ERAIFT is located on the campus of the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) and maintains a fruitful scientific and academic collaboration with this institution. Furthermore, ERAIFT has concluded partnerships with UNIKIS (Kisangani) and UNILU (Lubumbashi).

At the regional level, ERAIFT is developing a partnership with ENEF and USTM (Gabon), the Universities of Dschang and Yaoundé 1 and EFG (Cameroon) as well as with all the member institutions of RIFFEAC<sup>2</sup>.

At the international level, ERAIFT is developing a fruitful cooperation with the European network AGRINATURA, including the Universities of Liège (ULiège) and Gent (UGent, Belgium). In the Yangambi Biosphere Reserve (DRC), ERAIFT is developing close scientific cooperation with UNESCO (MAB), CIFOR, INERA, MRAC, JBM, CIRAD and Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech (Belgium)

### III. ORGANISATION OF THE REGIONAL MASTERS

#### 3.1 Organised sectors and institutions involved in training

ERAIFT has concluded a memorandum of understanding with the following regional institutions for the implementation of a regional Masters programme based on the LMD system of the Bologna decree: *Universities of Dschang and Yaoundé I as well as the Ecole de Faune de Garoua (EFG/Cameroon), Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (ENEF/Libreville) and the Université des Sciences et Technique de Masuku (USTM/Gabon) and the University of Kisangani (UNIKIS/DRC).*

The implementation of this regional programme is also done in close cooperation with the 35 member institutions of AGRINATURA

The following degree courses are covered by this regional programme:

1. *Professional Master's degree in Forest Management Technology (FMT);*
2. *Professional Master in Protected Area Management (PAM);*
3. *MAB Professional Master in Biosphere Reserve Management (BRM);*
4. *Research Master in Integrated Management of Tropical Forests and Lands (AGIFT).*

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<sup>2</sup> RIFFEAC: Network of Central African Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions



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### 3.2 Structuring of this training

This regional Masters programme is linked to the LMD system of the Bologna Decree. It covers a period of 24 months divided into 4 semesters (Semi-annualization of courses). The mobility of students and trainers is also foreseen during the third semester devoted to specialisation courses.

#### First year or Master I (Semesters I and II)

- A **core curriculum** is organised in the first year during which students learn the basics of *the systems approach*, which is the main thread of the teaching and research at ERAIFT. During these two semesters, students receive the **general competences (Cg)** based on the systems approach, which is participatory, cross-sectoral; in short, global and integrated.
- This refresher course on the fundamentals of systemics is conducted exclusively at ERAIFT by Chair holders appointed by its Academic and Research Council (CAR).

#### Second year or Master II (Semesters III and IV)

##### **For Semester III: Specialisation course (Cs) or professionalisation**

- At the end of the first year, students who have validated at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of their credits are admitted to the second year (M2) for their specialisation in one of the 4 tracks mentioned above (GAP, GRB, TAF, AGIFT).
- The orientation of the students in each of these tracks of study is done on an objective basis following a meeting of the Academic and Research Council of ERAIFT according to their competences (the results of the first year and the student's request), and taking into account the availability of scholarships in each track. This semester is intended for **specialisation courses** aimed at developing **specific skills (Cs)** related to these professions and is achieved through regional mobility foreseen in the project. For its viability, the number of students per course will have to vary from 10 to 20, a number that is pedagogically manageable.
- It should be remembered that the organisation of this third semester takes place in the form of regional mobility either at ERAIFT or at one of ERAIFT's partner institutions with a better training offer and a good anchoring structure for the training. This decision is made by the Academic and Research Council (ARC), after a special meeting with the regional partner institutions.



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### For Semester IV and the last one: Dissertation or End of Cycle Work

- Finally, the last Semester is for the *Dissertation Internship* and usually takes place in the student's home country.
- At the end of their fieldwork, students publicly present their results at ERAIFT, either in person or by video conference, as the case may be, before an international and interdisciplinary jury.

In conclusion, during the first year, students follow the general courses at ERAIFT. At the end of the first year, they are placed into the various fields of study to follow the specialisation courses. The orientation of students in these streams is done on an objective basis according to several elements, notably (1) the average marks obtained in year 1; (2) the student's choice, (3) his/her background.

This international call for expressions of interest aims at recruiting learners for the 4<sup>th</sup> cohort of these regional programmes, whose academic year starts in the second quarter of 2022, i.e. on **3 April, 2022**.

#### IV. SUBSIDY OF THE TRAINING

Scholarships are available but in limited numbers and are therefore awarded on a competitive basis. This study grant essentially covers the costs related to the candidate's stay in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and/or abroad as well as the organisation of his or her diploma course. The cost of training for the complete Master's cycle at ERAIFT is fixed at \$16,500 per year of study (US dollars sixteen thousand five hundred). A total of 40 scholarships are available for the 40 best students who will be selected after this call for applications.

This cost includes the costs related to the organisation of teaching, tutorials and practical fieldwork, the stay of the learners in the framework of their sub-regional mobility, dissertation internship, etc. But in the case of regional student mobility in semester 3, this cost can be relatively high.

#### V. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following profile is required for the recruitment of learners for this 4<sup>th</sup> cohort:

- Hold at least a degree equivalent to BAC + 3 in natural sciences (Biology, Ecology, Botany, Zoology, Environment, Geography, etc.); in engineering sciences (agronomy engineer, forestry engineer, bio-engineer, rural engineering engineer, etc.), geomatics, demography, veterinary and/or human medicine, social sciences and humanities



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(Sociology, Administrative and Political Sciences, Economics, Anthropology, Law, Psychology, Communication, etc.)

- Be **under 40 years of age at the** time of application selection;
- Have **sufficient knowledge of basic computer skills** (Internet, Mail, GIS and its applications ...) and have a good laptop with at least the following technical specifications (Processor I5, Hard disk 500 GB, Ram 8 GB and an external hard disk is recommended for data backup);
- Have sufficient skills in **qualitative and quantitative data analysis**;
- Be **proactive and autonomous**, and able to work in a **multicultural and sometimes difficult environment**;
- Be able to live in a **community** and adapt to the varying conditions of the study environment;
- Successfully pass the **French, English, mathematics and computer tests** which will be organised and compulsory for all candidates who meet the administrative and academic selection criteria;
- **To be of good ethical and moral values**;
- Be in good health and present a **certificate of vaccination against** the COVID 19 virus **within the last 6 months** (for successful applicants only);
- **At least 3 years of professional experience** in the forestry and environmental sector would be an asset.

**VI. ELEMENTS OF THE FILE**

Each candidate will send to ERAIFT a complete file including the following elements

1. A duly completed and signed application form (to be requested from ERAIFT or downloaded from its website: [www.eraift-rdc.org](http://www.eraift-rdc.org) ;
2. A **letter of motivation** addressed to the Director of ERAIFT and President of the Academic and Research Council, requesting enrolment in the 4<sup>th</sup> class of this regional programme. This letter must be handwritten, written in French and English, maximum one page each;
3. Various **certificates are** usually requested and legalised: a birth certificate, a current physical fitness certificate (issued in less than 6 months of the analysis of the application files), a recent medical certificate from a clinic of international renown, a **vaccination card** against the current emerging pandemics (Covid-19, etc.); a certificate of nationality, a certificate of good conduct or equivalent,
4. Certified copies of previously obtained **university diplomas** and photocopies of transcripts for each academic year (original diplomas must be presented for confirmation of enrolment at ERAIFT). The certification of copies of diplomas, reports, transcripts, etc.



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is done at the level of the educational institution (Dean/Head of Department/Head of Section, etc.), but the legalization of administrative documents will be done at the municipality or the Town Hall, depending on the case;

5. For the civil servant candidate, a **certificate of availability** from the employer for the duration of the training at ERAIFT is required (24 months of training);
6. Three **letters of recommendation** from persons authorised to give an informed opinion on the applicant (Heads of School, Employers, etc.);
7. A summary of the **updated curriculum vitae** of maximum 3 pages, showing especially *the applicant's competences, references of scientific productions (list of publications and scans of the first page of the publication; etc.)*;
8. Three **recent passport photos** (one of which should be attached to the application form);
9. Scan of the first two pages of the passport **valid for at least two years** corresponding to the period of the Masters course;
10. A **handwritten and signed declaration on honour**, attesting that once enrolled in this Master programme, the candidate undertakes to scrupulously respect the study and examination regulations of ERAIFT, to pursue his/her studies throughout the duration of his/her training, to display ethical and moral behaviour, and to produce all deliverables requested by the School at the end of his/her training (internship reports, Master 2 thesis, etc.), failing which he/she will have to reimburse any scholarship made available to him/her.

## **VII. TRANSMISSION OF THE FILE AND DEADLINE**

All applications should be sent to ERAIFT digitally in a single pdf file, via email: [recrutement@eraift-rdc.org](mailto:recrutement@eraift-rdc.org), with a copy to [h.mishidi@eraift-rdc.org](mailto:h.mishidi@eraift-rdc.org) with the subject line: "**My application to the Regional Masters Programme, 4<sup>th</sup> class**".

- **Addressee:** Baudouin MICHEL, Director of ERAIFT and President of the Academic and Research Council.
- **Maximum file size** to be sent: **10 MB**
- **Deadline for submission:** **Monday 28/02/2022 at 16:00 (Kinshasa time, GMT + 1)**
- For further information please write to,
- Only complete and timely applications will be examined by a **joint team, consisting of members of the Academic and Research Council (ARC) of ERAIFT and AGRINATURA, under the chairmanship of the Director of ERAIFT and President of the ARC.**



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- In a first step, an **analysis of the administrative conformity of the files** will be made for a preselection. Shortlisted candidates will be notified for an **entrance test in mathematics, French, English and computer science**.
- **Ethical and behavioural aspects as well as leadership** will also be assessed online during an interview with shortlisted candidates.
- ***Only successful applicants will be informed of their enrolment in the 4<sup>th</sup> class of this regional programme.***
- If the application is equally competent, priority will be given to female applicants; and the regional aspect of the School will be strongly supported.

**Done in Kinshasa, on 10/01/2022**

**The Director of ERAIFT**

**Baudouin MICHEL**