

## **EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS**

### **Graduate Study Programme on Climate Change Economics (PhD)**

Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar

Dakar, Senegal

**June 2024**

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International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION REPORT

**Graduate Study Programme on Climate Change  
Economics (PhD)**

Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar

Dakar, Senegal

**February 2024**



The WASCAL network (West African Science Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use) has mandated the Hcéres to perform the evaluation of the Graduate studies programme (PhD) "Climate Change Economics" (CCE-GSP) delivered by Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar (UCAD). The evaluation is based on the "Evaluation Standards of Doctorate/PhD abroad", adopted by the Hcéres Board on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. These standards are available on the Hcéres website ([hceres.fr](http://hceres.fr)).

In the name of the expert committee<sup>1</sup> :

Benoit Gabrielle, President of the committee

In the name of Hcéres<sup>1</sup> :

Stéphane Le Boulter, acting President

The Higher Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres) is an independent public authority. It is responsible for evaluating higher education and research institutions, research organizations, research units, and training programmes.

<sup>1</sup>In accordance with articles R. 114-15 and R. 114-10 of the Research Code, evaluation reports are signed by the chairman of the expert committee and countersigned by the President of Hcéres.

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## I. STUDY PROGRAMME IDENTITY SHEET

- University: Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar - Legal, Political, Economic and Management Sciences postgraduate school (*Ecole doctorale Sciences Juridiques, Politiques, Economiques et de Gestion - EDJPEG*)
- Level and duration of studies: Graduate studies program (PhD) with a three-year target duration
- Name: Climate Change Economics (CCE)
- Year of creation and context: 2012
- Location(s) where the facility is located: Dakar
- Campus: Cheikh Anta Diop University.

This study program is being implemented within the framework of WASCAL (West African Science Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use), a large-scale research-focused service centre including 11 West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Gambia and Togo). The programme is funded by WASCAL and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Each batch of the programme selects and admits one student from each country.

### PERSON IN CHARGE OF THE PROGRAMME

- Name, first name: Prof. BEYE, Assane
- Position held: Director
- Discipline: Economics

### RESULTS OF PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS AND QUALITY SYSTEM IN PLACE

This is the first time this programme has been evaluated.

The quality assurance system of the Graduate Study Programme (GSP) has been established by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (CIAQ) of UCAD. The evaluation of courses by students and students' recruitment follow the standards of the WASCAL network.

### HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAMME

- An administrative and technical staff of 11 persons, including a programme director and his deputy, a scientific coordinator and an academic coordinator, several supporting staff, an accountant, an IT officer, a janitor and a driver
- A pedagogical team including 20 professors from the host university and international lecturers and supervisors from West Africa, Europe and Canada
- A classroom and a computer room
- A bus to transport students or GSP staff
- Access to the libraries of UCAD, including their electronic resources

## NUMBER OF STUDENTS OVER THE EXISTENCE OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

		Batch 1 2012-2015	Batch 2 2013-2016	Batch 3 2016-2019	Batch 4 2019-2022
Year 1 to 4	Male	8	5	9	7
	Female	2	5	1	4
	Nationals	1	1	1	1
	Foreigners	8	9	9	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
Graduates	Male	7	5	9	7
	Female	2	5	1	4
	Nationals	1	1	1	2
	Foreigners	8	9	9	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>

Batch 5 was launched in 2022 with 11 enrolled students.

## II. COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

- Benoît GABRIELLE, Professor, AgroParisTech, Université Paris-Saclay, Chair of the panel
- Mathilde COLAS, PhD Student, Université de Technologie de Troyes, Student Expert
- Anass NAGIH, Professor, Université de Lorraine
- Vanina PASQUALINI, Professor, Université de Corse

Hcéres was represented by Pierre COURTELLEMONT, Science Advisor, and Michelle HOUPE, Head of project (Europe and International Department).

## III. EVALUATION PROCESS

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ON-SITE VISIT

- Date: 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- Organisation of the visit: before the visit took place, the self-assessment report and many appendices had been received by the experts. The on-site visit took place over two days, according to a schedule agreed between WASCAL Centre and the experts' panel. Once written by the panel chair, the report was submitted to all panel members for review.
- Cooperation of the institution to be accredited: perfect cooperation by all stakeholders
- Any problems: no problems identified

### PEOPLE MET

Day/Hour (Dakar Time)	People met
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 09:00 – 10:30 am	Meeting with WASCAL-CCE management team: presentation of the training programme
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 10:30 – 11:30 am	Meeting with students' supervisors
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Meeting with a panel of permanent and temporary professors
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 12:30 – 13:30 pm	Meeting with the administrative staff
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 03:00 – 04:00 pm	Meeting with a panel of students
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 04:00 – 05:00 pm	Meeting with a panel of former students (alumni)
March 9 <sup>th</sup> 05:00 – 06:00 pm	Site visit: Campus tour showing the workplaces of students (laboratories, practical rooms, documentation or research areas)
March 10 <sup>th</sup> 09:00 – 10:00 am	Meeting with the Academic Affairs Department of UCAD
March 10 <sup>th</sup> 10:00 – 11:00 am	Meeting with the Quality Assurance Board of UCAD
March 10 <sup>th</sup> 11:00 – 12:00 am	Meeting with the direction of the Legal, Political, Economic and Management Sciences (EDJPEG) post graduate school of UCAD

Around 50 participants were met during the visit, mostly on site.



## IV. OVERALL PRESENTATION

Since its inception in 2012, the WASCAL (West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use) network aims to provide climate change solutions through capacity building. By educating future scientists, WASCAL may help West African countries to develop suitable management strategies.

Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, WASCAL aims at strengthening the research infrastructure and capacity in West Africa related to climate change by pooling the expertise of eleven West African countries and Germany.

The Climate Change Economics Graduate Studies Programme (CCE GSP) of WASCAL is housed within the Legal, Political, Economic, and Management Sciences (EDJPEG) postgraduate school of the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar (UCAD). UCAD has a student body of around 90,000 and comprises several components: Faculties, Schools and University Institutes, Faculty Institutes, Postgraduate schools, common services, Joint International Training, and research structures. Their missions encompass education, training, research, and contributing to Senegal's and Africa's economic and cultural development. EDJPEG is one of the seven Postgraduate Schools of UCAD. It offers teaching and research activities to doctoral and post-doctoral students aiming to deepen their knowledge and know-how specific to each of its four disciplinary fields: law, political sciences, economics, and management. Additionally, it enhance opportunities for multidisciplinary between these four fields. The CCE programme leverages the multidisciplinary aspects contributed by EDJPEG through its courses covering economics, finance, geography, mathematics, international trade, statistics, and cultural issues. Conversely, the programme contributes to courses organised by the EDJPEG by co-funding them.

### PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME SELF-ASSESSMENT APPROACH

The request for accreditation by UCAD concerns the Climate Change Economics Graduate Study Programme (CCE GSP), which provided a self-assessment report consisting of a main document in English accompanied by an archive of about 30 files. The report was drafted by the GSP management team, with the help of professors, students, the GSP's administrative staff and the UCAD Internal Quality Assurance Unit (CIAQ). The drafting of the report, based on a participatory approach, follows the Hcéres reference framework.

## V. EVALUATION REPORT

### FIELD 1. DOCTORAL POLICY

Thanks to its focus on key challenges for the sustainable development of Senegal and West Africa, its international stance, and the quality of its training and research programme, the CCE GSP is a flagship programme of UCAD, fully aligned with its strategy and supported by its governing bodies.

Since its inception, the GSP considers the social, economic, and environmental needs of the 11 countries participating in WASCAL. This network has a Ministerial Council that brings together all the higher education and research ministers. This Council defines broad themes according to the specific needs of the countries, which are translated into research questions from which thesis topics are defined.

Originally, the New Inter-University Graduate Programme (NPTCI<sup>1</sup>), a Master's programme in Economics, was created in 1994 that brought together 19 French-speaking African countries. Then, in 2012 was launched the bilingual graduate study programme in economics, bringing a new, multidisciplinary perspective to tackle the challenges of sustainable development and climate change. This has a bearing on the positioning and research activities of PhD candidates. So far, this GSP has trained 30 PhD' students in its first three batches, and 22 students are currently enrolled in the fourth and fifth batches.

National and international research laboratories (including Germany, African countries and the United States) are partners of the CCE GSP. They are involved in academic activities and research, particularly in teaching and supervising PhD candidates. However, their relationships should be better defined, particularly regarding the attachment of each student to a research laboratory, also specifying the names of the thesis supervisors involved. The involvement of European research partners through a mandatory visit for PhD candidates provides a clear added value to the training and research of the GSP candidates. Still, a more formal approach to these collaborations (via cooperation agreements or MoUs) would be beneficial.

The GSP considers the question of research ethics, but only within the scope of a course on research methodology. Doctoral students can access the University's documentary and digital resources. The GSP fosters and support the production of scientific publications, although it does not specify a quota. The final PhD dissertations and scientific articles produced by the students are available on the WASCAL and UCAD web sites. Overall, graduates have demonstrated excellent scientific output, with each publishing several articles in internationally-renowned journals. Thus far, the 29 graduates of the CCE GSP have published 230 journal articles or conference papers, indicating a remarkable of scholarly activity.

The doctoral training programme regularly organises conferences or study trips in collaboration with its partners within the framework of research programs funded by Canada, West African countries, or the European Union. For instance, the "Regional Conference on Climate Change and Food Security" took place on 18-19 November 2019 at Cheikh Anta Diop University, with participation of all doctoral students. In November 2022, two students attended COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

At the national level, partnerships involve governmental or scientific bodies such as:

- Directorate of the Environment and Classified Establishments/Ministry of Environment (DEEC)
- Water and Forestry,
- National Agency of Civil Aviation and Meteorology (Anacim),
- Commission on Carbon Market and Climate finance,
- Environmental Watch Directorate,
- Ecological Monitoring Centre,
- Atmosphere and Ocean Physics Laboratory (LPAO-SF), UCAD.

However, even if links exist with socio-economic partners and with those involved with environmental matters, they are not directly engaged in the development of the doctoral programme.

The PhD programme welcomes an international audience, particularly facilitated by the WASCAL network and its 11 partner countries in West Africa. There are also partnerships with German, American and South African research centres, which offer research stays to students, funded by WASCAL.

**To conclude, the CCE graduate study programme is consistent with the institution's overall training strategy. The team in charge of the programme proficiently delineates, elucidates, and substantiates the positioning of the**

<sup>1</sup> NPTCI standing for « Nouveau programme de troisième cycle interuniversitaire »

doctorate within the scientific orientations and thematic priorities of the University and of the WASCAL network. The GSP takes into account the social, economic, and environmental needs of the various partner countries. It is closely integrated with existing Master's programmes and appropriately positioned within local, national, or international training offerings. The GSP has established numerous international partnerships to ensure robust support from research laboratories. However, the relationships between the GSP and its research partners needs clearer definition, particularly regarding the supervision and monitoring of doctoral theses. The adequate level of the doctoral dissertations is attested by the excellent quality of the associated scientific output. The GSP offers students with an international platform through the organisation of conferences and study trips. Socio-economic partners should be more actively engaged in the programme design and development to enhance the impact of WASCAL graduates on climate change issues.

## FIELD 2: TRAINING, HOSTING AND SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

According to WASCAL regulations, the curriculum of the doctoral study programme is structured into several mandatory steps, each with a specified object and duration:

Duration	Object
4 months	Language courses
6 months	Initial training courses in Dakar
2 months	Proposal development
5 months	Literature review
11 months	Data collection in home countries
6 months (including mobility in Germany)	Data analysis
9 months	Thesis drafting

The initial doctoral training courses comprise four modules:

1. Quantitative Tools;
2. Core Economics Theory and Climate Change;
3. Resources Economics and Climate Change;
4. Transversal module.

The modules allow students to acquire knowledge and skills, including tools (such as mathematical tools and research methods) and additional skills (such as Geographic information system [GIS] and communication). In parallel, experts, including socioeconomic partners and civil society actors, conduct regular webinars on topics related to climate change. However, this aspect lacks a clear definition in the curriculum. Overall, there is minimal input from non-academic sources to the programme, despite identifying various stakeholders as potential employers including governments and administrations overseeing sectors such as the environment, agriculture, forestry, marine resources, energy, or land use planning, as well as agencies, consultancies, and non-governmental organisations.

The initial training program consists of 22 courses, including 15 hours of classroom time (or equivalent) each. The courses take place during the first year of the GSP. A syllabus is provided for all courses, although it does not systematically outline the procedures for evaluating acquired skills. Courses are assessed by students through a comprehensive feedback form, yet the analysis of these forms lacks formalisation. Pedagogical meetings are not scheduled to facilitate discussion, review, and improvement of the overall training curriculum with lecturers.

The rules for recruiting PhD candidates are well defined by the institution, with various criteria in place. The funding policy includes a monthly stipend of 500 euros for three and a half years, a research budget of 10,000 euros, provision of a laptop computer for each student, and funding for mandatory international mobility, comprising a study visit of two to six months in Germany. The lump sum allocated to each PhD candidate for their research is uniform, although the expenses for experiments may vary depending on their nature, theme, or scale.

Doctoral students benefit from favourable conditions regarding digital and physical environments within the institution (e.g., conference room, classrooms, computer room, Internet access). The terms governing the hosting of doctoral students within research laboratories should be clearly specified in a hosting agreement, for instance.

Each student is assigned three supervisors: one from UCAD, one from their home country, and one from Germany. Surprisingly, there is no systematic rule to ensure interdisciplinarity in the supervising committee despite it being one of the key claims of the GSP. This is unexpected given that PhD projects intersect with non-economic disciplines such as climatology, agronomy, hydrology, demography, and social sciences. A committee convenes every six months to monitor and endorse the progress of the PhD work. However, the transition from one year to another of the doctorate is not clearly delineated, particularly in case of issues arising. Periodic tripartite meetings involving the administration, supervisors, and the doctoral student take place. Nevertheless, despite the existence of a Thesis Charter, the commitments of students and thesis supervisors need explicit clarification, as do the rules and criteria for defending a doctoral thesis. PhD candidates are encouraged to write dissertations in essay form to facilitate the publication of at least one scientific article prior to the defence.

The doctoral training is adapted to international students, starting with mandatory English language courses for Francophones, taught at University of Cape Coast in Ghana, and conversely, French language courses for Anglophones at the University of Lomé, Togo. The official language of the programme is English, and all courses are taught in English, as are the thesis dissertations. PhD candidates must be physically present in Dakar during the program's initial year. Afterwards, students return to their home countries for data collection and analysis in relation to their research project. Online meetings are scheduled every six months with the supervisors, and experts are invited if deemed necessary.

**To conclude, doctoral students within the GSP benefit from homogeneous, high-quality, and transparent recruitment conditions. The initial training programme provides them with multidisciplinary knowledge and skills, accommodating the diverse student batches through English and French language courses. However, the GSP lacks the input of socioeconomic partners and formal procedures to assessing the skills acquired by its students. The supervision conditions and hosting arrangements for PhD students within research laboratories need clearer definition to ensure interdisciplinarity. Doctoral students benefit from adequate material and financial conditions, thanks to the support from the WASCAL network, but with very little flexibility. Despite the existence of a Thesis Charter at UCAD level, the compliance rules and criteria for the final Ph.D. defence should be better defined.**

### FIELD 3: THE ATTRACTIVENESS, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE DOCTORATE

The application and selection processes are explicit, which includes the rule of admitting only one candidate per country within the WASCAL network. The composition of the pre-selection committees is well established, comprising officials or representatives from various educational and scientific institutions within UCAD and WASCAL. The primary selection criterion emphasised is scientific quality. Although the programme claims to encourage female applications, no system, such as gender weighting, is implemented. As a result, out of the first four batches, 12 out of 41 enrolled students were women.

Numerical indicators demonstrate that the number of applications has increased since the first campaign in 2012, despite the fixed number of spots at 11 (one per partner country):

Batches	Applications
2012	51
2013	84
2016	81
2019	Unknown
2022	157

The increase in the overall number of applications suggests a growing quantitative attractiveness, yet it does not enable an assessment of qualitative attractiveness. Some countries still receive low numbers of applications (such as Nigeria, Mali, and Gambia), or none at all (Cabo Verde), making it difficult to analyse the impact of Masters' programmes offered within the WASCAL network relative to nationality. An analysis based on recruitment pools would facilitate targeted information campaigns to ensure sustainable and evenly distributed qualitative attractiveness. Regarding the gender composition of admissions, the report should provide a percentage breakdown and comment on the low admission rate in certain countries. Generally, it is recommended to consolidate data for all batches between the self-assessment report and the periodic technical and financial reports of WASCAL (quarterly and semi-annual), provided in annexes. For instance, Annex 2.6 outlines the number of student mobilities to Germany per batch, from batch 1 to 4, with most PhD students staying for three to six months. The table indicates that for batch 4, 11 students stayed in Germany.

The Self-evaluation report does not provide an analysis of the links between the master's and doctoral programmes offered within the WASCAL network or those available in partner institutions.

All students enrolled into the programme from batch 1 to 3 have graduated within the planned timeline, and the graduation process is ongoing for batch 4. The career progression of CCE graduates is meticulously monitored and documented. Graduates hold positions in academia, with 60% serving as lecturers-researchers in national public institutions, and occasionally, they find roles in global organisations as consultants or scientific experts. However, this outcome does not precisely align with the initial programme prospects, particularly regarding opportunities within the private sector. This discrepancy may be attributed to the programme's limited exposure to the industrial world, which may stem from either a deliberate decision by the programme management or a lack of familiarity with private socio-professional environments. It is imperative to discern this aspect to either promote the training or adapt it accordingly.

Alumni associations exist by country and by programme at the level of the WASCAL network. They have platforms on social media. Above all, they act as intermediaries for specific pieces of information. They do not play an active role in developing or promoting the GSP, although some contribute to its training curriculum.

**To conclude, the GSP benefits from a well-structured international network of partner universities, ensuring high-quality recruitment of PhD candidates through clear admission procedures and regulations. The increasing number of applicants testifies to its attractiveness, although a qualitative analysis is lacking, and targeted promotion of the GSP could be enhanced. The programme features a remarkably high success rate for graduates (100%) and strictly adheres to the three-year target duration of PhD theses. The career path of CCE graduates is well monitored (on an internal basis), showing a strong focus on academia and a marginal impact on private or public decision-making bodies, thereby only partially aligning with the WASCAL network's objectives. While alumni maintain connections with the GSP management team, their involvement in the programme's development and promotion remains limited.**

## FIELD 4: MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE DOCTORATE

The research projects undertaken by students are validated by the Academic Board of the GRP, which determines the composition of the supervisory team. Supervising a PhD student entails holding at least one meeting per semester and submitting a progress report per trimester to the WASCAL Academic Council. The modalities for monitoring research activities are rigorously formalised and communicated to doctoral students and supervisors. Deadlines for thesis defence are adhered to, and defences are scheduled during a dedicated, coordinated period. However, beyond the local management of WASCAL, there is a lack of an independent mediation body capable of addressing grievances from PhD students in cases of supervision-related difficulties.

The doctoral training program facilitates exchanges with international researchers, both during the initial training phase and throughout thesis supervision. However, there is no assessment of the foreign researchers hosted or the training undertaken by supervisory staff. At UCAD level, there is a specific policy in place for the training and capacity-building of lecturers or supervisors, but no incentives to encourage university staff participation in the GSP.

The presence of this programme naturally stimulates a scientific activity around the theme of climate change, benefiting UCAD, its staff, and its students. It also facilitates the installation and anchoring of best practices in line with international standards. While the training pace – producing one doctor per year per country – may appear slow, the objective of integrating knowledge on climate change into the policies of WASCAL countries is steadily advancing.

The GSP courses are evaluated by students at the end of the training period, prior to the validation of research projects and the assignment of supervisors. The Academic Board addresses this matter during its annual meeting to formalise recommendations for professors. While this procedure could be improved for greater efficiency, such as by using anonymous forms and distinguishing between the evaluation of teaching by PhD students and training by graduates, it does not specify how many individual student difficulties are reported and addressed.

**To conclude, the GSP benefits from a well-formalised and documented framework for selecting, hosting, and supervising PhD candidates. Its organisational efficiency is supported by adequate financial means, human resources, and infrastructure. The support of the central WASCAL competence platform located in Ouagadougou is instrumental for capitalising on the data collected by PhD candidates and their fieldwork. However, the absence of an independent mediation body to address and resolve difficulties encountered by PhD students, whether related to course validation or thesis supervision, is a notable gap. While an institutional policy is in place for the training and capacity-building of lecturers or supervisors, there are no incentives to encourage university staff participation in the GSP. Although the programme's courses undergo thorough evaluation by students, with the results informing improvements to the training period, there is room for enhancing the efficiency and systematic nature of quality procedures.**

## VI. CONCLUSION

The Graduate programme on Climate Change and Economics occupies a strategically significant position within the WASCAL network, addressing a highly relevant and interdisciplinary topic that fosters dialogue between economics, and environmental and life sciences. It has produced an excellent scientific output through a substantial number of publications and has been successful in integrating its graduates into the academic sector. The programme benefits from efficient organisation, with adequate support in terms of financial means, human resources, and infrastructure, and enjoys clear recognition from its host university. The growing number of applications across various student batches underscores its appeal, although its promotional efforts could be better targeted and enhanced.

Since the GSP-CCE is fit to address established needs within both the public and private sectors, it could significantly enhance its impact on decision-making bodies by adapting its training curriculum and fostering closer interactions with socioeconomic stakeholders. Implementing a proactive partnership policy with these stakeholders could also facilitate increasing the number of graduates and leverage its influence. Developing vocational or entrepreneurship training, and a competence-based approach in general, is recommended to ensure the relevance of the study programme to the diverse scientific and societal issues arising from climate change in West Africa. Given the significant implications of climate change, particularly from an economic standpoint, prioritising the development and sustainability of the GSP-CCE and diversifying its targets in terms of job market should be paramount.

### STRENGTHS

#### *In general, for the WASCAL network*

- A well-structured international network of partner universities that ensures the high-quality recruitment of PhD students on an international scale, providing a top-tier opportunity for capacity building across West Africa in addressing climate change.
- A thematic focus on a cross-cutting topic with high societal and scientific relevance to West Africa aligns with established needs for public and private decision-making, as well as research and higher education.
- An effective foreign language and intercultural training.
- An organisation with adequate support in terms of financial means, human resources, and infrastructure.
- A well-formalised and documented framework to select, host and supervise PhD candidates.
- The support of a regional Competence Centre centralises the data collected by PhD candidates, providing WASCAL researchers with the opportunity to capitalise on this valuable resource.

#### *Specific points to CCE GSP*

- A programme with a very high success rate for graduates and strict compliance with the three-year target duration for PhD projects.
- A multidisciplinary training curriculum
- An excellent scientific productivity, with an extensive record of international, peer-reviewed articles and conference papers.
- A strong support from the university hosting the programme (UCAD) with clear recognition and added-value for the host institution.

### WEAKNESSES

- A marginal impact on private or public decision-making bodies so far, with the majority of graduates assuming academic positions.
- A training and research curriculum with a strong academic focus and limited input from or interaction with non-academic stakeholders affected by climate change.
- The lack of a structured partnership with German institutions, and a limited added value from the mandatory visit of PhD students in Germany.
- The absence of a framework to ensure a consistent interdisciplinarity across the PhD projects.
- The lack of a competence-based approach to curriculum design and of procedures for evaluating the skills acquired by students.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INSTITUTION

- Adapt the training curriculum to accommodate the needs of public and private decision-makers regarding climate change, broaden the career prospects for graduates beyond academia, and leverage the impact of the CCE programme in addressing the outlined challenges.
- Increase the number of graduates by deploying a proactive partnership policy with relevant stakeholders (economic sectors such as agriculture, forestry, or fisheries, regional/national authorities and governments, industry, and consultancies).
- Develop vocational training courses based on the programme's competences and expertise, as well as entrepreneurship training.
- Favour the immersion of French-speaking students in English-speaking countries during the initial language-training period by dispatching them over several locations/countries.
- Make the six-month initial academic training course modular to make room for advanced topics when necessary, based on students' background and research projects, and provide a diploma supplement to track this tailor-made curriculum.
- Structure and formalise partnerships with a selected group of recognised German institutions to enhance collaboration.
- Include external stakeholders in thesis supervision committees and ensure that the two main supervisors represent different disciplines to foster interdisciplinarity.
- Implement tools such as a dashboard to monitor the career path of alumni and provide feedback on the programme curriculum.

## VII. OBSERVATIONS OF THE INSTITUTION



*Le Directeur*

### UNIVERSITE CHEIKH ANTA DIOP DE DAKAR (UCAD)

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#### WASCAL GRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM

#### CLIMATE CHANGE ECONOMICS

Dakar, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Stéphane Le Bouler

President of the French High Council for the  
Evaluation of Research and higher education (Hcéres)

**Subject:** Feedback on the evaluation report

I am writing to provide feedback on the evaluation report prepared by Hcéres. We appreciate the thoroughness of the evaluation report. It accurately reflects the information from our self-evaluation report and the insightful discussions between the evaluation committee and the stakeholders interviewed. We concur with the committee's analysis, and endorse the recommendations that align with our ongoing effort for continuous service improvement since the creation of our programme.

We undertook in a transparent and inclusive way this exercise as an opportunity to reflect in depth on our programme with the aim of improving the quality of our teaching and research services. The evaluation process, from drafting the self-evaluation report to the site visit, has been a valuable opportunity for introspection. It has allowed us to reflect on our activities, our positioning at national and sub-regional levels, and the expectations of our stakeholders.

The strong points revealed by the evaluation committee confirm the significant contribution of our programme in addressing climate change issues through high-level publications and the provision of highly qualified human resources that strengthen institutional capacities and improve the livelihoods of our communities. This achievement is the outcome of a strong commitment and constant, multi-faceted support from all the university authorities and WASCAL.

The weaknesses highlighted by the evaluation committee reflect a number of issues that need to be addressed at both internal and external levels. Internally, the evaluators consider that the cross-cutting nature of climate change requires the curriculum to be open to non-academic stakeholders, particularly the private sector, in order to give our products a greater ease of professional integration. Externally, we need to establish a structured partnership with a German institution to facilitate scientific visits by students and strengthen the sustainability of the programme.



We highly value the recommendations provided, as they will serve as a foundation in our pursuit for sustainability, where achieving excellence is an imperative. We are committed to implementing the entire suggestion outlined in this report. The recruitment of our sixth batch will reflect it.

We extend our gratitude to the Hcéres staff and the expert committee, headed by Chairman Benoît GABRIELLE, for their professionalism throughout the process. We would also like to thank all the top management at UCAD, in particular the central directors who kindly gave up their time to talk to the members of the expert committee. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the WASCAL capacity-building department for giving us this opportunity to reflect in depth on our programme with a view to improving it. We, finally commend the dedication of our Graduate Study Program's technical, administrative, and teaching staff who spared no effort to make this evaluation a success.

Yours sincerely

**Assane BEYE**

WASCAL GRADUATE RESEARCH  
PROGRAM ON CLIMATE CHANGE  
ECONOMICS  
Le Directeur  
Professeur Assane BEYE

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2 rue Albert Einstein  
75013 Paris, France  
T. 33 (0)1 55 55 60 10

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## ACCREDITATION DECISION

**Graduate Study Programme (PhD) of WASCAL  
on Climate Change Economics**

Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar

Dakar, Senegal

**June 2024**

## SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCÉRES

HCÉRES has based its evaluation process on a set of objectives that study programmes must pursue to ensure recognised quality within France and Europe. These objectives are divided up into four accreditation criteria.

The Accreditation Commission issues an opinion about the accreditation of the study programme after examining the file. The Hcéres President takes the decision based on the Commission's opinion and the final evaluation report of the programme. This accreditation decision, taken in plenary session, is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The decision issued by Hcéres regarding the accreditation of the study programme corresponds to the awarding of a label to the evaluated entity.

This decision is independent of the accreditations carried out by the French State and therefore does not entail recognition in France of the institution or the diplomas delivered by it.



**Decision No. EI-2024-26 on the accreditation of the WASCAL Graduate Study Programme (PhD) on Climate Change Economics delivered by Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, Senegal**

**The President of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education,**

Considering the Research Code, in particular Articles L. 114-3-1 to L. 114-3-6;

Considering the Board's deliberation of 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 on the accreditation criteria for international study programmes (except doctorates/PhDs);

Considering the Decision No. 2023-9 of 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023 on the international accreditation procedure of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the agreement DEI\_20220407 of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 - for the evaluation/accreditation of seven training courses, delivered by training and research centres affiliated to the WASCAL network in seven sub-Saharan African countries;

Considering the opinion issued by the Accreditation Commission on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024;

**Decides:**

**Article 1**

Noting that the Graduate Study Programme on Climate Change Economics delivered by Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, in Senegal, meets the four accreditation criteria, voted by the Board of the High Council on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022, as follows:

**ACCREDITATION CRITERION 1: DOCTORAL POLICY**

The Climate Change Economics Graduate Studies Programme (GSP) is consistent with the institution's overall training strategy. The team in charge of the programme proficiently delineates, elucidates, and substantiates the positioning of the doctorate within the scientific orientations and thematic priorities of the University and of the Wascal network. The GSP takes into account the social, economic, and environmental needs of the various partner countries. It is closely integrated with existing Master's programmes and appropriately positioned within local, national, or international training offerings. The GSP has established numerous international partnerships to ensure robust support from research laboratories. However, the relationships between the GSP and its research partners needs clearer definition, particularly regarding the supervision and monitoring of doctoral theses. The adequate level of the doctoral dissertations is attested by the excellent quality of the associated scientific output. The GSP provides students with an international platform through the organisation of conferences and study trips.

**ACCREDITATION CRITERION 2: TRAINING, HOSTING AND SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS**

Doctoral students within the Climate Change Economics Graduate Studies Programme benefit from homogeneous, high-quality, and transparent recruitment conditions. The initial training programme provides them with multidisciplinary knowledge and skills, accommodating the diverse student batches through English and French language courses. However, the GSP lacks the input of socioeconomic partners and formal procedures to assessing the skills acquired by its students. The supervision conditions and hosting arrangements for PhD students within research laboratories need clearer definition to ensure interdisciplinarity. Doctoral students benefit from adequate material and financial conditions, thanks to the support from the WASCAL network, but with very little flexibility. Despite the existence of a Thesis Charter at UCAD level, the compliance rules and criteria for the final Ph.D. defence should be better defined.

**ACCREDITATION CRITERION 3: ATTRACTIVENESS, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME**

The Climate Change Economics Graduate Studies Programme benefits from a well-structured international network of partner universities, ensuring high-quality recruitment of PhD candidates through

clear admission procedures and regulations. The increasing number of applicants testifies to its attractiveness, although a qualitative analysis is lacking, and targeted promotion of the GSP could be enhanced. The programme features a remarkably high success rate for graduates (100%) and strictly adheres to the three-year target duration of PhD theses. The career path of CCE graduates is well monitored (on an internal basis), showing a strong focus on academia and a marginal impact on private or public decision-making bodies, thereby only partially aligning with the WASCAL network's objectives.

#### ACCREDITATION CRITERION 4: MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

The Climate Change Economics Graduate Studies Programme benefits from a well-formalised and documented framework for selecting, hosting, and supervising PhD candidates. Its organisational efficiency is supported by adequate financial means, human resources, and infrastructure. The support of the central WASCAL competence platform located in Ouagadougou is instrumental for capitalising on the data collected by PhD candidates and their fieldwork. However, the absence of an independent mediation body to address and resolve difficulties encountered by PhD students, whether related to course validation or thesis supervision, is a notable gap. While an institutional policy is in place for the training and capacity-building of lecturers or supervisors, there are no incentives to encourage university staff participation in the GSP. Although the programme's courses undergo thorough evaluation by students, with the results informing improvements to the training period, there is room for enhancing the efficiency and systematic nature of quality procedures.

#### Article 2

The WASCAL Graduate Study Programme (PhD) on Climate Change Economics delivered by Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, in Senegal, is accredited for a period of 5 years from the date of this decision.

#### Article 3

The decision is accompanied by the following recommendations and comments:

- Adapt the training curriculum to accommodate the needs of public and private decision-makers regarding climate change, broaden the career prospects for graduates beyond academia, and leverage the impact of the CCE programme in addressing the outlined challenges.
- Increase the number of graduates by deploying a proactive partnership policy with relevant stakeholders (economic sectors such as agriculture, forestry, or fisheries, regional/national authorities and governments, industry, and consultancies).
- Develop vocational training courses based on the programme's competences and expertise, as well as entrepreneurship training.
- Favour the immersion of French-speaking students in English-speaking countries during the initial language-training period by dispatching them over several locations/countries.
- Make the six-month initial academic training course modular to make room for advanced topics when necessary, based on students' background and research projects, and provide a diploma supplement to track this tailor-made curriculum.
- Structure and formalise partnerships with a selected group of recognised German institutions to enhance collaboration.
- Include external stakeholders in thesis supervision committees and ensure that the two main supervisors represent different disciplines to foster interdisciplinarity.
- Implement tools such as a dashboard to monitor the career path of alumni and provide feedback on the programme curriculum.

**Article 4**

This decision will be published on the Hcéres website.

Paris, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

The acting President  
signed  
Stéphane Le Bouler

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