

Faculty and Learning Environment

Students benefit from working closely with an expert teaching faculty comprising both UNU-IAS academic staff and invited distinguished scholars and practitioners. Sharing a building with many UN agencies, UNU-IAS offers a unique learning environment for its diverse international student body.

The UNU Library offers access to a range of academic books, over 10,000 electronic journals, World Bank and OECD publications, and official UN documents issued since 1946. Students also have access to the libraries of International Christian University, Sophia University, and The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. All students are provided with a comprehensive library orientation session at the beginning of the course.

An online learning system is provided for students to access lecture notes, reading lists and other materials specific to each course, as well as a message board and forum to facilitate discussion among faculty and students.

Student Support Services

UNU-IAS assists students from the time of their registration to graduation, acknowledging that students may experience difficulties adjusting to a new country and culture. An induction programme is conducted at the beginning of the academic session, introducing students to the staff responsible for student services, and familiarizing students with the campus through a tour of the facilities.

Housing

Students are provided with a handbook including information about living in Tokyo prior to their arrival, including information on how to find accommodation.

Fees

Application processing fee: None
Tuition fees: **USD 10,000** per year

A limited number of scholarships (covering tuition fees and living costs) are available for outstanding applicants from developing countries who can demonstrate a need for financial assistance.

Admission Requirements

Master's degree

Applicants for the master's programme must possess at least a completed bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in the field of sustainability with a GPA of 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale, and have a sufficient level of English language proficiency.

Doctoral degree

Applicants for the doctoral programme must possess a master's degree in a discipline related to sustainability studies and a minimum of 2 years of practical field experience related to UNU IAS research themes, or possess two master's degrees — at least one of which must be in a discipline related to sustainability studies. Applicants must have a GPA of 3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale for at least one of the master's degrees earned, and a sufficient level of English language proficiency.

Note: Admission requirements are subject to change each academic year

How to Apply

All interested applicants should apply using the UNU-IAS online application form. The application period usually starts in December every year. For more details, please visit the online postgraduate programmes page at: <http://ias.unu.edu/en/admissions/degrees>



UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCED STUDY OF SUSTAINABILITY

Postgraduate Degree Programmes

ias.unu.edu

United Nations University

Promoting science for human security, peace and sustainable development

The mission of the United Nations University is to contribute, through collaborative research, capacity development and advisory services, to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the United Nations, its Peoples and Member States.

The United Nations University comprises a worldwide network of institutes, coordinated by the United Nations University Centre in Tokyo.



Admissions Office

UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

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Website: <http://ias.unu.edu/en/admissions/degrees>

UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)

The United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) is a leading research and teaching institute based in Tokyo, Japan. Its mission is to advance efforts towards a more sustainable future, through policy-oriented research and capacity development focused on sustainability and its social, economic and environmental dimensions. UNU-IAS serves the international community, making valuable and innovative contributions to high-level policymaking and debates within the UN system.

The activities of the institute are in three thematic areas: sustainable societies, natural capital and biodiversity, and global change and resilience. UNU-IAS applies advanced research methodologies and innovative approaches to challenge conventional thinking and develop creative solutions to emerging issues of global concern in these areas. The institute's research, education and training combine expertise from a wide range of areas related to sustainability, and engage a global network of scholars and partner institutions. Through postgraduate teaching UNU-IAS develops international leaders with the interdisciplinary understanding and technical skills needed to advance creative solutions to problems of sustainability.



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The United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) invites applications for its postgraduate programmes — the Master of Science in Sustainability and the Doctor of Philosophy in Sustainability Science.

Master of Science in Sustainability

This master's degree programme cultivates a holistic perspective to address the development needs of societies without affecting the underlying sustainability of the earth system, through an innovative interdisciplinary approach that integrates the natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities.

Doctor of Philosophy in Sustainability Science

This doctoral degree programme focuses on environmental sustainability as its central theme, and provides comprehensive multidisciplinary knowledge for understanding sustainability problems in a holistic manner. The programme also fosters a deeper understanding of sustainability science through analysis of current issues related to global change, with perspectives from both natural and social sciences.

Unique opportunities at UNU-IAS

UNU-IAS has a global network of researchers and experts, providing students with unique opportunities for collaborative research. Both degree programmes offer opportunities to gain practical experience as well as theoretical and empirical knowledge, and develop skills through training courses including field research with UN agencies or other international organizations.

UNU-IAS develops its programmes by collaborating with other leading universities both in Japan (The University of Tokyo, International Christian University and Yokohama National University) and other countries. Students have opportunities to take courses from well known universities in the field of sustainability. Students also benefit from the unique position of UNU-IAS within the UN system. They will have opportunity to interact with leading academics, researchers, policymakers and practitioners.

UNU-IAS welcomes applicants with:

- A keen interest in the pressing global issues on the UN agenda, and in particular those of sustainability.
- An aspiration to pursue a career in international fields in public-service or private organizations, including the United Nations, multinational corporations and non-governmental organizations as well as research and academic institutions.
- The intention to proactively apply academic research findings to policymaking.
- A strong desire to contribute to the solving of problems concerning global environment through an interdisciplinary approach.

Course Information

Degree Awarded:
MSc in Sustainability

Credit requirement: Minimum 30 credits
Duration: 2 years
Start: September

Degree Awarded:
PhD in Sustainability Science

Credit requirement: Minimum 14 credits
Duration: 3 years
Start: September

Course offerings will be updated at the beginning of each semester.

Programme Design

MSc Programme (30 credits)

BROAD OVERVIEW COURSES: 8 CREDITS

Core Courses

UN-CECAR courses (Please see below)

Climate, Energy and Food Security

ELECTIVE COURSES: 6 CREDITS

Applied Hydrology

Sustainable Bioproduction and Ecosystems Management

Sociology of Development

COMPETENCY COURSES: 4 CREDITS

Environmental Statistics

Remote Sensing

Science Communications

Research Seminars: 4 credits

Master's Degree Thesis: 8 credits

PhD Programme (14 credits)

Core Courses and Research Seminars: 8 credits

Any other courses offered by UNU-IAS and partner universities: 6 credits

Doctoral Dissertation

Joint Diploma Programme of UNU-IAS and The University of Tokyo Graduate School of Frontier Sciences (UT-GSFS)

Master's Degree Programme

Students who wish to obtain this joint diploma offered by UNU-IAS and UT-GSFS are required to obtain 34 credits, eight of which should be from a pool of courses designated by UNU-IAS and UT-GSFS under the joint diploma programme. A joint diploma can only be awarded to students who successfully complete the two-year master's degree programme.

PhD Degree Programme

Students who wish to obtain a joint diploma offered by UNU-IAS and UT-GSFS are required to obtain 18 credits from both institutes.

University Network for Climate and Ecosystem Change Adaptation Research (UN-CECAR)

UNU-IAS organizes intensive courses developed under the framework of UN-CECAR. This network of more than 20 leading universities in the Asia Pacific designs and delivers collaborative courses

on climate and ecosystems change, adaptation and sustainability science.

Core Courses (2 credits each)

These courses provide students with a solid grounding in essential theories and multilateral approaches to issues of sustainability while emphasizing interdisciplinary perspectives.

UN System and Global Challenges

This course presents the institutional background and policy tasks of the UN system, and provides an analytical framework to study complex problems on the UN agenda.

Global Change and Resilience

This course explores concepts and options for building resilience to counter adverse impacts from land-use change and climate change drivers. Topics include definitions, water management, disaster risk reduction and the sustainability of ecosystem services.

Human Development and Global Sustainability

This course surveys the most pressing issues in development by focusing on the linkages between international cooperation and development outcomes.

Natural Capital and Biodiversity

This course provides students with an understanding and a multidisciplinary perspective on natural capital, biodiversity, human well-being and their interactions.

Research Seminars

Research Seminars are designed to equip students with the necessary skills to undertake interdisciplinary research in sustainability. Seminars emphasize collaborative knowledge building, and incorporate a wide range of learning

approaches. Critical analysis, research design, quantitative and qualitative methodologies, and thesis writing are among the skills developed through these interactive and student-centered seminars. Other learning activities

include group projects, guest lectures, workshops, and visits to United Nations and government agencies in Tokyo.

Courses (2 credits each)

Applied Hydrology

The course provides a broad understanding of hydrological processes, their quantitative estimation and how they are related to issues of water resources and sustainability. Systems analysis concepts are introduced to examine what constitutes a sustainable system.

Sustainable Bioproduction and Ecosystems Management

This course provides an overview of the global consequences of ecosystem changes and drivers of these changes, and introduces sustainable approaches to land and ecosystem management at different levels.

Environmental Statistics

This course develops statistical skills for conducting various types of environmental studies. An overview of statistical methods commonly utilized in natural and social environmental science will be provided, with training in analytical approaches used in both disciplines. Topics will include approaches for data manipulation, descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing, linear models, time series, spatial data analysis, and multivariable analysis.

Remote Sensing

The course provides a broad understanding of geospatial techniques and their use in many processes related to the global environment, from research to management and policymaking. It will introduce remote sensing techniques available for earth observation and monitoring changes to understand spatio-temporal changes and develop sustainable management plans.

Science Communications

This course is designed for researchers who are concerned about how best to effectively transmit their scientific knowledge to a broader audience in a variety of real-world contexts. It covers strategies for dealing with complex research topics, and for communicating with journalists and policymakers.

Climate, Energy and Food Security

This course provides students with practical insights and up-to-date knowledge on the interconnected themes of climate, energy and food security. It introduces the challenges facing the Asia Pacific region and the global community, and some of the possible solutions. The course was developed by a network of universities in the region, and connects classrooms at each university in real-time through video conferencing.

Sociology of Development

This course takes a sociological and cultural analysis approach to contemporary development problems, the formulation of policy and the evaluation of development outcomes, and examines failures of well-intentioned development projects. It also emphasizes methodologies for analyzing the sociological and cultural components of development.

Building Resilience to Climate Change

This course covers a range of issues related to sustainability and adaptation to climate and ecosystems change. Topics include climate and atmospheric science, impact assessment, climate and society, ecosystems resilience, risk and uncertainty, integrated solutions for mitigation and adaptation, mainstreaming adaptation into development planning and community-based adaptation.

Leadership for Sustainability

This course aims to educate and develop leaders with the ability to understand sustainability and sustainability leadership. It covers the sustainable development goals, basic concepts of leadership, trends and insights on leadership, organizational psychology, leadership and business leadership, and sustainability.