

POST-GRADUATE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Become part of an international team looking at

Social-Ecological Risk, Vulnerability and Adaptations to Climate Change in the Garden Route

This three-year programme is a collaboration between leading social and ecological scientists at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and CSIR, South Africa, University of Exeter in the UK, Arizona State University and CIRAD, IRSTEA and CFE in France. We wish to assess actual and perceived risk, vulnerability, and adaptation to climate change, and social learning in three regions: the Garden Route coast in South Africa; the Languedoc-Rousillon in France; and Cornwall in the UK.

The project addresses four research issues:

Risk and adaptation

1. How do risk due to climate change; adaptive capacity; human perceptions of risk and adaptability; and access to capacity-enhancing resources influence the adaptive actions and strategies of decision makers?

Vulnerability

2. How do such adaptations unintentionally affect the vulnerability of external groups, places or ecosystem services?

Feedback, reflection and action

3. Which feedbacks occur when people engage in social learning through reflective practice and critical inquiry?

Behavioral change and transformation

4. How do perceptions of risk and adaptive capacity change when decision makers are actively involved in, learn and reflect, in a process of situated social learning?

Opportunities for involvement

Opportunities exist for prospective Doctoral, post-Doctoral and Master's students to be part of an international consortium that will collaboratively address these issues.

Prospective students are encouraged to develop their own topics around the above themes. Examples of topics include:

- **Stakeholder engagement through participatory research to promote awareness, social learning and ecosystem stewardship in select catchments in the Southern Cape.**
- **Risk perceptions and adaptation strategies of farmers, foresters and conservationists in the Garden Route.**
- **The intended and unintended consequences of adaptations to risk and vulnerability in the Garden Route.**
- **Resilience theory to map areas of risk and vulnerability to climate change along the Garden Route coast.**
- **Combining empirical and participatory modeling techniques to assess risk and vulnerability of social-ecological systems in the Garden Route.**

In addition to competitive bursaries, participants will have extraordinary opportunities to develop international networks and contacts and share in the expertise of leading global sustainability specialists. Students will be based in the Sustainability Research Unit at NMMU's George Campus at Saasveld.

Please contact Prof Christo Fabricius, christo.fabricius@nmmu.ac.za by 30 September 2013, and feel free to visit the Sustainability Research Unit web site www.nmmu.ac.za/sru. Prospective students can join any time between September 2013 and February 2014.