



SUPPORTING IPBES CAPACITY BUILDING IN WEST AFRICA

As of: February 2021

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, IPBES, is tasked with providing scientific advice to governments on the topics of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The project aims to develop a model for strengthening the work of IPBES in West Africa. The overarching goal of this programme is to network domain experts working in biodiversity and ecosystem services, and to expand existing interfaces between research and government. Annual conferences promote cooperation and knowledge sharing between researchers about current developments in the field of biodiversity. This is supplemented by online forums that help to bring domain experts and decision-makers together from the region and further afield. A master's programme focusing on the evaluation of biodiversity and ecosystem services is also being set up at a university in West Africa. Students from 15 partner countries are eligible to enrol in this programme.

State of implementation/results

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all major project activities of present events scheduled within this timeframe have been moved to virtual formats.
- The graduation of the first year of the Master programme „Managing the Science-Policy Interface on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for sustainable development in West Africa – SPIBES“ was successfully completed. The defence of the work took place in a virtual meeting at the end of July 2020. All 15 students from 14 countries in West Africa have successfully obtained their master's degree.
- Since April 2020, most lectures for the second year of SPIBES Master's students have been held via digital platforms. The newly revised curriculum is successfully implemented through highly interactive teaching formats and digital classrooms.
- A series of virtual mini-workshops are being held in 2020 in place of the originally planned in-person workshop targeting West African

PROJECT DATA

Country/Countries:

Côte d'Ivoire (Elfenbeinküste), Ghana

Implementing organisation:

Universität Bonn

Political partner(s):

- Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) - Ghana
- Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRSCI) - Côte d'Ivoire

Implementing partner(s):

- Félix Houphouët Boigny University (UFHB) - Côte d'Ivoire
- Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung GmbH (UFZ)
- Nangui Abrogoua University (UNA) - Côte d'Ivoire
- UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC)
- West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)

BMU grant:

€ 2,493,294.72

Duration:

02/2017 till 01/2022

Website(s):

<http://www.wabes.net/>





biodiversity experts from academia, policy and societal actors. Until September 2020, three of these workshops were held with the support of the IPBES Secretariat on (1) "Scoping process of the IPBES Nexus Assessment" on 22 July; (2) "IPBES Transformative Change Assessment" on 20 August, and; (3) "First Order Draft of the IPBES Assessment on Invasive Alien Species" on 22 September with Prof. Helen Roy, Co-Chair of the Assessment. We will be conducting more workshops in a similar format, based on very positive feedback from participants and IPBES secretariat.

- Through close cooperation and interactive formats, these workshops narrow the gaps between SPIBES students, researchers and government representatives from West Africa. This collaboration offers the students valuable insights into practices in the science-policy interface. These contacts may support the students in filling interesting positions after graduation.
- The project facilitates communication between West African experts and the international IPBES community, for example through joint participation in the review process on IPBES products, such as the new assessments, and through network activities in the context of IPBES plenary sessions.
- WABES contributes directly and indirectly to the IPBES capacity building mandate, including through the participation of WABES partners and stakeholders as resource persons in the IPBES taskforce for capacity building and through all other project activities.

