

climate *news*

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY – MARCH 2025



A Quick Glance

- Burkina Faso Takes Strategic Step Towards Bioenergy and Green Hydrogen Development
- WASCAL Boosts Solar Energy Output in Burkina Faso with €450,000 Cleaning Equipment
- Promoting Climate Resilience and Renewable Energy in West Africa



West African Students Chart a Course in Marine Science Aboard Germany's POLARSTERN

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Thirteen master's students from West Africa have set sail on a life-changing journey aboard the German research vessel POLARSTERN, travelling from Mindelo in Cape Verde to Bremerhaven, Germany. Over the course of two weeks, these young scientists will gain hands-on experience in ocean research, working alongside international experts in marine and climate science. This voyage marks the third edition of the Floating University, a flagship initiative led by the GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel. The programme is made possible through the support of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) under the WASCAL framework.

The expedition provides more than just exposure. It equips students with practical skills and knowledge that are critical for addressing climate-related ocean challenges in their home countries. From collecting water samples at depths of up to thousands of metres, to studying microscopic organisms and analysing ocean currents, the students are immersed in real-time scientific inquiry that connects classroom theory to global research standards. The experience also fosters professional networks and introduces them to advanced technologies and methods that are often inaccessible in local settings.

Beyond the technical training, the Floating University is

a powerful demonstration of international cooperation and shared commitment to advancing ocean science in the Global South. It contributes meaningfully to the goals of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development by building scientific capacity where it is needed most. It also aligns with WASCAL's broader mission to train a new generation of climate leaders who can translate knowledge into policy, innovation, and community impact.

For the participating students, this opportunity is a springboard. Many alumni from previous editions have gone on to pursue doctoral studies, publish research findings, and shape environmental policy at national and regional levels. Their achievements are a testament to what is possible when the right support, mentorship, and learning environment come together.

This voyage reaffirms a long-standing partnership between Germany and West Africa, one that places value on mutual learning, investment in people, and sustainable development. As the POLARSTERN makes its way northward, it carries not only a crew of aspiring scientists, but the hopes of a continent determined to play a greater role in the stewardship of our oceans.

[Read more.](#)

Climate Change Scholars Advancing West Africa's Resilience



The academic success of these scholars is more than a personal triumph. It signals the steady development of West Africa's capacity to generate homegrown knowledge and lead climate action across multiple sectors. Each thesis defense adds to the body of evidence-based research that is essential for shaping national climate strategies and supporting vulnerable communities.

In an important stride toward strengthening West Africa's climate leadership, 132 scholars across 12 universities in 11 countries are advancing steadily in their academic journeys. As members of WASCAL's fifth cohort, these students are contributing to a growing pool of regional expertise dedicated to tackling the complex challenges of climate change through high-quality research and innovation.

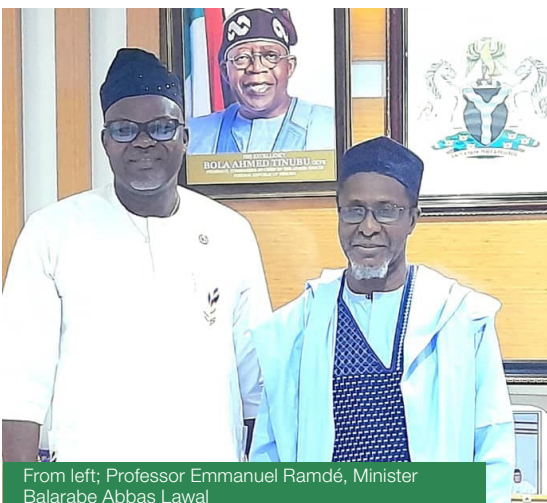
WASCAL's commitment to training the next generation of scientists and policy experts continues to yield results. The dedication of these scholars is matched by the strong partnerships among universities, local institutions, and the support of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Together, they are strengthening the region's scientific and leadership base to tackle the growing impacts of climate change.

At Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana, doctoral candidates in the Climate Change and Land Use programme have reached a major milestone by successfully defending their theses. This achievement marks a critical step in their journey to becoming leaders in sustainable land management, environmental planning, and climate policy. Their research is already contributing to better understanding of land degradation, forest recovery, food systems, and urban climate resilience.

As more students move toward completing their programmes, the momentum continues to build. These scholars are not just earning degrees; they are preparing to play key roles in transforming West Africa's climate response and development agenda. Their work represents real progress toward a more resilient and sustainable future for the region.

[Read more.](#)

Nigeria Assures WASCAL of Support to Build Capacity on Climate Change



From left: Professor Emmanuel Ramdé, Minister Balarabe Abbas Lawal

The Nigerian Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal, has assured WASCAL of his government's support to build capacity on climate change and energy transition. This partnership will help Nigeria tackle climate change and transition to cleaner energy. He was speaking when WASCAL, led by the Executive Director, Prof. Emmanuel Ramde paid a courtesy call on him.

Nigeria's participation in the upcoming International Conference on Climate Change by WASCAL will provide a platform for the country to showcase its commitment to climate action and learn from others.

[Read more.](#)

WASCAL Boosts Solar Energy Output in Burkina Faso with €450,000 Cleaning Equipment



WASCAL has reinforced Burkina Faso's efforts to expand clean energy access by providing €450,000 worth of specialised cleaning equipment to SONABEL, the national electricity company. The equipment, delivered under the PV2H project, is set to enhance the performance of the Zagtouli Solar Power Plant by addressing a critical challenge, dust build-up on solar panels, especially during the dry Harmattan season.

With the new equipment in place, regular and efficient cleaning of the panels can now be carried out, allowing the plant to operate at its full potential. This is expected to increase the reliability and volume of solar power fed into the national grid, reduce maintenance disruptions, and ultimately improve energy access for households and businesses.

The intervention also supports Burkina Faso's broader goal of moving away from fossil fuels and strengthening its renewable energy systems. By integrating practical solutions with scientific expertise, the PV2H project is helping to unlock the full potential of solar energy in the country.

This contribution reflects WASCAL's continued commitment to supporting West African countries with real, targeted solutions in the fight against climate change.

[Read more.](#)

Burkina Faso Takes Strategic Step Towards Bioenergy and Green Hydrogen Development



WASCAL has taken a decisive step in advancing

sustainable energy in Burkina Faso through the successful validation of a key report under the BIO2H-Burkina Project. The workshop, which brought together experts, policymakers, and energy stakeholders, focused on evaluating the country's bioenergy resources and identifying pathways for the production of green hydrogen.

The report presented at the workshop outlines concrete findings on the viability and application of bioenergy technologies, particularly the use

of biodigesters, and maps out the potential for green hydrogen generation at various scales. These insights are crucial for informing national energy planning and advancing renewable energy initiatives.

Participants reviewed the draft findings, provided critical expert input, and validated strategic recommendations aimed at shaping a more efficient and sustainable energy landscape. This milestone ensures that the project will proceed with a strong evidence base and sector-wide consensus.

Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the BIO2H-Burkina Project is a key pillar of WASCAL's mission to support West African countries with scientific tools and practical solutions to address climate and energy challenges. The validation process strengthens the country's capacity to integrate clean energy technologies and supports Burkina Faso's transition towards energy security and environmental sustainability.

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WASCAL and UEMOA Deepen Commitment to Regional Climate Action and Resilience



WASCAL has renewed its strategic collaboration with the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) to advance shared goals in climate adaptation and sustainable land management across West Africa. During a high-level engagement in Ouagadougou with UEMOA's Commissioner, both institutions reaffirmed their commitment to transforming research into actionable policies that benefit communities and ecosystems.

The meeting underscored a mutual resolve to strengthen institutional synergies and invest in science-based solutions that respond to the region's pressing climate challenges. With WASCAL's extensive expertise in climate science and UEMOA's influential policy platform, this collaboration is poised to scale up

innovations, improve land use systems, and build long-term resilience.

As part of the renewed commitment, the two bodies agreed to work closely on integrating evidence-based research into policy frameworks, supporting capacity-building initiatives, and co-developing regional programmes that align with national climate priorities. The partnership is expected to create tangible impact by bridging science, governance, and development. Led by WASCAL Executive Director, Prof. Emmanuel Wendsongré Ramdé, the delegation reaffirmed WASCAL's dedication to supporting UEMOA and its member states in delivering measurable progress on climate resilience and sustainable development.

[Read more.](#)

WASCAL Strengthens Support for Women Leading Climate Action in West Africa



On International Women’s Day, WASCAL highlights the vital role women play in driving climate solutions across West Africa. While women face some of the most severe impacts of climate change, including threats to food security, health, and livelihoods—they continue to lead powerful initiatives that build community resilience and promote sustainability.

WASCAL is taking clear steps to support and expand the leadership of women in climate action. Through its scholarship and research programmes, more women are being equipped with the scientific skills, technical training, and leadership experience needed to actively shape solutions in climate science and green energy. The organisation is increasing efforts to ensure that

women and girls have equal access to education, innovation, and funding opportunities in the fight against climate change. By focusing on inclusion and capacity-building, WASCAL is helping to reduce the gender gap in climate discourse and strengthen long-term resilience across the region.

WASCAL remains committed to expanding its support for women-led initiatives, building stronger networks, and working with partners to create policies and programmes that put women at the centre of sustainable development.

[Read more.](#)

Promoting Climate Resilience And Renewable Energy In West Africa



From left: His Excellency Mr. Alpha B. Barry, Minister Mourana Soumah, and Professor Emmanuel Ramdé

H. E. M. Alpha B. Barry, Chair of the WASCAL Ministerial Council, and Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation from the Republic of Guinea has expressed his commitment to working together with his colleague Ministers to accelerate actions for combating climate change in West Africa, stating, “We want to ensure we do not only give our continuous support, and commitment to fulfil our obligations as a member state, but also as a member of the scientific community.”

The Minister's commitment is part of a broader effort by WASCAL to address the pressing issues of climate change.

WASCAL's Ministerial Council plays a crucial role in overseeing the organization's long-term plans and annual reports, ensuring they address member states' priorities and transform urgency into actionable progress across West Africa.

During his visit to WASCAL's headquarters, the Minister emphasized the importance of unity and

cooperation in addressing climate threats. He was accompanied by the Minister for Finance, Mr. Mourana Soumah, the Guinea Ambassador in Ghana and Togo, and Mr. Abdoulaye Keita together with staff from both Ministries from Guinea.

The visit highlights WASCAL's focus on promoting climate resilience, and renewable energy. WASCAL and its member states continue to create stronger synergies to create a more resilient West Africa and ensure a brighter future for generations unborn.

[Read more.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. WASCAL is set to host its inaugural International Conference on Climate Change and Just Energy Transition (I3C-JET) 2025, which will bring together researchers, policymakers, innovators, community leaders, and development partners to accelerate Africa's response to climate change. Through collaborative research, inclusive dialogue, and practical action, the conference aims to identify knowledge and technology gaps and set a clear direction for future climate research in Africa. Additionally, the event will highlight successful policy and funding models that have enabled impactful climate initiatives, while also promoting inclusive approaches that empower women, youth, and marginalized groups.

Furthermore, participants will have the opportunity to explore how to integrate scientific knowledge with indigenous practices to deliver practical solutions in key areas such as agriculture, water management, energy, and disaster preparedness. Building on this, the conference will also focus on strengthening community engagement, supporting innovation, and advancing policy recommendations to build a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable West Africa. By bringing together diverse stakeholders and fostering collaboration, the I3C-JET conference is poised to drive meaningful exchange and support a sustainable future for the region.



International Conference on Climate Change & Just Energy Transition 2025 [I3C-JET]

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

We invite submissions of original research, case studies, technological innovations, policy frameworks, services, and practical solutions addressing the conference theme and sub-themes.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

LENGTH Maximum 300 words	FOCUS AREA Ensure Relevance to conference sub-themes
FORMAT Title, authors' names, affiliations, & contact information	LANGUAGE English

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION
15th February - 2nd June 2025

Submit your abstracts via: <https://events.wascal.org>



SAVE THE DATE

International Conference on Climate Change & Just Energy Transition 2025 [I3C-JET]

Abuja- Nigeria
October 20-24, 2025

www.events.wascal.org

WASCAL
West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adaptive Land Use

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Combating Climate Change and Improving Livelihoods

2. Ordinary Governing Board meeting, 24th - 25th September 2025, Conakry, Republic of Guinea
3. Ordinary meeting of Council of Ministers, 26th September 2025, Conakry, Republic of Guinea

