

INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PRACTICE

The biodiversity crisis is one of the most important contemporary global crises; it is worsened by several factors such as the growing anthropization of the planet and climate change. In order to face this crisis, we must make great efforts in several areas, such as improving territorial management with total conservation objectives (national parks and others) or partial ones (biological corridors, buffer zones, etc.) and achieve a higher degree of biodiversity-friendliness in productive areas.

This requires, among other things, professionals who are committed to biodiversity conservation and able to effectively perform in the rural social system. Professional training includes the combination of basic skills developed in the master's in Conservation Practice complemented by training in practical biodiversity management in its different aspects.

The Master's in Biodiversity Conservation Practice (MCP) is geared toward university-level professionals in any area who are active and interested in biodiversity conservation processes and in ecosystem services, who seek to consolidate an integrated vision of territories, including coastal-marine zones. The MCP is taught in Spanish, but is available to professionals from every country of the world interested in pursuing the program.

The objective is to help professionals who are active, or those who wish to become active, in biodiversity conservation processes develop and strengthen the necessary skills to facilitate, promote and eventually lead local biodiversity conservation processes within the context of progress toward sustainable rural development. The set of guiding competences of the MPC includes the following:

1. Completely understand the ecological processes and biodiversity conservation strategies, processes and mechanisms to strengthen specific technical knowledge about conservation, and as a cross-cutting framework to develop other competences
2. Team work
3. Work in an integrated and trans-disciplinary manner
4. Promote equity in all its forms and in all processes
5. Design, plan, execute, monitor and evaluate processes, projects and organizations in a participatory manner, at different periods.
6. Mediate and resolve conflicts
7. Promote and develop local enterprise initiatives based on biodiversity conservation and its articulation with value chains and local development processes
8. Facilitate participatory processes with multiple actors and concurrence of different disciplines
9. Develop training activities and manage knowledge promoting the use of educational, dissemination and extension methods appropriate for rural areas
10. Promote and develop sustainable governance, management and local policy mechanisms linked to national and global political and legal frameworks.

General structure and learning activities

The MCP is a professional master's program that helps the participating professionals to develop knowledge and abilities through four groups of activities equivalent to a total academic load of 60 credits:

The competences mentioned above will be developed or strengthened through the following activities:

- a. Graduate courses (equivalent to 46 credits)
- b. Field trips for conservation practice
- c. Weekly conservation practice workshop (one day a week, during the first year)
- d. Graduation work in a conservation process in the field (14 credits)

The first three activities are developed during the first 18 months of the MCP, with professors in charge of their planning, design, execution and evaluation. Graduation work has a variable duration, but must be completed within 24 months of the beginning of studies. It can be done in any country or organization where the work is needed, including the student's own institution.

Master's courses

PRIMER TRIMESTRE		Créditos
	Cursos de nivelación y obligatorios	
1	Nivelación en producción agropecuaria y sistemas de producción	2*
2	Nivelación en bosques y biodiversidad	2*
3	Nivelación en sociología rural e interculturalidad	2*
4	Nivelación en economía	2*
5	Desarrollo local sostenible	2
6	Investigación bibliográfica y redacción técnica	2
7	Educación y facilitación	2
8	Taller de práctica de la conservación	0
	Total de créditos obligatorios	8

* Solo un curso de nivelación es obligatorios

SEGUNDO TRIMESTRE		Créditos
	Cursos obligatorios	
1	Estrategias de vida y análisis de situación	2
2	Clima y cambio climático	2
3	Equidad en los procesos rurales	2
4	Análisis social a escala local	3
5	Fundamentos biológicos de la conservación	2
6	Taller de práctica de la conservación	0

7	Giras de práctica dirigida	0
	Total de créditos obligatorios	11
Cursos electivos		
1	Salud rural	2
2	Información y comunicación en la práctica del desarrollo	1

TERCER TRIMESTRE		Créditos
Cursos obligatorios		
1	Sistematización de experiencias	1
2	Mediación de conflictos	2
3	Gestión participativa de áreas protegidas	3
4	Taller práctica de la conservación	0
5	Giras de práctica dirigida	0
	Total de créditos obligatorios	6
Cursos electivos		
1	Creación de capacidades para el desarrollo local	2
2	Información y comunicaciones en la práctica del desarrollo II	2

CUARTO TRIMESTRE		Créditos
Cursos obligatorios		
1	Gestión de empresas locales	3
2	Gestión de empresas asociativas	2
3	Manejo adaptativo para la conservación de la biodiversidad	2
4	Taller práctica de la conservación	0
5	Giras de práctica dirigida	0
	Total de créditos obligatorios	7
QUINTO TRIMESTRE		Créditos
Cursos obligatorios		
1	Fundamentos de gobernanza local	2
2	Procesos e instrumentos de gobernanza local	2
3	Financiamiento de la conservación	2
4	Gestión integrada de zonas marino costeras	2
5	Uno de los dos cursos siguientes:	
5.1	Diseño, ejecución y evaluación de proyectos	2
5.2	Planificación estratégica	2
5	Taller práctica de la conservación	0
6	Giras de práctica dirigida	0
	Total de créditos obligatorios	10
Cursos electivos		
1	El otro curso de los listados anteriormente en el punto 5 de obligatorios	2

SEXTO TRIMESTRE		Créditos
Cursos obligatorios		
1	Gestión local de la vida silvestre	2
2	Monitoreo y gestión para la conservación	1
3	Preparación del trabajo de graduación	1
4	Taller práctica de la conservación	0
5	Giras de práctica dirigida	0
	Total de créditos obligatorios	4
Cursos electivos		
1	Gestión del paisaje para el desarrollo sostenible	3

SÉPTIMO Y OCTAVO TRIMESTRE		Créditos
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1	Elaboración del trabajo final de graduación	14
2	Seminario de presentación del trabajo final de graduación	0

Elective or optional courses

MCP students may take other courses besides those listed above. All courses offered for CATIE's academic master's programs and those offered specifically for the MCP are considered as optional or elective courses. These courses are included in the student's academic file, but each student must decide whether or not he/she takes any of these.

Conservation practice workshops

Each quarter, students should register in the conservation practice workshop where they will conduct case studies, attend lectures by invited specialists in areas of interest, learn about conservation practice experiences or those related to projects and initiatives regarding the different emphases. Conservation practice workshops do not offer academic credits, but have mandatory attendance.

Directed practical trips to the field and to real scenarios

These trips are organized each quarter and are focused on the central theme of the trip. Students must register for these each quarter and even though they have no academic credit, they can be counted as practical course work.

Each trip is linked to a preparation process with the students and the preparation of reports according to the subject and practice conducted is required. Each trip can include group and/or individual work. The trips can be for the entire integrated group or for sub-groups who will go to different sites. The assignment of roles for students will increase beginning in the second quarter.

Graduation project

The graduation project or work is the final requirement to obtain the Master's degree in Conservation Practice. It is a professional work with an estimated average duration of three months and which must be completed within 24 months of having begun the master's program. It is worth 14 academic credits and complements the minimum of 60 credits required for the MCP.

Its nature is clearly professional. Frequent options are project design, facilitation of local strategies, systematization of experiences, analysis of social enterprises, basic studies for plans or strategies, among others. Scientific research is not part of this work. An important requirement of this work is that it be needed by some type of organization (local, NGO, governmental) that is active in rural development processes.

The graduation work or project can be conducted in any country or organization in Latin America, including the student's own institution. Since students take the candidacy examination for the MCP before beginning the graduation work, students are not required to return to CATIE to present their work. Procedures stipulate that once they complete their work, students must send the corresponding report to the Graduate School, where it is reviewed. Once approved, the diploma will be issued.

CATIE holds its graduation ceremony for graduate students each year in December. Students in the MCP are not only invited to this ceremony, but are encouraged to attend. However, participation in this event is not mandatory.

Admission

Admission is open all year round. Classes begin each year in January. Admission requirements are:

- Hold a university bachelor's degree or equivalent from a public or private university recognized officially in its country
- Pass an at-home Admission exam
- Submit the documents required by CATIE's Graduate Program
- Show proof of financial support required to complete graduate studies

We recommend that interested students complete the Admission process as early as possible in order to have sufficient time to apply for scholarships, loans and other types of financial aid, as needed.

Additional information and contacts

Information about CATIE: <http://www.catie.ac.cr>

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