

TO WHOMEVER IT MAY CONCERN

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## TROPIMUNDO PROGRAM SUMMARY

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FOR GRADUATED STUDENTS OF 2015

TROPIMUNDO is an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course in Tropical Biodiversity and Ecosystems funded by the European Commission. It is the first MSc programme (2 years, 120 ECTS) that integrates the knowledge and skills related to four inter-related tropical ecosystems under threat (tropical rainforests and woodlands, terrestrial and coastal wetlands, such as mangrove forests, seagrass beds and coral reefs). Study of these ecosystems is crucial to understand, protect and manage tropical biodiversity at a time of international biodiversity crisis, with an imminent risk of extinction of species due to global warming and anthropogenic impacts such as habitat destruction and changes in land use.

TROPIMUNDO is unique in that it incorporates a 2nd semester (with both theoretical courses and fieldwork) in the tropics in either Guadeloupe, an overseas department of France (Université des Antilles – Uda), Peru (Universidad Científica del Perú – UCP), Cameroon (Université de Dschang – UDSch), Malaysia (Universiti Malaysia Terengganu – UMT) or Australia (University of Queensland – UQ). Furthermore, TROPIMUNDO brings together European higher education institutions in Belgium (Université Libre de Bruxelles – ULB, Vrije Universiteit Brussel – VUB), France (Université Pierre et Marie Curie – UPMC, Sorbonne Université – SU, Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle – MNHN and Université de Guyane – UdG) and Italy (Università degli Studi di Firenze – UNIFI) that have long-standing expertise in tropical rainforests and woodlands and in coastal ecosystems. They integrate world-class scientific training and research on the aforementioned tropical ecosystems with experience in designing and teaching international MSc programmes. Both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semesters are spent at an institution in Europe, focussing on background courses and specialised courses respectively. The fourth and final semester is devoted to the thesis, which is jointly supervised by three or four partners. Graduates obtain multiple degrees, a joint Europass Diploma Supplement and a Europass Mobility Certificate. TROPIMUNDO’s learning outcomes stretch far beyond academic knowledge and aim to foster enhanced capabilities in analysis and communication, independence, creativity and assertiveness, critical judgement, and ethical and social understanding.

During their two-year programme, TROPIMUNDO students have the opportunity to study botany, zoology and integrative ecosystem approaches. Multiple specialisations are included, such as:

- the evolution of tropical flora and vegetation;
- faunistic assemblages;
- IT tools for the processing and management of biodiversity data and databases (biogeographical, genetic, geographical information systems), including the management and conservation of historic collections such as herbarium sheets;
- the study of the diversity, dynamics and evolution of tropical and subtropical ecosystems (with a focus on four related systems, namely tropical rainforests and woodlands, mangrove forests, seagrass beds and coral reefs, including the interactions between flora, fauna, man and the environment within and between each of these adjacent ecosystems);
- the conservation and restoration ecology of natural habitats and their biodiversity, including competences in sustainable management and governance of biodiversity;
- tropical ethnobotany, exploitation and valorisation of the functions, goods and services of natural habitats and their resources, and conservation of traditional ecological knowledge.

TROPIMUNDO maximises exposure to European languages by offering a content and language integrated learning programme in English or in English and French, delivered in institutions in French, English, Dutch, Italian and Spanish-speaking countries. The programme aims to improve students' language capabilities by offering language lessons, buddy programmes and tandem learning.

TROPIMUNDO is coordinated by four decision-making bodies (Steering, Selection, Internal Evaluation and External Evaluation committees), and one main management structure (Coordination Office), with equal commitment of all partners. A series of Associated Partners (including scientific institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, people responsible for conservation or management of tropical ecosystems and their biodiversity and public authorities) have agreed to advertise the programme, to provide or advertise placements, jobs, internships or thesis perspectives and scholarships, and to assist in evaluating the programme. TROPIMUNDO thus has contacts with the professional world.



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ERASMUS MUNDUS MASTERS COURSE IN  
TROPICAL BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS