



## **PhD vacancy:**

### **Climate change and resilience among smallholders in Mozambique**

Are you passionate about tackling climate-related challenges and empowering climate-affected communities in Africa? Do you aspire to complete academic research with a real-world impact? Join Climares, a groundbreaking research project that supports the climate resilience of at-risk populations in five African countries. For our work in Mozambique, we are looking for a PhD candidate who will work with smallholders and other stakeholders using innovative, participatory research methods. The position is initially for one year, with possible extensions to a maximum of five years, on a full-time basis. The research will be in Mozambique with the support of Eduardo Mondlane University (EMU), in partnership with Wageningen University & Research (WUR) in the Netherlands. The dissertation must be written in English and if successful, the applicant will receive a degree from Wageningen University. The successful applicant will start the position by August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

#### **Job description – what you will do?**

You will be part of an exciting new research project called Climares ([www.climares.nl](http://www.climares.nl)). Climares is a consortium of 7 African and 7 Dutch universities, along with societal partners, working in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Morocco, Senegal, and Uganda. Our mission is to support at-risk populations—smallholders, fisherfolk, urban outdoor workers, pastoralists, and displaced people—by transforming weather and climate data into actionable insights that enhance resilience and enable early adaptation. Climares uses participatory digital and in person research, co-created climate storylines and advocacy methods to ensure that weather and climate information becomes accurate and actionable and integrated with local knowledge systems.

Within the scope of the project, you are expected to develop your own PhD research focus and thematic interest, in close collaboration with your supervisors. The supervision team consists of African and Dutch

academics with a range of research areas. You will also be part of an interdisciplinary group of eleven PhD researchers, who are recruited from the five African countries and who will be the core of the Climares project. The PhD researchers will work independently and in collaboration, by sharing knowledge, skills, and experiences.

This PhD project in Mozambique centres around action-oriented research with communities and other stakeholders, such as civil society actors, private actors, and government representatives. The project aims to support the agency and resilience of communities by creating and supporting Knowledge∞Action (K∞A) networks. These networks are composed of all stakeholders that have an interest in the resilience of a population group, including affected communities. As a PhD researcher, you will be responsible for setting up and facilitating these networks over a five-year period, and for collecting data on the process. For the duration of the project, you will be part of the Climares Academy that meets online for one day per week for training, supervision and meetings with your peers.

Within Climares, this PhD project will focus on climate-related challenges and adaptation strategies of smallholders engaged in cash crop production, notably cotton cultivation on poor sandy soils in Nampula province.

### **Where you will work**

This PhD position is based in Mozambique, with occasional travel to the Netherlands (or other countries) for training purposes and consortium meetings.

The PhD trajectory will start with an intensive two-month training in the Netherlands. After this, you will return to Mozambique to spend significant periods of time with smallholders and to start working on the Knowledge∞Action (K∞A) networks. During this period, you will attend online training and reflection meetings one day per week.

You will be a member of the Climares PhD school, called the Climares Academy. Training will include academic courses as well as training on skills and content required for Climares, and individual career development support. Training will be provided by members of the Climares consortium, including academic partners and societal partners such as the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, Deltares, and the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute. PhD candidates will receive cutting-edge teaching and mentoring from a diverse range of experts, combining theoretical knowledge with practical applications.

### *Supervision and degree*

This PhD project will be jointly supervised by scholars from Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique and Wageningen University in the Netherlands. With your supervisors, you will develop a detailed PhD project plan, including research activities and milestones. You will also jointly develop and regularly monitor your own career development plan.

You will be based at Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique and be awarded a PhD degree from Wageningen University.

## Requirements

Across the five countries, we are looking for an interdisciplinary team of PhD researchers. We therefore invite candidates with various profiles to apply.

Required for this position:

- You must have a master's degree or an equivalent diploma in social sciences, climate sciences, environmental sciences or a related field;
- You must have experience with, and a strong affinity for, research related to climate change, climate resilience, climate change impacts, or climate vulnerability related to smallholders;
- You have excellent oral and written communication skills in English; (proficiency in English might be tested as part of the admission procedure)
- You possess strong research skills, either qualitative or quantitative, and have experience working with communities, preferably using participatory methods;
- You are motivated to develop your methodological skills in both qualitative and quantitative research;
- You are a resident of Mozambique, or have extensive experience working in Mozambique, preferably with smallholders. For participatory research with communities, it is important that you are familiar with local customs and that you speak Portuguese, and, preferably, the relevant local language.
- You are able to carry out your work independently and proactively, and you are also able to work well in a team. You support the idea of interdisciplinary teamwork and knowledge sharing.
- You have excellent academic skills (analytical thinking, scientific writing and presentation), evidenced for example by a good review of your master's thesis and potentially some scientific publications;
- You have excellent social skills that will allow you to work with communities, other stakeholders and other PhD candidates over a long period of time.

## What we offer

We offer you an interdisciplinary PhD position, where you will obtain academic skills with practical application, in an enthusiastic team of world-renowned scholars and organizations working on climate issues.

The start date of this position is 1 August 2025, and you will be based at the Faculty of Agronomy and Forestry Engineering of the Eduardo Mondlane University.

We offer a competitive remuneration as well as research costs. The initial contract has a duration of one year (12 months), with the possibility of extension based on performance.

## **About the home university**

### **Eduardo Mondlane University**

- Founded in 1962, Eduardo Mondlane University (EMU) is the oldest and most prestigious university in Mozambique. With a total of about 50,000 students, it offers a total of 204 programs (104 at BSc; 85 MSc and 15 PhD) across its 11 faculties and 6 high schools. Through teaching, research and outreach UEM has been influential in shaping national, regional and global development policies and strategies. In 2024 UEM was ranked number one university in Mozambique and 23<sup>rd</sup> amongst the southern Africa universities according to Times Higher Education ranking. UEM has headquarters in Maputo city and branches in Gaza, Inhambane, Zambezia and Nampula provinces.

The Faculty of Agronomy and Forestry Engineering (FAEF) of the EMU is a multidisciplinary socio-ecological faculty which trains students on matters of agronomy and forestry. It is the number 1 in Mozambique on agrarian sciences and has extensively trained top researchers and managers not only on agronomy and forestry but across a range of development issues including on disaster management and climate change resilience. It offers 3 BSc programs, 11 MSc Program and 3 PhD programs.

## **About the host university in the Netherlands**

### **Wageningen University**

This PhD project will be co-supervised by Wageningen University in the Netherlands. Wageningen University is the most renowned life science university in the Netherlands, hosting high quality research and training on biodiversity, climate change, food security, health, and society. The mission of the University is 'to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life'. The university contributes with impact-oriented often interdisciplinary research and hosts a strongly international community of staff and students. <https://www.wur.nl/en.htm>

The PhD research on smallholders is interdisciplinary in nature. The supervision team from Wageningen University will combine social science (from the chairgroup Sociology of Development and Change, SDC, part of the Social Science Department) and environmental science (from the chairgroup Soil Physics and Land Management, SLM, part of the Environmental Science Department). SDC hosts expertise on rural and urban development, natural resource governance and conflict, vulnerability and resilience; and a strong tradition of fieldwork and collaborative methodologies. SLM hosts expertise on sustainable land management, soil and water conservation, and farmer-led adaptation and innovation.

## **Application process**

The deadline for applications is 28 March 2025. You can apply by emailing your application to:

[climares-phdapplication@wur.nl](mailto:climares-phdapplication@wur.nl) AND [mestrado.faef@uem.mz](mailto:mestrado.faef@uem.mz)

In the subject line mention “**PhD vacancy: Climate change and resilience among smallholders in Mozambique**”

Please include the following documents :

- A motivation letter (max. two pages)
- A curriculum vitae (CV)
- Copies of transcripts of former education and/or training
- A brief description of potential research ideas for the position, of maximum 1000 words
- One writing sample.
- Names and contact details of two referents

The application should be written in English. Translation of supporting material (e.g. writing sample) is not required. We strongly discourage the use of generative AI in the motivation letter and description of research ideas.

After reviewing all applications, we will make a shortlist of candidates who are invited for an online interview between April 22 and 26. There might be a second interview before a final selection is made.

### **Further information**

For more information on Climares, please visit: [www.climares.nl](http://www.climares.nl)

For specific questions, please contact: Luis Artur, Faculty of Agronomy and Forestry Engineering. Email: [lartur@uem.mz](mailto:lartur@uem.mz) or [larturfaef@gmail.com](mailto:larturfaef@gmail.com) ; phone:+258-844317090

