

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Admission to the II Level International Master's Programme "Biodiversity Governance: Nature 2000 Expert (BIOGOV)" Academic Year 2026/2027

Issued by the University of Tuscia (UNITUS), Department of Ecological and Biological Sciences (DEB), in partnership with the Carabinieri Command for Forestry, Environmental and Agri-food Protection Units (CUFAA). The Programme is funded by the European Union under the LIFE Programme. It aims to provide advanced academic and professional training in the field of environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and EU policy implementation.

Article 1 – General Information

The University of Tuscia (UNITUS), Department of Ecological and Biological Sciences (DEB), in partnership with the Carabinieri Command for Forestry, Environmental and Agri-food Protection Units (CUFA), hereby announces the opening of applications for admission to the II Level International Master's Programme "Biodiversity Governance: Nature 2000 Expert (BIOGOV)" for the Academic Year 2026/2027.

The BIOGOV Master is a one-year postgraduate programme worth 60 ECTS credits and fully delivered in English. The programme is addressed to international students holding a second-cycle degree or an equivalent qualification obtained abroad.

The BIOGOV Master's Programme focuses on biodiversity governance, conservation, and ecological restoration within a European and global framework aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda and the Nature Restoration Regulation (2024/1991; https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/nature-restoration-regulation_en). The programme trains 20 highly qualified professionals from across Europe to work in the effective management of protected areas with a special focus on Natura 2000 sites, addressing key topics such as biodiversity monitoring and restoration, conservation measures, policy and stakeholder engagement, and environmental education. It provides advanced scientific knowledge and practical skills in ecological processes, sustainable resource management, biodiversity monitoring, and modern analytical techniques, equipping graduates to effectively contribute to the governance of Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas.

Sede

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Rettorato

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Article 2 – Educational Objectives

The BIOGOV Master aims to provide advanced interdisciplinary training in biodiversity governance, ecological restoration, environmental monitoring, conservation biology, and sustainable management of natural resources. The programme prepares 20 highly qualified professionals capable of operating in international environmental governance programmes, protected area management, ecological transition policies, and biodiversity conservation initiatives.

Graduates will acquire advanced competences in:

- biodiversity monitoring and ecosystem assessment;
- restoration ecology and landscape planning;
- environmental governance and protected area management;
- international biodiversity conventions and Natura 2000 policies;
- stakeholder engagement and science-policy communication;
- environmental crime prevention and environmental peacekeeping.

Article 3 – Programme Structure and Teaching Methods

The programme is structured into six thematic modules delivered through blended learning methodologies online, complemented by two months of in-person classes and field activities (late May to July) at the Carabinieri Centre of Excellence for Environmental Protection in Sabaudia (CoEEP), as well as within Italy's State Natural Reserves and other protected areas. All selected candidates must adhere to the code of conduct that will be sent via email once the selection procedure has been completed.

The formative modules are structured as follows:

- Module 1 - Evolution Biology and Biodiversity patterns and process (5 ECTS)
- Module 2 - Biodiversity Loss and ecosystem degradation (5 ECTS)
- Module 3 - Monitoring for biodiversity conservation and restoration (10 ECTS)
- Module 4 - Environmental crimes (5 ECTS)
- Module 5 - Landscape planning: from nature protection to Restoration Ecology and sustainable use on natural resources (10 ECTS)
- Module 6 - Best-practices governance of biodiversity from international convention (15 ECTS)
- Traineeship (2 months in field) (5 ECTS)
- Final work (5 ECTS)

Article 4 – Admission Requirements

Applicants must hold all of the following qualifications by the application deadline:

- Master of Science OR equivalent second-cycle university degree awarded by an accredited Higher Education Institution OR a single-cycle degree;
- Proficiency in the English language (minimum level B2 of the CEFR), as the entire course, including materials and examinations, will be taught exclusively in English;

- Citizenship of a European Union (EU) Member State

The Academic Committee reserves the right to assess the equivalence and suitability of foreign qualifications for admission purposes. Applications from candidates who are expected to graduate before the beginning of the programme may be accepted conditionally.

Article 5 – Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Accessibility

The BIOGOV Master is committed to the principles of inclusion, diversity, accessibility, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination. The programme guarantees equal and equitable access to all applicants regardless of gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, socio-economic background, age, sexual orientation, or migration status. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, accessible digital learning resources, flexible participation formats, and dedicated academic support services will be provided where required. All online teaching materials and digital platforms used within the programme shall comply with accessibility standards and inclusive learning principles.

Article 6 – Application Procedure

Applications must be submitted electronically to the Certified Email (PEC) address protocollo@pec.unitus.it, using the official application form published together with the public notice on the University of Tuscia website no later than no later than **August 17, 2026** at 12:00 PM. Applications received after the official deadline will not be considered.

The application package must include:

- completed application form (Annex 1);
- copy of a valid passport or identity document;
- curriculum vitae et studiorum;
- copy of degree certificate and transcript of records;
- motivation letter in English (Annex 2);
- any additional documentation relevant for the selection procedure.
- Proficiency in the English language (minimum level B2 of the CEFR)

The BIOGOV Master offers a maximum of 20 places. As the programme is funded by the European Union under the LIFE Programme, tuition and enrolment fees are 100% waived for all admitted students. Furthermore, accommodation and meals are fully covered for the selected candidates.

In order to ensure biogeographical diversity and the internationalisation of the programme and promote cross-border cooperation, required by the European Project, the selection process will strictly apply a Geographical Diversity Clause (Per-Country Limit) (article 7) and will therefore produce separate ranking lists for each EU country based on the candidate's residence.

Article 7 – Selection Procedure

Admission is based on evaluation of academic background, curriculum vitae qualifications, motivation letter, and coherence of the applicant's background with the objectives of the

programme. The Selection Committee, appointed by the Director of the Department of Ecological and Biological Sciences (DEB) upon proposal of the Master's Organizing Committee, will evaluate candidates up to a maximum score of 100 points, structured as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum score	Details
Academic background & final grade	20 points For candidates who have obtained a Master's degree (Laurea Magistrale) from a foreign country, the conversion criteria reported on the MUR website at the following address will be applied: https://www.mur.gov.it/sites/default/files/2021-05/ALLEGATO%20%20bando%20SSM%202020-2021%20-%20Conversione%20Titoli.pdf 10 points	Master's degree Final grade: ● 110 e lode → 20 points ● 110 → 19 points ● 103–109 → 16 points ● 95–102 → 13 points ● 84-94 → 10 points ● <84 → 7 punti PhD
CV, publications & professional experience	20 points 10 points 10 points	Scientific papers, technical reports and books on topics related to the Master programme (article 3) Previous professional experience, internships, or green projects on topics related to the Master's Programme (article 3). Those previous activities involving an international dimension/collabora

		tion (eg, LIFE, Interreg or Horizon, IUCN) will be highly valued and awarded additional points.
Motivation letter	30 points	Assessment of motivation, professional goals.

In order to guarantee the active inclusion of students from diverse European Union countries, the programme establishes a mandatory minimum threshold of 12 different nationalities among the admitted candidates.

Re-opening of Applications: Should the initial application pool fail to reach this minimum quota of 12 distinct EU nationalities, the University reserves the right to re-open the Call for Applications during the second half of August.

Selection Mechanism for the Quota: The selection will be carried out strictly through the merit criteria already established in this Call. The Committee will first select the top-ranked candidate from each of the represented nations.

Allocation of Remaining Places: If positions remain vacant because the objective of recruiting 20 candidates from different EU countries is not met, the remaining positions will be allocated by recalling the second-ranked candidates across all nationalities who have achieved the highest overall merit scores.

The final merit ranking, detailing the candidate's score and nationality, will be published on the University website <https://titulus-unitus.cineca.it/albo/viewer?view=html>. The publication of the ranking has the value of official notification. The ranking will explicitly highlight the 20 successful candidates selected after applying the Geographical Diversity Clause (Art. 6). Selected candidates must complete their online enrolment within 15 working days from the date of publication, otherwise they will lose their right to place, and the next eligible candidate from the waiting list (respecting the recovery mechanism in this article) will be contacted.

Article 8 – Tuition Fees and Financial Support

Participation in the BIOGOV Master is free of charge for admitted students. The programme benefits from financial support provided through the LIFE Train2K project and institutional cooperation between UNITUS and CUFAA. Accommodation, subsistence, and field training support will be covered by the Train2K Life project according to available project resources and programme rules.

Article 9 – Attendance and Academic Requirements

Students admitted to BIOGOV Master Programme are strictly required to:

- Ensure a minimum attendance of 80% of the total course hours;
- Sign the daily attendance register (digital or physical);
- Participate in mandatory monitoring surveys, indicator tracking, and evaluation questionnaires issued by the Academic Committee

Failure to comply with the attendance or project monitoring requirements will result in immediate exclusion from the Master and the revocation of the funding waiver.

Article 10 – Final Examination

The final examination consists of the submission and public defence of an individual final project written in English. The final project must demonstrate the student's ability to integrate theoretical knowledge and practical competencies in biodiversity governance and environmental management. The final defence will be evaluated by an Examination Committee appointed by UNITUS and CUFAA.

Article 11 – Person in Charge of the Procedure (Responsabile del Procedimento)

The Person in Charge of the administrative and selection procedure for this Call for Applications is Dott. Alessandro Cruciani, Academic and Administrative Secretariat of Unitus Academy - School of Advanced Studies (E-mail: acruciani@unitus.it).

Article 12 – Data Protection

All personal data provided by applicants will be processed in compliance with the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR - Regulation UE 2016/679). In accordance with University regulations, the Data Protection Officer (RPD/DPO) for the University of Tuscia is Prof. Andrea Genovese.

Article 13 – References to EU Inclusion and Accessibility Frameworks

This Call has been drafted in alignment with European higher education inclusion and accessibility principles, including Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021–2027, the European Education Area framework on inclusive higher education, and EU accessibility directives.

Article 14 – Contacts

Co-Directors of the Master:

- Prof. Gianluca Piovesan – University of Tuscia
email: piovesan@unitus.it
- Gen. Raffaele Pio Manicone – CUFA
email: raffaele.manicone@carabinieri.it

Point of contact:

- Dr. Jordan Palli – University of Tuscia
email: jo.palli@unitus.it

Administrative and academic information will be available through the official website:

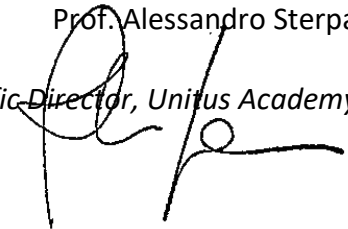
<https://sites.google.com/unitus.it/masterbiogov>

Website Life <https://train2kplatform.rgpbio.it/biogov-master-en/>

July 13, 2026

Prof. Alessandro Sterpa

Technical-Scientific Director, Unitus Academy

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line and a small circle.