



## Call for application PhD contract CLIPSSA – Pacific Climate, Local Knowledge and Adaptation Strategies

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### Type of PhD contract

PhD contract in anthropology-geography, financed by the CLIPSSA AFD-IRD agreement (see project description).

### CLIPSSA project and partners of thesis

CLIPSSA (Pacific climate, local knowledge and adaptation strategies) is a joint regional project developed by IRD (French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development, <https://en.ird.fr/>), Météo-France (<https://meteofrance.fr/>) and AFD (French Development Agency, <https://www.afd.fr/en>). Research project combining climate sciences and humanities and social sciences, CLIPSSA aims to accompany Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Wallis-and-Futuna and French Polynesia in drafting adaptation plans against climate change threats.

### PhD school of affiliation

Pacific Graduate School (EDP). The Ministry of Higher Education accredits this multidisciplinary research and innovation PhD school. The Universities of New Caledonia and French Polynesia jointly manage the EDP.

### Supervision the thesis

Gilbert David, Geographer, DR HDR, IRD (UMR Espace DEV)

Catherine Sabinot, Ethnoecologist and Anthropologist, CR, IRD (UMR Espace DEV)

Christophe Menkes, Climatologist, DR HDR, IRD (UMR ENTROPIE)

### Location of the thesis

IRD Centre of Noumea, UMR Espace DEV 228, 101 Promenade Roger Laroque, BPA A5 98848 Noumea.

### The subject of the thesis

***Challenges, capacities and vulnerabilities to face climate change. The contribution of local knowledge and the exchange of knowledge, know-how and life skills with inhabitants of New Caledonia and Vanuatu.***

Vanuatu and New Caledonia regularly have been confronted with environmental disturbances caused by sometimes violent weather events. These events strain the populations whose way of life and certain activities depend on the environment in which they live.

To cope with climatic hazards, people who grow food have developed certain practices in their fields or gardens to limit damage to their crops (mulching, spacing crops, planting trees, etc.) or to survive in the event of losses (diversification of species and varieties planted in the fields, spatial diversity of crop locations, etc.). They also relied on other food practices (fishing, hunting) or other resources (social, economic, etc.) to subsist. The knowledge, know-how and skills developed through repeated interactions with the environment and acquired during the transmission and sharing processes are adjusted or created to adapt to these inhabitants' environmental constraints.

However, specific climatic hazards such as the heavy rains of 2021 and 2022 in New Caledonia (La Niña Southern Oscillation phenomenon) or the drought that followed the 2015 PAM cyclone in Vanuatu may be particularly impactful for these farmers. The climate projections envisaged could further challenge the latter (rising temperatures, intensification of extreme rainfall, drought and their consequences). This raises questions about the challenges these inhabitants face and the factors that enable them to resist or, on the contrary, to be vulnerable to extreme climatic hazards.

This thesis project at the interface of ethnoecology, anthropology and geography, which is part of the interdisciplinary research programme CLIPSSA (Pacific Climate, Local Knowledge and Adaptation Strategies), aims to examine (1) how the knowledge of the inhabitants of New Caledonia and Vanuatu who have to cope with extreme weather events, is built today by mobilizing a wide variety of knowledge and expertise, (2) how this knowledge influences the degree of vulnerability of these actors (potential and fragility) in managing these hazards and their consequences. Finally, (3) we aim to understand the extent to which this knowledge can be a resource on which public policies can rely to promote the adaptation of these actors to climate change.

Study sites will be chosen in the two territories to answer these questions. The aim will be (1) to describe the issues, the various practices and resources of the inhabitants who cultivate food products in order to cope with extreme atmospheric hazards, (2) to characterise the strengths and weaknesses of these actors in order to cope with them, taking into account the diversity of practices and knowledge transmitted and exchanged. Finally, (3) it will define the factors that allow or not to consider local knowledge in public policy adaptation to climate change.

### Who can apply?

Candidates should have a Master's degree, ideally in anthropology, geography or agronomy. Holders of a Master's degree or equivalent engineering diploma in the environmental sciences or other humanities and social sciences may also apply.

### Expected skills

- Experience in surveys technical in the human and social sciences (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, participant observation)
- Analytical, writing and synthesis skills
- Driving licence
- Excellent ability to work in English and French (oral and written)
- Ability to work in a team and autonomy
- Knowledge of the island and Oceanic context will be an advantage.

### How to apply?

Applications should be sent before **14<sup>th</sup> February 2023** to:

**Catherine Sabinot:** [catherine.sabinot@ird.fr](mailto:catherine.sabinot@ird.fr)

**Gilbert David:** [gilbert.david@ird.fr](mailto:gilbert.david@ird.fr)

**Fleur Vallet:** [fleur.vallet@ird.fr](mailto:fleur.vallet@ird.fr)

The auditions will take place on **20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023**.

The selected candidate will be informed in the following days so that the UNC PhD school commission can audition him or her during the week of **27<sup>th</sup> February**.

The application must include a detailed CV and a cover letter. The candidate must write his/her thesis proposal following the framework of the UNC thesis proposal form attached.