

**Senior/Post-doctoral Research Associate – social scientist, economic geographer, critical accountant**  
**Lancaster University /University of Washington**

An exciting opportunity exists for an environmental social scientist/ human geographer/ political ecologist to contribute to a collaborative project in West Africa. This position is part of the Nippon Foundation Ocean Nexus Fellowship.



Salary: £30,619 to £43,155

Hours: Full time

Contract Length: 24 months

We are seeking a highly motivated and enthusiastic social scientist, economic geographer, critical accountant, or someone from an allied field, to contribute, as part of the Nippon Foundation Ocean Nexus Fellowship, to a project critically investigating the governance and finance landscape of fishy food systems in West Africa. Working closely with researchers from Lancaster University, Ocean Nexus Centre at the University of Washington, World Fish, the University of Ghana and other collaborating organizations the project will develop a mixed methods approach to collect qualitative and quantitative data to critically analyse the governance and finance of fish food systems in West Africa.

Africa has been heralded as the last frontier of global capitalism, highlighting how intertwined the future of Africa and capitalism are. Indeed, West Africa's waters are the focus of increasingly

global economic actors capitalizing on the productive fisheries of the region through industrial fishing, on-shore processing of small-pelagic fish, and of attempts to develop other sectors of the maritime economy through 'blue growth' plans. These actors have a corporate form, and have rationales and ways of working, that reflect their operating context and finance base, which are a world away from that of the majority ocean resource users. The scale of these activities, made possible by increasingly opaque sources of finance, risk undermining both the sustainability of fish stocks and the food sovereignty of the entire region. West Africa's waters are thus in need of a transformation in oceans governance, towards a system that is more effective at ensuring the ocean economy reflects the values, priorities, capabilities, and existing rights of the majority ocean resource users: small-scale fish workers.

As a first step to ensuring a just and equitable consideration of food production in the 'blue economy' we want to deploy a Nexus Research Fellow with knowledge of the region's societies, economies, politics, and coastal ecologies. This aim of this position is to: 1) critically evaluate the finance landscape behind emergent patterns of investment and growth in fisheries exploitation in the region; 2) to unpack the dynamics driving flows of finance in and fish out of west Africa; and, 3) to document the importance to regional food sovereignty of regional fish production, processing, and trade. In doing so, we aim to co-develop tools and knowledge that can support small-scale fish workers in improving their livelihoods and contributions to the region.

Citizens of ECOWAS nations are strongly encouraged to apply

## Reading

Campling, L. and Quentin, C., 2021. Global inequality chains: how global value chains and wealth chains (re) produce inequalities of wealth. In *Rethinking Value Chains* (pp. 36-55). Policy Press.

Crosman, K.M., Allison, E.H., Ota, Y., Cisneros-Montemayor, A.M., Singh, G.G., Swartz, W., Bailey, M., Barclay, K.M., Blume, G., Colléter, M. and Fabinyi, M., 2022. Social equity is key to sustainable ocean governance. *npj Ocean Sustainability*, 1(1), p.4.

Galaz, V., Crona, B., Dauriach, A., Scholtens, B. and Steffen, W., 2018. Finance and the Earth system— Exploring the links between financial actors and non-linear changes in the climate system. *Global Environmental Change*, 53, pp.296-302.

Hicks, C.C., Gephart, J.A., Koehn, J.Z., Nakayama, S., Payne, H.J., Allison, E.H., Belhbib, D., Cao, L., Cohen, P.J., Fanzo, J. and Fluet-Chouinard, E., 2022. Rights and representation support justice across aquatic food systems. *Nature Food*, pp.1-11.

Jouffray, J.B., Crona, B., Wassénus, E., Bebbington, J. and Scholtens, B., 2019. Leverage points in the financial sector for seafood sustainability. *Science Advances*, 5(10), p.eaax3324.

Ouma, S., 2015. *Assembling export markets: The making and unmaking of global food connections in West Africa*. John Wiley & Sons.

Zu Ermgassen, E.K., Godar, J., Lathuillière, M.J., Löfgren, P., Gardner, T., Vasconcelos, A. and Meyfroidt, P., 2020. The origin, supply chain, and deforestation risk of Brazil's beef exports. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(50), pp.31770-31779.