**Presentation of the One Planet Fellowship Programme (OPFP)**

**Context:**

In the medium- and long-term, African food and nutritional security is going to be especially vulnerable to climate change and especially in need of research on climate change adaptation. Given the urgency for action and the long-term aspect of this global challenge, it is imperative that African scientists, particularly young ones, and international researchers develop the scientific skills to maximize the crucial future adaptations and mitigations for the African continent. However, early career scientists face challenges in securing resources, training and research positions. This undermines the continent’s ability to deal with agricultural change resulting from climate change. It is thus of utmost importance to speed up the emergence of the next generation of scientific leaders specializing in agriculture-climate interface.

In order to address these challenges, OPFP is launched as a dedicated initiative to prepare the next generation of African scientists, creating and nurturing leaders to be ready to understand climate change and help societies adapt in due time.

**Objectives of the OPFP**:

One Planet Fellowship Programme (OPFP) aims at enhancing the capacity of young scientists working on agriculture and climate change adaptation and mitigation in Africa by building their leadership, scientific research, networking and mentoring skills. This is done by selecting a group of 40 young scientists in activity who will be supported by a 3 years programme of training (in their scientific discipline, but also in behavioural and soft skills) and a mentoring programme of 3 years. Some of the beneficiaries of this programme –the “Laureates” - will be offered to join a research lab or center in Europe, for a 6 months advanced science training (AST) in top-notch European laboratories and/or universities. Laureates will be paired with a senior scientist in their host lab in Europe. To do this, partnerships are being built with European research and higher education institutions, identifying senior scientists from these organizations willing to serve as mentors to African laureates.

In addition, other accompanying measures are to be organized such as learning visits of Laureates on different policy and development institutions in Europe to foster science-policy linkage, exchange visits between African and European mentor to promote institutional linkages, as well as seminar workshops involving Laureates, mentors and junior scientists focusing on helping Africa’s smallholder farmers adapt to a changing climate.

Through these actions, the OPFP seeks to enhance the capacity of high potential researchers working on agriculture and climate change adaptation and mitigation, and, in the meantime, building a pipeline of African science leaders in agriculture – climate interface- as well as create an intergenerational network of African and European scientists equipped to lead research focused on helping Africa’s smallholder farmers adapted to a changing climate.

**Main activities:**

Three successive Calls for applications in Africa were launched in 2019-2021. For each call, up to 45 candidates (25 females, 20 male) are selected to take part in a 3-year non-residential, career development programme. Selected Laureates are expected to be fully engaged at their institutions during the Fellowship period while participating in periodic training courses designed to enhance their scientific research, networking, and mentoring skills.

* Year 1 is theoretically devoted to mentoring and leadership enhancement. A Senior African mentor is identified for each fellow in his home country/institution. The mentoring relationship is launched with Mentoring Orientation Workshop. It is followed by on-going engagement between the African fellow and their senior African mentor over the course of 12 months, implementing personal career roadmaps for each fellow, including science skills training and leadership development workshops, and specific plans for his/her climate adaptation research progression.

Due to the COVID-19, the implementation has been delayed and the batch 1 of the fellows, recruited in 2019 is (mid 21) currently at the end of this phase. Batch 2 laureates are at the beginning of this stage.

* Year 2 is supposed to be devoted to science skills enhancement and networking. Around 40% laureates are offered the opportunity to spend 3 to 6 months of research training in a European research institution or university and supervised by a senior European scientist. This provides an opportunity for the fellow to gain exposure to new ideas and methods in his/her field of research, to network with other young scientists in the host institution and establish linkages for future collaboration. While in Europe, laureates participate in science-policy dialogues and attend science seminar-workshop involving other laureates, mentors and junior scientists. Exchange visits between African and European mentors are facilitated.

Agropolis Fondation is in charge of actions related to the science pillar of the Laureateship, particularly in terms of developing and implementing Advanced Science Training (AST), science-policy linkage via learning visits, facilitating scientific networking and exchange between African and European scientists.

Implementing organization: Agropolis Fondation and African Women on Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD)

Localisation: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia.