



PhD position in economics – Monitoring, evaluation and learning to promote synergetic biodiversity conservation and human development

The French agricultural research and cooperation organization working for the sustainable development of tropical and Mediterranean regions (Cirad), is seeking a highly motivated and qualified PhD candidate in the field of economics, social sciences, agronomy. You will be based in Mozambique and join a research team working on the sustainability and health of social-ecological system. This position offers an opportunity to contribute to the design and analysis of monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) approaches that promote simultaneous/synergetic biodiversity conservation and human development in transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs), including understanding associated challenges and advantages of a co-designed and dynamic system.

Project background

The PhD research project is embedded into the “One Limpopo One Health” (OLOH) project, funded by AFD (Alliance Française de Développement) and FFEM (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial), in which Cirad works with the University Eduardo Mondlane, Peace Parks Foundation and other partners in Mozambique. The objective of OLOH is to contribute to the double objective of biodiversity conservation and sustainable local development of rural communities living in the buffer zone of the Limpopo National Park (LNP), through an integrated approach that combines ecosystem, animal, and human health. OLOH project builds upon previous experience (ProSuLi project) along the creation of multi-stakeholder spaces in which local stakeholders co-design the governance and sustainability of selected interventions and monitor them in an adaptative management framework. OLOH project deals with reinforcing the role and engagement of communities in natural resource management in order to improve the co-existence of people and nature (e.g., biodiversity including wildlife) in the buffer zone of the LNP. In particular, it focuses on designing a land use management plan to co-deliver biodiversity conservation and well-being of local communities in healthy social-ecological systems.

Job description

The PhD work will focus on a monitoring and evaluation system (M&E) fit for the Social-Ecological-System (SES) at stake, with an aim to be used for strategic territorial planification. This includes to work on the advantages, challenges, and opportunities of a co-designed (participatory) and dynamic M&E for fostering simultaneous biodiversity conservation and human development in TransFrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) (i.e., sustainable livelihoods based on a sustainable use of natural resources and peaceful co-existence with wildlife). More specifically, the PhD candidate

will focus on i) identifying the key design and organizational features of a M&E system fit to targeted SES; ii) understanding whether and how (along which modalities) a co-constructed and user-defined SES-ME can generate ownership and sustained use by local stakeholders to inform the nature and implementation of land-use and resource management activities; iii) capturing the various outcomes/changes that the SES-M&E contributes to generate for local stakeholders and in the territory.

Work conditions

We offer a full-time position for the duration of the doctoral studies (3 years funding according to French education system) with the earliest starting date being the 1st of September, 2024. You will be located in Mozambique and work in the field for extended periods of time (2 years in Limpopo National Park / Massingir), with opportunities for short stays in Montpellier, France. You will work in an interdisciplinary team of researchers based in Maputo, France and Africa with experience on the evaluation of socio-economic impacts of research, wildlife ecology, social-ecological system health, and systems' governance. You will collaborate with research and project partners. There will be training opportunities throughout your work. As an integral part of your work, you will publish your results in peer-reviewed journals and present them at (inter)national conferences.

Your profile

- MSc degree in monitoring and evaluation preferably, or in environmental economics, social sciences, natural resource management
- Knowledge about participatory, co-designed approaches
- Experience or knowledge in developing countries context
- Ability to work with multiple and diverse actors in complex stakeholder networks
- Ability to listen, be proactive
- Ability to work independently
- Excellent communication, teamwork, and organizational skills
- Excellent level of English (written and spoken)
- A good level of Portuguese would be useful

Application process

We are looking forward to receiving your application **before the 1st of June, 2024** with the following documents: curriculum vitae, Copies of BSc and MSc educational records, master thesis report, a motivation letter including a statement of research interest, names and contact details of two references. Please send your application file to Alexandre Caron alexandre.caron@cirad.fr, and Marie Ferré marie.ferre@cirad.fr. Short-listed candidates will be invited for an interview.