



Call for PhD Candidate

Implementing Sustainable Land Management (SLM) strategies to mitigate the negative impacts of woody invasive alien species in the East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania

Background: CABI Switzerland, in collaboration with Swiss, Ethiopian, Kenyan, Tanzanian and South African research institutions, is implementing a project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). The project aims to help mitigate the effects of woody invasive alien species (IAS) on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being in selected study areas in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania (woodyweeds.org). To achieve this goal, we will generate and share knowledge on invasion processes and on context-dependent effects of woody IAS. Additionally, we will elaborate sustainable control measures and develop and document Sustainable Land Management (SLM) strategies that mitigate the negative effects of woody IAS in East Africa.

PhD Position: Within this project, an exciting PhD position is available at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) (<http://www.suanet.ac>) in Tanzania. The PhD study will focus on woody IAS in the East Usambara Mountains and will run parallel to other two to be implemented in Awash river basin, Ethiopia, and Baringo County, Kenya, with the common broad objective to identify, test and monitor promising Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices to mitigate negative effects of woody IAS in order to improve biodiversity, ecosystem services and rural livelihoods in East Africa. The three PhD theses will build on the outputs achieved during the phase I of the project, and will involve accompanying the work of the Local Implementation Groups (LIGs) with the aim to follow the process, tutor the LIGs and comprehensively document the development (negotiations, selection and prioritization) and implementation processes towards producing an SLM Technology Document that describes the specific SLM options successfully tested in the selected areas.

The main objectives are:

- To identify existing (indigenous and external) land management practices through stakeholder workshops and new options from research;
- To conduct and evaluate a structured process to select most promising strategies for test implementation (deliberative multi-criteria decision process);
- To facilitate local test implementation and monitor selected parameters;
- To evaluate the role of institutions in supporting SLM practices.

Specific focus

One of the most promising responses to land degradation is the concept of Sustainable Land Management (SLM), which addresses technical and ecological aspects as well as economic and socio-cultural dimensions. With the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), target 15.3 specifically addressing the aim of a land degradation-neutral world ("By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world"). The PhD candidate will work on the documentation, selection and implementation process of SLM technologies and approaches, with the aim to create an environment that triggers uptake of ecologically sound and socially acceptable SLM technologies.

Desired behaviour in SLM is motivated by supportive institutions, while undesired behaviour is sanctioned. While some institutions have emerged spontaneously without purposeful design and have eventually become habits and traditions, SLM supportive institutions should be a result of purposeful design. They should be a result of continuous deliberations and “struggles” to assist land users. The PhD candidate is expected to pay particular attention to the role of institutional settings in encouraging implementation of SLM.

Required competences

- Masters in sociology or related fields;
- Experience with stakeholder or institutional analysis is an asset;
- High social competences in interacting with stakeholders at different levels;
- Excellent skills in oral and written communications in English and ability to speak Kiswahili – Tanzania national language can be an added advantage;
- Great interest in working with an interdisciplinary and international team; and
- Willingness to travel and work in the field for extended periods.

What the research project offers

- Work in a strong international team;
- Training in inter- and transdisciplinary research;
- PhD salary according to Tanzanian standards during the 3 years (subject to approval of project’s second phase in September 2017);
- Field expenses and travel allowances;
- Supervision by experts from SUA, Tanzania and the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE; <https://www.cde.unibe.ch>), Switzerland.

Application: Please send a CV, academic transcript, contact details for at least two academic references, and a brief outline of research interests to: The Director, Directorate of Research and Postgraduate Studies, Sokoine University of Agriculture. P.O. Box 3151, Chuo Kikuu, Morogoro, Tanzania (copy to Prof. G. C. Kajembe- Project Leader e mail: kajembe@suanet.ac.tz/kajembegc@yahoo.com).

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until August 30, 2017. Informal inquiries are welcome. Short-listed candidates will be contacted immediately after the deadline to set up interviews. The envisaged start date for the project is October/November 2017.