



Education and Training Program in Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation

Institute of Resource Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Application Deadline: 12th March 2010 (16hrs East Africa time)

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The SysTem for Analysis Research and Training (START) and the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA), with financial support from the MacArthur Foundation, announce the 2010 *Education and Training Program in Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation in the Albertine Rift Region of Africa*. Applications are invited from early to mid-career conservation researchers and practitioners; masters-level graduate students; and university educators currently teaching courses related to conservation and natural resource management.

The program offers interdisciplinary learning through the use of **course modules** that allow participants to acquire knowledge and skills in assessing climate change risks to ecosystems and biodiversity, and strategies for their conservation, and through **field externship projects** whereby participants are able to apply what they have learned in the course to actual conservation efforts in the region. Participants who are university educators will receive focused training in the use and application of **distance learning modules** on climate change and biodiversity conservation, rather than participating in field externship projects.

Course modules will be offered at Institute of Resource Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam from 19 July - 3 September 2010. Externship projects will commence immediately following completion of coursework, and are anticipated to last approximately two months. Training in distance learning modules will commence on 6 September 2010 and last approximately 1 week.

Program description

The course modules are intended to generate comprehensive understanding of how climate change could impact ecosystems and biodiversity, the implications of that change on current conservation practices, and strategies for how to develop responsive strategies for adapting to potential impacts. The curriculum will cover:

- Observed and projected climate variability and change in the Albertine Rift region;
- Mechanisms by which climate affects ecosystems and biodiversity;
- Past effects of climate on ecosystems of the region and projected future impacts, including synergistic effects with non-climatic stressors;
- Impacts of ecosystem change and species loss on human livelihoods and well-being;
- Existing approaches to biodiversity conservation (e.g. protected areas, landscape design and management, and matrix management), and challenges to these approaches from climate change;

- Tools, methods, and approaches for adapting conservation strategies to a changing climate and to other drivers of change; and
- Synergies and trade-offs between strategies for climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation initiatives, such as Reducing Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation (REDD).

The material will be taught in two three-week courses, with a field trip to visit biodiversity conservation sights offered in between the two courses. The first course will concentrate on understanding climate change in the context of biodiversity conservation in the Albertine Rift Region, and the second course will focus on specific tools, methods and approaches for integrating climate change into conservation management. Participants will receive hands-on training on how to 1) assess climate risks to ecosystems, species and human livelihoods; 2) design climate responsive conservation strategies; and 3) communicate risks and engage stakeholders. In addition, university educators will receive training in the use and application of distance learning modules to teach climate change subjects within the conservation curriculum of their home universities. Courses modules will be conducted using lectures, case studies, group discussions, computer labs and seminar presentations.

Following completion of the two courses, participants other than university educators will be expected to engage in a research project to fulfill the externship requirement. Project participants will be placed in teams of 3-5 individuals, under the guidance of an expert supervisor, to work with existing conservation programs/projects in the Albertine Rift region on developing climate risk assessments of biodiversity initiatives of high priority to the region. [Participating university educators will not be required to undertake externship research projects but will instead receive training in the use of distance-learning modules.]

The externship project activity will enable participants to acquire hands-on experience in conducting climate risk assessments, drawing on knowledge and skills gained through the course, and it will enrich scientific understanding of interactions between climate change and local drivers of ecosystem change that influence biodiversity conservation ecosystem function in the region. Participants will be expected to generate publishable manuscripts based on the outcomes of their research. One participant from each group will also be expected to present externship research outcomes at a planned regional science-policy dialogue on climate change and biodiversity in the Albertine Rift in 2011.

Participant performance will be evaluated on the basis of written reports, presentations (seminar, case studies etc), classroom participation and externship projects. Successful participants will also be awarded a certificate of program completion from the University of Dar es Salaam.

Eligibility

The Education and Training Program is open to:

- Early to mid-career conservation researchers and practitioners working in governmental/non-governmental organizations with missions to manage and protect lands, natural resources, habitat and species;
- Masters-level graduate students in natural resource management, environmental science, conservation biology and related fields; and
- University educators currently teaching courses related to conservation and natural resource management

Applicants to the program must be **African nationals** and priority will be given to applicants

from the Albertine Rift countries i.e. Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Applicants must at minimum have a bachelor's degree; familiarity with climate change/conservation concepts and with methods and tools such as remote sensing data, GIS applications, etc., will be an added advantage. University educators must, in addition, possess a master's degree.

Selection Criteria

Course enrollment is limited to 30 participants; 20 participants will be selected from the conservation researcher/practitioner/graduate student applicant pool and 10 participants will be selected from the university educator applicant pool. Selection of applicants will be based upon previous academic and professional preparation, potential to apply knowledge and skills gained in the program to conservation/academic work, country of residence and gender balance. Priority will be given to applicants from countries of the Albertine Rift region.

Criteria for selection include:

- Level of education and relevant experience and training;
- Level of competence in the applicant's field(s) and intellectual abilities;
- Academic/Professional interests in areas related to and general familiarity with the topics of climate change and biodiversity conservation;
- Future professional plans, commitment to work in the Albertine Rift region and potential for future leadership;
- Preliminary proposal for externship research project;
- English language speaking and writing skills (the courses will be conducted in English; all application materials must be submitted in English).

Financial Support

Participants will receive financial support for local travel, accommodation and subsistence costs during the duration of the course. Those participating in externship projects will also be awarded stipends of up to \$2500 each.

The cost of travel to the University of Dar es Salaam from participants' city of origin must however be covered by the participants themselves or their home institutions.

Application Deadline

All application materials must be received at **IRA, University of Dar es Salaam** no later than **12th March 2010** (16.00 Hrs East Africa Time) Applications received after the deadline and incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Prospective applicants are encouraged to forward their applications as early as possible.

Application Guidelines

Please follow the guidelines below to apply:

1. Read eligibility requirements and decide if they apply to you. If you have questions, please contact the Pan-African START Secretariat (PASS) or IRA at: pass@ira.udsm.ac.tz and mubayacp@yahoo.com respectively.
2. Download the electronic Application Documents from the PASS, IRA or START websites

(<http://pass-africa.org>, www.ira.udsm.ac.tz/ and www.start.org). If you have problems downloading, copies can be requested from PASS or IRA via email (pass@ira.udsm.ac.tz or mubayacp@yahoo.com). Application Documents include the following:

- Application Form
 - Professional Reference Form
 - Institutional Support Form
3. Complete the electronic **Application Form**. Please fill in ALL the information requested.
 4. Arrange for your TWO references to each complete and submit the **Professional Reference Form**.
 5. Arrange for the **Institutional Support Form** to be filled out and signed by an appropriate representative of the Applicant's home institution. The purpose of this form is to let the Program organizers know that the institution is aware of the applicant's intention to participate in the Program and that the institution supports this application. The form can be signed by the home institution's Director, Department Head, or the Applicant's direct supervisor.
 6. Prepare a **Statement of Current Activities and Future Plans**. The statement should provide a brief summary (no more than 2 pages; 12 point font size) of your current academic, research or professional activities and future career plans that are most relevant to your qualifications for the Education and Training Program. The statement must highlight your perception of the benefits of the Program in advancing your career goals.
 7. **Conservation researchers, practitioners and graduate students** must prepare a **Preliminary Proposal for the externship research project** (no more than 1 page; 12 point font size). The proposal must describe a climate risk assessment activity that you would conduct in association with an existing conservation related program in the Albertine Rift region. Please specify clearly your objectives for this activity and state the expected outcomes in terms of their relevance to understanding climate risks to biodiversity in the region and adapting conservation to such risks. You must also include details about the nature of your proposed activity, the conservation program you would like to work with and its location, and the value added by your activity to the conservation program.
 8. **University educators** must submit a **brief statement of teaching plans**, which must include current teaching responsibilities relevant to biodiversity conservation/natural resource management and how participation in the education and training program would help them to incorporate climate change related information in their courses (no more than 1 page; 12 point font size).
 9. Obtain and submit a copy of your **Official University Transcript** for the highest degree completed, listing courses taken and grades for each course. Transcripts in a language other than English must be translated into English.
 10. Submit a copy of your current **Resume/Curriculum Vitae** (no more than 2 - 3 pages; 12 point font size) that summarizes information about your education, employment history, and other activities that are most relevant to your qualifications for the Education and Training Program.

Contact information for PASS / IRA:

Education and Training Program in Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation
Pan-African START Secretariat
Institute of Resource Assessment
University of Dar es Salaam
P. O. Box 35097
Dar es Salaam
Tel: +255 22 2410144
Email: pass@ira.udsm.ac.tz or mubayacp@yahoo.com

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants must submit all application materials to IRA electronically. All forms can be electronically completed and submitted as email attachments. Electronic submission of the **Professional Reference Forms** must be done by the References themselves.

IMPORTANT: We recommend that you retain a copy of all the application material for your records. Please note that for your application to be considered, **all application materials must be received by IRA no later than 12th March 2010 (16 hrs East Africa time).** An acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant upon receipt of the application forms. Applicants will be notified of the selection committee's decisions by the mid May 2010.

For questions regarding the course or the application process please contact either the Pan-African START Secretariat (PASS) or Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA) at: pass@ira.udsm.ac.tz or mubayacp@yahoo.com