

## Job opening

The Wyss Academy for Nature at the University of Bern brings together scientists, business leaders, policymakers, and communities to co-design innovative solutions to pressing problems such as climate change, biodiversity loss, land use change, and inequality. Our vision is a just, sustainable world where nature conservation and human wellbeing reinforce each other. Our institution consists of regional hubs in Europe, South America, East Africa, and Southeast Asia and investigates, develops, implements, and empowers technical, social, economic, institutional, and policy innovations at the interface of nature and people.

In collaboration with partners, we are developing a novel monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) tool covering an area of about 2,500km<sup>2</sup> in Northern Kenya. The MRV system is based on a photogrammetric aerial survey and a very high-resolution 3D image mosaic, a digital surface-, and elevation model. Monitoring integrates these models with historic land use data and continuous satellite monitoring. The tool could also serve as a visualization and engagement tool for communities. To advance this project, we seek a:

## Research Scientist: Payment for Ecosystem Services

**Start date:** at the earliest convenience

**Location:** Wyss Academy for Nature Office in Nanyuki, Kenya

**Apply by:** Monday, 10 March 2025

**Contract terms:** 100%

### About the role

The selected candidate will contribute to the interdisciplinary research project on payment for ecosystem services (ID PES), which tests a new methodology of landscape MRV including the monitoring of social and human wellbeing. This role focuses on three main tasks: First, the MRV tool development. Second, leading the co-design and implementation of research activities. And third, coordinate and manage administrative tasks and stakeholder engagement in relation to the project. The position offers opportunities to collaborate with global and regional experts across the Wyss Academy network.

### Responsibilities

#### MRV tool development

- Lead and coordinate the co-design of the MRV tool (including data visualization/front end), ensuring the needs of Hub Kenya, the ID PES project, and local stakeholders are well represented.
- Ensure the MRV tool's alignment to the PES interventions theories of change within the project area, while aligning the tool to human-wellbeing
- Coordinate assessments and monitoring impacts of PES activities through to the MRV tool
- Oversee data compilation and integration from Hub Kenya, local organizations, and service providers into the MRV system.
- Collaborate with the WA GIS team in Bern and CETRAD for seamless integration of spatial data and monitoring-related matters.

#### Research collaboration

- Lead the co-design and implementation of research activities, which:
  - quantifies ecosystem services (e.g. carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, etc.) and estimates the economic and intrinsic value of nature for the PES interventions

- evaluates the effectiveness of the MRV approach to shape benefit sharing mechanisms for stakeholders participating in PES interventions
- quantifies the MRV tool's cost-efficiency and financial sustainability
- Contributes to academic and non-academic publications

Project management and stakeholder engagement:

- Leading the management and execution of administrative tasks, including planning, conducting, and documenting community and stakeholder engagement activities, as well as meetings with project partners.

**Profile**

We seek a team player with a strong interest in shaping and coordinating this interdisciplinary project locally. You have expertise in measuring and monitoring landscape changes and, ideally, have managed similar field projects. You possess technical knowledge of data integration and MRV systems. Experience collaborating with diverse international and local stakeholders is essential. You should also enjoy engaging communities in project and research activities. Strong professional and culturally sensitive communication skills are essential. Finally, this role requires commitment to administrative tasks, as well as creative aspects of the project.

**Qualifications**

- PhD degree in Natural Resource Management, Conservation, Environmental Science, Geography, Biology, Conservation Biology, or related fields
- Candidates with a PhD degree: At least 2 years of work experience in an area related to the responsibilities of this position
- Candidates with a Master's degree: Will also be considered with an additional 3 years of work experience in an area related to the responsibilities of this position
- In depth expertise and experience in Payment for Ecosystem Services and landscape monitoring
- Knowledge of Kenyan local and national policies and international conventions regarding PES (or willingness to build up that knowledge)
- Expertise in handling, analyzing, and visualizing spatial and remote sensing data
- Experience in using statistical software (e.g. R, Python, GIS)
- Understanding of MRV systems (e.g. on carbon, biodiversity conservation etc.) and their challenges and opportunities (or willingness to learn)
- Experience to work with partners and stakeholders at multiple levels, including local communities, local and international NGOs, and service providers
- Proven experience working in cross-regional teams & in South-North research partnerships
- Experience in coordinating and managing administrative tasks related to research projects
- Fluency in English; communication skills in Kiswahili are a plus

**We offer**

- The chance to be part of an organization that develops, tests, and scales up solutions to the most urgent problems of our time
- An intercultural, multidisciplinary, and dynamic working environment
- Flexible working hours

For more information about this position, please write to [hr@wyssacademy.org](mailto:hr@wyssacademy.org). Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit their application (CV, cover letter outlining their motivation and how they comply with the requirements (max. 2 pages), as well as employment and education certificates) via the online portal.

*The Wyss Academy for Nature values diversity and equal opportunity. We welcome all applications from qualified individuals who meet the required criteria. **Women are strongly encouraged to apply.** Dossiers submitted through employment agencies will not be considered.*