

## REQUEST FOR PRE-PROPOSALS FOR FIELD RESEARCH: ***ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION ACTION***

Many of the earth's ecosystems are experiencing unprecedented and extensive environmental degradation and damage. To meet these challenges, the United Nations has declared 2021-2029 the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (<https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/new-un-decade-ecosystem-restoration-offers-unparalleled-opportunity>). By conserving and restoring threatened habitats and their species, scientists and citizen scientists can reverse this trend.

Ecological restoration takes direct action to repair degraded ecosystems and create a more sustainable world. It provides unparalleled opportunities to provide food security for humans and wildlife and take action against climate change. It typically requires active human intervention and action, and is often part of adaptive management. To succeed, projects must be grounded by best science and long-term participation of local people collaborating with managers. In Indigenous communities, it must incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), defined as a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs, handed down through generations about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment.

The *Earthwatch Ecological Restoration Action* RFP invites pre-proposals from scientists for ecological restoration projects that will take measurable action to address Aichi Strategic Goals, specifically, Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use; Goal C: Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity; and Goal E: Enhance implementation via participatory planning, knowledge management, and capacity building, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (<https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/default.shtml>), (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>). Proposed projects should:

- Increase scientific knowledge and public awareness of environmental challenges, while providing locally relevant solutions, in fulfillment of the UN SDGs and Aichi Targets;
- Increase partnerships with local people, communities, governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and corporations at local and international levels; and
- Inform management plans and environmental policies.

All pre-proposals must be hypothesis-driven, have quantifiable goals, measurable impacts, an overarching research theme directly related to global change, and enable participation of citizen scientists and community members. Projects must use best practices, which include a reference site, assessment, (<https://www.ser.org/page/SERStandards/International-Standards-for-the-Practice-of-Ecological-Restoration.htm>), restoration, monitoring, and adaptive management. We strongly welcome pre-proposals that will improve human livelihoods and support scientists in emerging nations. We seek projects in South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and North America.

### ***FOCAL RESTORATION ECOLOGY ACTION RESEARCH TOPICS:***

We invite pre-proposals for field-based research by qualified scientists on the following topics:

- Climate-change impact mitigation and resiliency;
- Native plant restoration and eradication of non-native species;
- Restoration of native pollinators and ecosystem engineers;
- Biodiversity conservation, including native species reintroductions;
- Restoration of ecosystem productivity and resiliency;
- Restoration of food-web functionality, including keystone species restoration;
- Pollution reduction (in water, soil, and air) including plastics and other contaminants;
- Restoration of habitats strongly impacted by climate change;
- Restoration of agro-forestry systems; and
- Incorporation of TEK into ecological restoration.

**HARNESSING THE POWER OF CITIZEN SCIENCE TO TAKE ACTION TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CHANGE:** Since 1971, Earthwatch has funded scientists working with citizen-scientist volunteers to increase our understanding of ecosystems and find sustainable solutions to global change. Projects we fund produce rigorous, relevant, and impactful science. Incorporating citizen scientists in fieldwork increases the broader impacts of the research we fund, by increasing their science awareness and conservation commitment.

**To fit our citizen-science model, all proposed projects must:**

- Have quantifiable goals and measurable impacts of action taken on the project;
- Have a 3-year or longer duration (longer-term research may receive priority support);
- Incorporate field-based research;
- Have data gathered primarily by citizen-scientist participants recruited by Earthwatch;
- Field approx. 4-10 teams per year, with 4-15 volunteers per team as needed for data collection;
- Have short (1-3 day) and/or long (7-14 day) duration teams (projects that enable both short and long duration teams will receive priority support);
- For teams > 1 day, provide reputable housing for volunteers within a 45-minute drive from site;
- Field adult, high school and college student, teacher, and corporate groups;
- Be run in English, with all communications by field staff and supporting documents in English;
- Educate volunteers about the project's science and its relevance to global priorities;
- Engage with, provide outreach to, contribute to conservation actions, or otherwise collaborate with local community stakeholders;
- Share project data with stakeholders, and if possible contribute to open-source datasets;
- Partner with collaborators and receive support from at least one other source of funding.

**GRANTS:** Earthwatch funding is intended to be supplemental to other sources of funding. Annual grants cover project field expenses including: equipment, research permits, scientist transportation to the field, support staff, and food and housing while in the field. **Grants do not cover scientist salaries, student tuition, overhead, or capital equipment.** Annual budgets for projects with long-duration teams range between US \$20,000–\$80,000, with most of that covering volunteer and staff expenses while in the field. Final grants are provided on a per-capita basis based on the number of participants. Research projects are tenable for three years, subject to annual performance review, and may be eligible for renewal beyond that period.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) REQUIREMENTS:** All pre-proposals must be submitted by the PI, who is also expected to be the primary leader in the field. All PIs must have a PhD in the area of proposed research and a university, government agency, or science-focused NGO affiliation. We encourage graduate student participation on projects and are particularly interested in helping support early-career scientists and scientists local to the research nation.

**SUBMITTING A PRE-PROPOSAL:** All pre-proposals and supporting documents must be in English. Earthwatch will select pre-proposals for development into full research proposals. Criteria for selection are: quality and relevance of the project proposed, PI qualifications, and goodness of fit for citizen science. Due to safety concerns, we are unable to support projects in the following areas: Earthwatch No Go List. To submit a pre-proposal, visit <http://earthwatch.org/research-funding/apply-for-funding>.

**PRE-PROPOSALS FOR PROJECTS STARTING IN 2021 WILL BE  
ACCEPTED THROUGH 11:59 P.M. (EDT) SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2019**

Please direct inquiries to: [research@earthwatch.org](mailto:research@earthwatch.org)