



**Center of Excellence in Biodiversity  
&  
Natural Resource Management**

**Call for application: 7 day study tour in Nyungwe National Park for 5 postgraduate students from the University of Rwanda from Monday 13 to Monday 20 May 2024**

**Dates: Monday 13 – Monday 20 May 2024**

**Application deadline: 29 March 2024**

The Centre of Excellence in Biodiversity (CoEB) – UNESCO Category 2 Centre in collaboration with Yale School of the Environment call for application of 7-day study tour in Nyungwe National Park for 5 postgraduate students from the University of Rwanda. Yale’s School of the Environment is widely recognized for its ability to link graduate students with real-world applications of their academic studies. This study tour offers students a unique opportunity to observe and critically examine conservation strategies and initiatives being undertaken in Nyungwe National Park, Rwanda – a country rich in the history and practice of conservation of wildlife and wild places, within a crucible of great human pressures. Rwandan masters or PhD students will join with those from Yale University to visit Nyungwe National Park, confer with conservationists from park managers, engage with communities surrounding them, and delve deeply into intensive discussion throughout. They are continually challenged by the objective of saving outstanding biological richness in a most challenging context, and draw lessons from direct observation of site-based solutions.

### **Scope**

Various conservation issues and approaches are seen in practice, discussed in depth, and assessed as a consequence, including:

- The effectiveness of protected areas
- Ecotourism implementation, benefits and challenges
- Public/Private management of parks
- Buffer zone creation and management
- Natural forest restoration
- Landscape level initiatives
- Revenue-sharing from parks with local communities
- Human/wildlife conflict; compensation for wildlife-inflicted damages
- Enterprise development to link conservation and development
- Comparison of national and local interests/benefits from conservation

To directly examine issues of conservation and development, the group spends several days in a community bordering Nyungwe National Park: a site in which development efforts are aimed at integrating rural health, education, farming, and natural resource management - allowing observation of progress and challenges.

### **Outline of daily activities:**

May 13: pick-up in Huye and transport to Gisakura, meeting up with the Yale students (lodge in guesthouse in Gisakura for the next 4 nights)

May 14: full-day guided hike in Nyungwe National Park

May 15 & 16: treks to see chimpanzees and colobus monkeys, with afternoon briefings by park management staff

May 17 & 18: hike to Banda village (just north of the park), observing rural development programs and the relationship of local people to the park (lodge in guest houses in Banda)

May 19: hike from Banda to the road (a difficult 3-hr hike up steep hills), visit in-forest restoration site, arrive in Huye by evening

May 20: morning post trip panel discussion at the Huye office of the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management, University of Rwanda.

Relevant readings and general lectures on tropical forest ecology will be shared to deepen student understanding and experience prior to the study tour.

### **Cost coverage**

Travel and lodging will be covered by funds from Yale School of the Environment.

### **Application Process**

Selection of 5 students for the study tour will be competitive, based on submission of a letter of interest and c.v. to Dr. Amy Vedder ([amy.vedder@yale.edu](mailto:amy.vedder@yale.edu)) and Dr. Bill Weber ([bill.weber@yale.edu](mailto:bill.weber@yale.edu)) by **5pm CAT on Friday 29 March 2024**.

The letter of interest (1-2pp maximum) should include information on:

- Reasons for your interest
- What you hope to gain from the study tour
- More specifically, how this study tour will complement your postgraduate training, thesis research, and/or better inform your career goals
- How you plan to share your experiences and learning with the CoEB and University of Rwanda community

Announcement of students selected to participate will be made by **4 April**, via email.



**Dr. Venuste Nsengimana**  
**Director, Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management**  
**College of Science and Technology**  
**University of Rwanda**