



Socio-Ecologist: Medicinal Plant Project

Purpose of the job:

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) is one of the largest biodiversity conservation organisations in southern and East Africa, with a rich portfolio of projects and programmes across the region. The EWT seeks to employ a full-time Socio-Ecologist, primarily (but not exclusively) to implement its Medicinal Plant Project.

The Socio-Ecologist: Medicinal Plants is responsible for the implementation of the EWT's Medicinal Plant Project primarily in (but not limited to) Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces. The position requires extensive engagement and collaboration with traditional healers, traders, harvesters, and communities to reduce the volumes and impact of illegal harvesting of medicinal plants from the wild through the scaling of mass cultivation, strengthening governance, monitoring of wild plant populations and other actions.

Main Responsibilities:

- Overall day-to-day implementation and coordination of the EWT Medicinal Plant project primarily in Limpopo and Mpumalanga, including administrative tasks, assisting with the sourcing of funding, networking, and communications.
- Create awareness of the values of biodiversity and impacts of wildlife offenses amongst SAPS officials, community leaders, local communities, and other stakeholders.
- Facilitate, co-develop, and implement management strategies to scale cultivation and distribute medicinal plants to traditional healers, traders, harvesters, and targeted communities.
- Facilitate and/or implement training (including horticulture) and identify opportunities to strengthen the livelihoods of those involved in the medicinal plant trade.
- Co-develop and monitor the implementation of management plans with communities to strengthen governance and protection of selected wild medicinal plant populations with local communities and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to the design and implementation of research and monitoring and evaluation systems, ensuring integration into project processes and consistent high-quality collection, collation, and input of data.
- Train and support community citizen scientists to monitor selected medical plant populations, in collaboration with university partners.
- Provide training on wildlife legislation and engage with targeted stakeholders such as the South African Police Services, traditional healers, traders, and harvesters, amongst others.
- Monitor and advise on instances of non-compliance and illegal harvesting of medicinal plants and facilitate strategies to curb these activities with local communities, conservation authorities, the South African Police Services, and other stakeholders.

Additional duties and Responsibilities:

- Prepare high-quality internal and external reports as required.

- Contribute to the writing of articles and social media posts.
- Represent the EWT and our partners in relevant fora such as meetings, workshops, conferences, etc.
- Implement the EWT's Education for Sustainable Development project (Guardians of the Future) in schools in targeted communities.
- Support additional EWT projects and initiatives as required.

Qualifications and experience:

Essential

- Minimum of a BSc or BSc equivalent life or environmental sciences or horticulture but, preferably, at least an Honours qualification
- 3-5 years' experience in Community-Based Conservation or similar projects, preferably relating to medicinal plants and natural resource management
- Excellent project management skills
- Demonstrable computer literacy
- Good report writing and project administration skills
- Sound financial management experience
- Willingness to travel

Desirable

- Fluent in TshiVenda or SePedi
- Strong research skills
- The incumbent will preferably be based in Vhembe, in Limpopo Province

Interpersonal Skills:

- Disciplined, reliable, and energetic
- Excellent communication and networking skills
- Independent and self-motivated, but also willing to work as part of a team

Level of decision-making, including limitations:

Implements the EWT's Medicinal Plant Project under the guidance of the Manager: People In Conservation Unit, with support from other EWT team members as required.

The Endangered Wildlife Trust is an equal-opportunity employer. To apply, please click the following : [Application link](#). Applicants who have not been contacted within 10 working days of the closing date must please assume that their application was not successful. The EWT reserves the right not to make an appointment. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. **Closing Date: 22 November 2024.**