BGCI Vacancy Announcement

Title of post: Project Officer

Job Purpose: To support project activities and facilitate training programs and tree survey activities for projects focused on threatened tree species and forest restoration

Contract Type: Full-time

Duration: 6 months Fixed Term Appointment (with the potential to extend)

Location: BGCI Africa Office, IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, Mukoma Road, P.O. Box 68000 – 00200, Nairobi

Remuneration: 1.8m – 2.1m Kenya shillings per annum, depending on experience

Start Date: As soon as possible, no later than February 2023

Position Summary

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) is seeking to recruit a strong technical project officer to join our Africa team. BGCI Africa is running a number of restoration and tree conservation projects in East Africa and works with partner organizations and local communities. In an effort to improve the knowledge and skills of our beneficiaries and partners, we are looking to recruit a project officer who will also undertake training and capacity building roles for plant conservation for our project beneficiaries and partners. Part of this role will include assisting in the implementation of a Darwin Initiative funded project to improve tree conservation and forest restoration in Kilifi County in Kenya as well as other smaller projects that are focused on threatened tree species in East Africa. The appointed person will work from BGCI Africa Office in Nairobi, Kenya, with field trip in the country, and also be connected to our global team. The appointed person must be eligible to work in Kenya.

Candidates for this post will be people with a strong technical background on plant conservation and forest restoration particularly tree nursery management, seed collection, monitoring and propagation in nurseries, and plant surveys. The candidate will also be self-motivated, and able to work independently.

About BGCI

There are an estimated 2,500 botanic gardens and arboreta in the world attracting 750 million visitors each year. Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) is at the centre of this network. Our members include the largest, most renowned gardens on the planet – Kew, New York, Missouri, Singapore, Sydney and Shanghai – and they also include many smaller gardens situated in the world’s plant diversity hotspots. All of these member gardens share a commitment to making sure that no plant species becomes extinct, and they have a combined workforce of many thousands of horticulturalists and scientists working towards that end.
BGCI provides support to its members in many different ways: we are an advocate for the botanic garden community, promoting the role of botanic gardens in plant conservation policy, practice and education; we connect people, co-ordinating efforts and bringing people together to exchange ideas; we are a knowledge hub, providing training, learning resources and professional support; and we provide funding and technical support to efforts aimed at saving plants.

Central to BGCI’s role in advocating for the botanic garden community is our efforts to communicate about the important conservation work being carried out by BGCI, our members, and our partners. We recently launched a landmark report, ‘State of the World’s Trees’, documenting the conservation status of the world’s 60,000 tree species. This report indicated that 30% of the world’s tree species are at risk of extinction. BGCI also leads a programme of practical work on threatened tree species, including coordinating action for specific taxonomic groups of trees via Global Conservation Consortia and working with partners on the ground to design and deliver projects for threatened tree species.

The BGCI Africa programme has a strong focus on tree conservation and forest restoration. The programme leads a number of practical projects with partners focused on threatened tree species recovery and ensuring strong biodiversity outcomes in restoration and tree planting.

Detailed Position Description

The project officer will provide efficient project level support, both administratively and technically helping to ensure successful planning, implementation, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation of BGCI’s programme ecological restoration and tree conservation projects. The project officer will primarily be working on the Darwin Initiative Project – Darwin Initiative funded project Kaya Connect: Restoring the East African Coastal Forest Biodiversity Hotspot (now until March 2025) and the Fondation Franklinia funded project Mainstreaming threatened species into tree planting programmes in Kenya (now until May 2023), and supporting delivery of other projects in the BGCI Africa portfolio, including new projects as they are added to the portfolio. Specific tasks will include:

Duties and Responsibilities:

General duties

- Assist in the East Africa project manager in project planning and implementation
- Follow up with project partners, (especially nursery partners), on data management and proper reporting for the project
- Provide support and technical input on the project design and implementation
- Assist in collation of project specific interim and final reports from the project partners
- Provide technical knowledge and information on fundraising activities to BGCI staff and project partners
- Tracking and Follow up on project deliverables that have been assigned to project partners and consultants towards, supporting the Project Manager to ensure timely submission of the desired and high-quality outputs.
- Assist project partners on technical issues concerning the project, where necessary.
- Provision of logistical support for workshops and meetings including disseminating information packs to participants and external audience.
- Implementation of data management in line with BGCI and project specific protocols, policies and procedures.
- Maintaining regular contact with project partners including gathering and availing information relevant to support of both partners and project managers.
- Undertaking any other duties as assigned by the line manager.

Training and Capacity Building
1. Develop training materials to build capacity for survey work, collection of propagation materials, propagation, and planting of threatened tree species
2. Organize training courses with the project partners including:
   - Developing training timetables and schedules
   - Identifying and arranging for appropriate staff from partner organizations to participate in the trainings and surveys
   - Organizing travel to the project sites
   - Facilitation of the trainings
   - Developing and submitting reports on training activities
   - Conducting training needs assessments and training evaluations
   - Conducting regular follow ups with the trainees

Tree Species Surveys
- Along with the guidance of specialists, provide support in planning and undertaking surveys on threatened tree species
- Track the locations of target species for each of the projects together with relevant project partners
- Organize and lead field surveys to locate the species in the designated forests
- Fill in survey forms and report on them
- Field survey training for accompanying partners and project beneficiaries
- Ensure propagation materials end up to the right nurseries for propagation
- Preparation and planning for survey work including collection protocols in the various sites
- Sourcing for botanists from partner organizations to join surveys and ensure delivery of reports from the botanists

Communication and Reporting
- Assist the project manager in tracking reports from project partners
- Keeping track of data from nurseries with the partner organizations
- Ensuring the data tracking sheets are up to date
- Communicating with the trained nursery groups on a regular basis to check on their progress and any gaps realized
- Documentation of field activities through photographs and brief reports to enable promotion of the project

**Administrative Duties**
- Preparing budget requests prior to undertaking field activities
- Submitting expense reports from field missions – this includes all receipts accounting for all the money spent in the field.
- Keeping records of up-to-date approved timesheets

**Person Specification**
BGCI Africa is looking to recruit a candidate with outstanding technical expertise in plant conservation, and ecological restoration. The post holder will demonstrate sensitivity to complex, multicultural and multinational institutions, and structures. Working within a partnership model, candidates must be able to show their capacity to innovate and to manage change. They must also be able to inspire project beneficiaries and partners towards achieving the goals of the project.

**Education and Experience**
- Eligibility to work in Kenya
- A bachelor’s degree in botany, forestry, environmental conservation or a related field.
- At least 3 years’ experience in a conservation organization with active roles in training and capacity building and tree or forest conservation
- Experience in interacting with international organisations and individuals; and multiple partner settings
- Experience working with remote local community members
- Perfect mastery of English, both oral and written combined with excellent communication and presentational abilities
- Experience in report writing and simple data management
- Applied plant conservation skills – this could include, for example, botanical survey work, seed collection, propagation, nursery management, species recovery

**Desirable**
- Experience of working for a not-for-profit organisation
- Knowledge of botanic gardens, plants or related disciplines ideally gained through direct personal experience
Skills and competencies

Essential
- Proven track record of delivering and managing conservation projects, preferably international
- Capacity to innovate and manage change
- Willingness to travel frequently internationally
- Knowledge of plant conservation approaches and methodologies
- Knowledge of database functioning

Application Process
To apply for this position please submit a CV and Cover letter of one page maximum detailing your experience, relevant qualifications and reasons for applying for the position to africa@bgci.org.

Closing date for the application: 8th January 2023

BGCI is committed to putting equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our organisation. We are committed to ensuring a working environment in which all individuals are free from discrimination and in which opportunities are equal to all. We encourage applications from all sections of the community, particularly those underrepresented within our sector.