



MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

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FULLY FUNDED PHD SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Maasai Mara University is a Public University chartered in 2013. Our mission is to provide quality university education through innovative teaching, research, and community outreach.

Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Vision: A University focused on innovation and empowerment for societal transformation.

Mission: To provide quality education through teaching, research, innovation and community outreach

Core Values: Excellence, Innovation, Productivity, Accountability, Collaboration, and Equity (EXIPACE).

More details on our university can be found on our website www.mmarau.ac.ke.

Maasai Mara University is pleased to announce a PhD scholarship opportunity for a passionate and committed student interested in halting biodiversity loss in the African Rangelands through Collective Action at the landscape level.

The scholarship is part of the larger CurveBend project, a 7-year transdisciplinary research project funded as part of the National Science Agenda (NWA) by the Dutch Research Council (NWO). The CurveBend consortium consists of 9 research institutes in the Netherlands, Argentina, Kenya and Tanzania.

The project will study, develop, and support different forms of collective action at the landscape scale aimed at restoring biodiversity and promoting a nature-positive society.

Scholarship Overview

WP3-EA: Reconciling the ecological and human lifescapes of East African rangelands through collective action **EA-PhD1 - PhD position (4 yrs, based at MMU) - Collective action to mitigate elite capture and promote biodiversity under different land tenure arrangements in pastoral rangelands**

Supervision: Dr. Jedidah Nankaya (MMU), Prof. Robert Lensink (RUG), Prof. Han Olf (RUG), Prof. Erwin Bulte (WUR)

Job description: In this project, you will: 1) Analyse variations in land tenure arrangements and their impact on formal and informal resource governance in pastoralist rangelands, 2) Analyse the inclusion/exclusion of different social groups (gender, generation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and kinship) from land and natural resources, 3) Analyse different collective actions and benefit sharing schemes that help mitigate elite capture of natural resources and protect biodiversity.

Methodology: The PhD will conduct semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in different Maasai communities that vary in the land tenure systems and rainfall (high vs low) to understand their organisation regarding access to grazing land and identifying barriers and enablers for successful collective action. They will combine economic and ethnographic methods to measure the share of these goods and services exchanged via formal markets and via informal arrangements. We study how different conservation benefit sharing interventions by conservation authorities and investors (als conservation leases) work out in sharing among different social and economic groups, depending on the natural and political context (compare low-high rainfall, Kenya-Tanzania).

Responsibilities and Tasks: 1) Develop a dataset of formal and informal ownership structures of land and livestock across Maasai communities in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, 2) Map cash flows and exchange of goods and services in different communities, with and without strong collective action, 3) Quantify the differences between different forms of collective action in costs and benefits between different social groups (youth, women and men).

Place of work: Maasai Mara University, Narok, with regular field work in Narok County and Northern Tanzania and also at least 6 months at the University of Groningen for collaboration and coursework.

Requirements: Qualifications: 1) A completed (research) master degree in environmental sciences, economics, sustainability or equivalent; 2) Experience with quantitative methods and software (e.g. GIS, statistics, R); 3) Keen interest in developing mixed methods skills (qualitative social science methods and quantitative methods); 4) Proven affinity with savanna ecosystems, including pastoralist rangelands; 5) Affinity with Masaai communities; 6) A team player with a collaborative attitude and ability to work within an interdisciplinary team composed of anthropologists, economists and ecologists; 7) proficiency in English, Swahili and Maa language (all required).

Interested? [Click to fill out the application form](#)

More information: Jedidah Nankaya (jsjedidah@gmail.com/nankaya@mmarau.ac.ke) or Robert Lensink (b.w.lensink@rug.nl)