

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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THE JRS BIODIVERSITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES GRANT TO SUPPORT DATA-BASED JOURNALISM ON BIODIVERSITY IN THE NILE BASIN

SEATTLE, Washington – August 30, 2019 – The JRS Biodiversity Foundation announces a grant award of \$299,900 to foster collaboration between journalists and scientists and support the expansion of [Water Journalists Africa's](#) geo-journalism platform, [InfoNile](#). The three-year investment supports JRS' [Capacity Development](#) and Freshwater Biodiversity Programs to increase access to biodiversity data and knowledge in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Nile River stretches through 11 countries in Africa where human activities threaten its rich biodiversity. There is a critical gap between the data published for scientific knowledge and its translation to public knowledge through the media to create public awareness of why conservation is important. This project seeks to bridge the gap between scientists and journalists by promoting informed, data-based, and science-based journalism about freshwater biodiversity issues in the Nile Basin.

[Water Journalists Africa](#) will improve the communication of biodiversity issues by cross-training journalists and scientists in data journalism and communication skills and expanding its geo-journalism platform, [InfoNile](#). InfoNile combines interactive maps and data visualizations with journalistic story telling about water issues in the Nile River Basin. This expansion will include a new portal to easily connect journalists and scientists and added stories about biodiversity challenges and solutions to increase awareness and inspire action to improve water resources management.

“We will introduce more local journalists in the region to the concept of combining data, maps, and interactive online storytelling, to enable them tell stories about biodiversity in creative ways,” says Water Journalists Africa Managing Director, Fredrick Mugira. “This way, we will promote innovative and credible environmental journalism in Africa that encourages people to take action to improve the quality of their continent.”

“Credible, science-based, environmental journalism is a vital ingredient to transforming biodiversity data into conservation action,” says JRS Biodiversity Foundation Executive Director, Don Doering. “We are excited to support WJA’s creative and bold work to bring together scientists, journalists, and technology to tell the story of biodiversity’s value to society.”

Multiple partners are joining Water Journalists Africa in this ambitious effort. [Code for Africa](#) and [MapBox](#) will provide technical support and enhance stories through data visualizations and custom interactive maps, respectively. Code for Africa will also support training in data visualization and [SciDev.net](#) will support training in science journalism. [IHE-Delft Institute of Water Education](#), [Nile Basin Capacity Building Network](#), and [Nile Basin Initiative](#) are all key partners for access to researchers and journalists throughout this collaborative project.

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About “*InfoNile.org: A Geojournalism Platform Connecting Journalists and Scientists in the Nile Basin for Data-Based Communication on Biodiversity*” – See <https://jrsbiodiversity.org/grants/wja2019/>.

About the JRS Biodiversity Foundation – The mission of the JRS Biodiversity Foundation is to increase access to and use of information that will lead to greater biodiversity conservation and more sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Founded in 2004, the JRS Biodiversity Foundation supports the capacity of institutions and people who collect, manage, and share biodiversity data for Sub-Saharan Africa. JRS’ grantees connect this knowledge to stakeholders who make and influence decisions that are crucial to supporting biodiversity. The foundation has awarded \$20M in grants since 2007. Visit us online at <http://jrsbiodiversity.org>.

About Water Journalists Africa – Water Journalists Africa is the largest network of journalists who report about water on the African continent, with over 700 members reporting from 50 countries. Water Journalists Africa’s vision is to promote public understanding of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) by improving the quality, accuracy, and intensity of reporting on water resources. In 2017, Water Journalists Africa founded InfoNile.org, a project that aggregates citizen, local, and international reporting on various water issues in the Nile Basin. Visit Water Journalists Africa online at: <http://waterjournalistsafrica.com>

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