

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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JRS ANNOUNCES NEW GRANTS TO ADVANCE FRESHWATER BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

SEATTLE, Washington – SEPTEMBER 19, 2019 – The JRS Biodiversity Foundation announces three new grant awards, totaling \$374,600, to expand the JRS [Freshwater Biodiversity and Resources Program](#) to support the conservation and sustainable use of freshwater ecosystems. JRS invests in regions in sub-Saharan Africa with high biodiversity value to develop the capacity to share and utilize biodiversity data and knowledge. These funded projects target freshwater ecosystems in South Africa, Malawi, and Tanzania, and focus on improving data access, connecting knowledge to decision-makers, and creating partnerships for long-term success.

[Association for Water and Rural Development – Enhanced bioinformatics capacity for data sharing and decision-support for freshwater biodiversity conservation of the transboundary rivers of the Kruger National Park \(South Africa\), \\$284,000](#)

JRS awards a \$284,000 project implementation grant to the [Association for Water and Rural Development \(AWARD\)](#) for the development of a system that supports monitoring, analysis, and sound decision-making regarding freshwater biodiversity in the Lowveld region including the catchments of Kruger National Park (KNP), South Africa. This grant will expand the Freshwater Biodiversity Information System (FBIS) currently being developed with a previous [JRS grant](#) to include biodiversity data for all of the rivers flowing through KNP. AWARD will enhance the information system through added analytical capacity (of trends and the impact of water quality and other drivers upon aquatic biodiversity) using their INWARDS decision-support model.

[Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources – Saving the critically endangered riverine species of Malawi, US\\$ 36,340](#)

[Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources \(LUANAR\)](#) receives a US\$ 36,339 planning grant to develop a multi-year project to provide access to Malawi fisheries data with a focus on endangered fish species. This investment will support LUANAR to develop a technical plan and build partnerships for the development of a database and data-sharing portal. This four-month planning phase will identify the best strategies to support stakeholders who are working to save the critically endangered riverine species of Malawi and productive fisheries.

[Sokoine University of Agriculture – Freshwater biodiversity information system for sustainable conservation of Rufiji River basin in Tanzania, \\$54,280.](#)

[Sokoine University of Agriculture \(SUA\)](#) receives a \$54,280 planning grant for a multi-year project to improve freshwater biodiversity data access for the Rufiji River catchment in Tanzania. Improved data accessibility will allow stakeholders to develop long term plans for conserving freshwater biodiversity in relation to existing land uses such as agriculture, mining, human settlements and hydropower operations within the Rufiji River Basin. During this eight-month planning phase, SUA will design the data architecture and software environment, identify information gaps, build the best approach for biodiversity assessments and data-sharing, and engage stakeholders in the goal of developing a data-sharing portal for freshwater biodiversity information.

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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 scientific knowledge to stakeholders who make and influence decisions that are crucial to conserving biodiversity. The foundation has awarded \$US 20.3 million in grants since 2007. Please visit us online at <http://jrsbiodiversity.org>.

About the Association for Water and Rural Development (AWARD) – AWARD is a non-profit organization specializing in multi-disciplinary, participatory, research-based project implementation aimed at addressing issues of sustainability, inequity, and poverty. The association has a 20-year history of research and implementation in water resources protection and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). Visit AWARD online at: <http://award.org.za>

About Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) – LUANAR is a university based in Malawi with a focus on advancing knowledge for agricultural growth, food security, wealth creation, and sustainable natural resources management. The Aquaculture and Fisheries Science Department and the Africa Centre of Excellence in Aquaculture and Fisheries at LUANAR aims to produce graduates with an in-depth understanding of aquaculture and fisheries science and aquaculture and fisheries research and extension capabilities. Visit LUANAR online at: <http://www.bunda.luanar.mw>

About Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) – SUA is a public university based in Morogoro, Tanzania with a mission to promote development in agriculture, natural resources, and allied sectors through training, research, and delivery of services. Visit SUA online at: <http://www.sua.ac.tz/>

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