

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Don S. Doering, Executive Director at info@jrsbiodiversity.org, (206) 454-7915.

NEW JRS GRANTS STRIVE TO BRING AFRICAN POLLINATOR DATA TO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

SEATTLE, Washington – October 8, 2019 – The JRS Biodiversity Foundation announces grant awards totaling nearly \$595,000 in support of JRS' [Pollinator Biodiversity and Services Program](#). Pollination is critical to sustaining human nutrition and agricultural livelihoods, and the decline of pollinator populations has raised alarm across the globe. JRS' funding targets sub-Saharan Africa where there is a lack of accessible pollinator biodiversity data to contribute to agricultural development, global assessments, and science-based policy decisions.

[Development of a national biodiversity data portal \(Atlas of Living Tanzania\), based on Atlas of Living Australia open source software](#)

[Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology \(DIT\)](#) receives a \$240,000 grant to implement an online biodiversity data portal for Tanzania. This data portal will be developed closely with [TanBIF](#), the Tanzanian nation node of the [Global Biodiversity Information Facility \(GBIF\)](#), an online network that provides open-access biodiversity data. The new portal will be based upon the modules and overall design of the [Living Atlases](#), pioneered by the Atlas of Living Australia and locally modified by over 20 nations. Pollinator data will be the initial focus, but the portal will be able to accommodate all types of biodiversity information. This project will bring together a network of biodiversity data holders with the goal of providing researchers and other stakeholders in Tanzania with an effective tool to publish and access biodiversity data and address national issues in ecosystem services, food security, resilience to climate change, and more.

“This project is an opportunity for Tanzania to develop a sustainable biodiversity facility, which will enable researchers to publish and access biodiversity information to address the local needs,” explains Dr. Florence Alex Mamboya, the Project Director, “This is an important tool for gathering biodiversity information to be used for research, planning, and sustainable management of biodiversity resources.”

[Generating information on bee pollinator diversity and distribution in Uganda through the application of ecology and informatics tools](#)

The Department of Zoology, Entomology, and Fisheries Science at [Makerere University](#) receives a \$275,000 implementation grant to increase the quantity, quality, and accessibility of data on bee pollinators in Uganda. This project led by Dr. Anne M. Akol aims to create a new, public, web-based database to mobilize pollinator information in Uganda. This data portal will be complemented by the generation of new data products to serve different end-user needs, a bee identification guide, and outreach activities and materials. Collectively, these activities and products will increase knowledge and create awareness of the role of pollinators in food production and environmental resilience in Uganda.

Akol knows that mobilizing information is key. “This new information facility will aggregate pollination information for Uganda and make it available to decision-makers working with agriculture and conservation, farmers, and educators. I hope the facility spurs national interest and growth in biodiversity informatics. Such expertise is needed to bring our considerable volume of biodiversity information to one place and make it accessible to diverse users.”

Integrated modelling to understand pollination services across agricultural landscapes

The [Basque Center for Climate Change \(BC3\)](#) receives a \$43,000 planning grant for the development of a model for agricultural pollination services in South Africa. Dr. Ainhoa Magrach will lead this eight-month effort by BC3 to plan how its modeling platform, [ARIES](#), can aid in understanding and formulating management of South African pollination services. BC3 will also work to secure scientific partnerships, assess available data, and better understand African biodiversity and stakeholder needs.

Harnessing pollinator biodiversity informatics in Malawi to understand the importance of agroecological interventions

[Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources \(LUANAR\)](#) receives a \$36,950 planning grant to mobilize bee pollinator data in Malawi. This funding will bring together partners and specialists to develop a plan for a pollinator database and data-sharing portal. LUANAR is collaborating with the [Soils, Food, and Healthy Communities \(SFHC\)](#), a farmer-led organization that uses agroecological methods to improve food security and nutrition in Malawi. SFHC is a key partner in the [Farms4Biodiversity](#) project that aims to study the efficacy and adoption of agroecological farming methods in smallholder farming systems in Malawi. The planning team, led by Dr. Trust Kasambala Donga at LUANAR, aims to use this database and portal to support applied research on the effects of land-use change on bee pollinators and how farming practices influence pollinators or ecological resiliency of the Malawian landscape.

###

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. Visit JRS online at <http://jrsbiodiversity.org>.

About Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) – DIT is a technical training institution in Tanzania with a vision to become the leading technical education Institution in addressing societal needs. DIT strives to provide competence-based technical education through training, research, innovation, and development of appropriate technology. Visit DIT online at <http://www.dit.ac.tz/>.

About Makerere University – Makerere University in Uganda provides innovative teaching, learning, research, and services responsive to national and global needs. Their vision is to be the leading institution for academic excellence and innovations in Africa, and the Department of Zoology, Entomology, and Fisheries Science strives to equip students with the knowledge and skills to meaningfully contribute to the development of natural resources for the welfare and benefit of society. Visit Makerere University online at <http://www.mak.ac.ug>.

About the Basque Center for Climate Change (BC3) – BC3 is a research center on the causes and consequences of climate change. The Center produces multidisciplinary knowledge to support decision making towards sustainable development at the international level. BC3 strives to strategically foster co-production of knowledge relevant to decision making by integrating environmental, socioeconomic, and ethical dimensions of climate change. Visit BC3 online at <https://www.bc3research.org>.

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. Visit LUANAR online at <http://www.bunda.luanar.mw>.

Contact at JRS Biodiversity Foundation: Don S. Doering, Executive Director, [ddoering 'at sign' jrsbiodiversity.org](mailto:ddoering@jrsbiodiversity.org), +1(206) 454-7915

Contact at DIT: Dr. Florence Alex Mamboya, Project Director, [florence.mamboya 'at sign' dit.ac.tz](mailto:florence.mamboya@dit.ac.tz), +255(0)22-2150174

Contact at Makerere University: Dr. Anne M. Akol, Project Director, [aakol 'at sign' cns.mak.ac.ug](mailto:aakol@cns.mak.ac.ug), +256 414 531902

Contact at BC3: Dr. Ainhoa Magrach, Ikerbasque Research Fellow, [ainhoa.magrach 'at sign' bc3research.org](mailto:ainhoa.magrach@bc3research.org), +34 944 014 690

Contact at LUANAR: Dr. Trust Kasambala Donga, Project Team Leader, [tdonga 'at sign' luanar.ac.mw](mailto:tdonga@luanar.ac.mw), +265993320600

###