ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH

Postdoctoral Researcher: Environmental Risks of Accelerated Adaptation and Ecological Restoration

Conservation Science

Job Description

Main Duties

- Lead and undertake research activities to explore the diverse risks associated with accelerated adaptation and ecological restoration, working collaboratively with scientists, conservation organisations, public agencies and other stakeholders;
- Identify, collate and synthesise evidence relating to ecological risks, barriers and mitigations relevant to selected species and systems, such as climate impacts, pests and pathogens, herbivory and predation, invasive species, ecological competition and wider ecosystem consequences of both intervention and non-intervention, through targeted literature review, case studies and existing risk assessment frameworks;
- Design and facilitate workshops, horizon-scanning exercises and expert elicitation processes with project partners and external stakeholders to capture practical risk knowledge and lessons learned from existing interventions;
- Contribute to analysing, evaluating, and where possible quantifying and modelling risks and mitigations across different restoration contexts;
- Co-develop, test and refine digital outputs and practical resources such as interactive visualisations and decision-support;
- Contribute to the design, development and testing of an overall project online toolkit and associated resources;
- Contribute to papers and conference presentations, project reports, policy briefs and impact activities including wider knowledge exchange activities with technical partners;
- Support evaluation of toolkit resources and identify opportunities for wider adoption and impact beyond the lifetime of the project;
- Contribute positively to a collaborative and inclusive research culture, maintaining high standards of research integrity, ethics and data management.

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Person Specification

Essential skills, knowledge and qualifications

- Experience designing and delivering high-quality independent research
- Expertise synthesising and analysing complex ecological or environmental datasets and diverse information sources
- Excellent written and verbal communication and ability to communicate complex ideas to diverse audiences
- Ability to work effectively both independently and within interdisciplinary teams
- Highly organised and able to manage multiple priorities
- Willingness to travel within the UK
- Knowledge of restoration ecology, conservation science or environmental risk assessment
- Appreciation of environmental change and its implications for ecosystems and biodiversity
- Track record of publishing research outputs or evidence of publication potential
- PhD in human geography, environmental social science, environmental humanities, anthropology, sociology, environmental governance, sustainability studies, landscape studies or a related discipline

Desirable skills and knowledge

- Experience in ecological risk assessment, horizon scanning or structured expert elicitation methods
- Experience engaging with scientists, conservation practitioners and policy communities
- Experience developing online decision-support tools, databases, dashboards, visualisations, models or digital knowledge resources
- Understanding of species translocations, reintroductions or ecosystem restoration practice
- Understanding of biosecurity, invasive species management or ecosystem resilience frameworks
- Familiarity with evidence assessment methodologies and confidence-scoring approaches