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The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Cameroon is looking for a Student Research Intern

Want to make a positive difference to the future of people and our one shared home, the Earth? Working with WWF could be your opportunity of a lifetime:

All around the world, people are waking up to the deepening crisis of nature loss. A growing realization that nature is our life-support system. And that nobody will be spared from the impacts of its loss. Here at WWF, we are helping to tackle this enormous global challenge.

Our people come from hugely diverse backgrounds and with a variety of expertise, ranging from HR and finance to advocacy and conservation science. We welcome applications from anyone who believes they can help us create a better future for people and wildlife.

What we do:

We are an independent conservation organization, striving to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife. From individuals and communities to business and government, we are part of a growing coalition calling on world leaders to set nature on the path to recovery by 2030. Together, we seek to protect and restore natural habitats, stop the mass extinction of wildlife and make the way we produce and consume sustainable.

For our Country Office in Cameroon, we are looking for one (01) Student Research Intern for a PhD program in One Health Project (INFORBIO).

Under the supervision of the: One Health Program & Veterinary Coordinator

Type of position: Internship

Location: Campo

Duration: One (01 year)

Department Mission:

Located within the Atlantic Equatorial Coastal Forest Ecoregion, the Campo-Ma'an National Park (CMNP, 264,064 ha) and its buffer zones (776,202 ha total) harbour exceptional biodiversity, including forest elephants, western lowland gorillas, chimpanzees, buffaloes, and a rich diversity of other mammals. The park is surrounded by logging concessions and multiple-use zones where community agro-forestry and agro-industrial activities are found.

The peripheral zone of the CMNP is home to five native ethnic groups whose livelihoods depend directly on natural resources: the Yasa (sea fishermen), the Mvae and Ntumu (slash-and-burn agriculturalists), the Mabea (river fishermen) and the indigenous Bakola/Bagyéli people (hunter-gatherers). Over recent decades, major infrastructure projects including the Memve'ele hydroelectric dam, the Kribi deep-sea port, and agro-industrial expansion have driven rapid population growth, nearly tripling the local population between 2002 and 2020 to an estimated 150,000 inhabitants. A gorilla habituation program for wildlife viewing tourism, underway since 2015 and the first of its kind in Cameroon, represents a key conservation strategy in the CMNP, though it brings challenges including zoonotic disease transmission risk, habitat fragmentation and increased disease risk from population influx.

Located in the extreme south-east of Cameroon, Lobéké National Park (217,854 ha) forms part of the Congo Basin's Sangha Tri-National (TNS) transboundary conservation area, together with national parks in the Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo. A UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2012, the park harbours some of the highest densities of African forest elephants and western lowland gorillas in Africa, alongside chimpanzees, bongos, buffaloes, leopards and a rich diversity of plant and bird species. The surrounding landscape is predominantly managed through logging concessions and hunting interest zones.

Commercial poaching for bushmeat, illegal timber and the ivory trade are the main drivers of biodiversity loss in the area, compounded by poverty and limited development opportunities among local populations. Indigenous peoples and local communities have historically been sidelined from conservation efforts,

despite their direct dependence on the forest for their livelihoods, and their meaningful integration into park management remains a central challenge.

Both landscapes represent critical interfaces between wildlife, local communities, and emerging anthropogenic pressures — precisely the conditions under which zoonotic diseases can emerge and spread. The proximity of great apes and other wildlife to human settlements, combined with bushmeat hunting, habitat encroachment, and rapid population growth, creates significant opportunities for pathogen spillover in both directions. Robust and sustained zoonoses surveillance at this human–wildlife interface is therefore not only a conservation priority, but an essential public health measure for the communities living alongside these exceptional ecosystems.

INFORBIO (Intact and Effectively managed Forest and Biodiversity as natural barrier to mitigate climate change and risk of pathogen spillover) is a multidisciplinary project financed by the German Ministry of Environment, that combines participatory forest management by indigenous communities, agroforestry, the establishment of mobile health clinics and the development of an early warning system for zoonotic disease surveillance through a multifaceted One Health approach. The overarching goal is to safeguard forests as natural barriers against the spread of zoonotic diseases while improving livelihoods in remote areas of the Central African Republic (CAR) and Cameroon.

Since 2017, WWF Kudu Zombo Program has been collaborating with HIOH (Helmoltz Institute for One Health) (Germany) to implement a program of surveillance of infectious zoonoses in great apes and other wildlife in the Campo Ma'an Landscape. Within the framework of the INFORBIO project, WWF One Health Program is seeking a PhD student to join it's One Health team in Campo Ma'an and Lobeke landscape. The objective is to examine presence of infectious zoonotic diseases in the human-wildlife interface within the two landscapes. The work will be performed in close collaboration with another PhD student hired by CREMER (Yaoundé) within the same project.

Main Functions

The candidate will be implicated in the collection of animal and environmental samples and perform laboratory analyses with support from One Health Program team under the supervision of WWF CCO One Health Program & Veterinary Coordinator, CREMER and the HIOH team, responsible partner for zoonotic surveillance activities within the INFORBIO project. The candidate will be based in Campo and will perform extensive fieldwork in Campo Ma'an and Lobeke Landscapes. Laboratory activities will be carried out in the WWF Campo lab and at CREMER facilities. The position includes a four-month research stay for training in laboratory methods at HIOH in Greifswald, Germany.

Task and major responsibilities

- A. Contribute to the surveillance of zoonoses through frequent sampling of wildlife in the forest as follows:
 - 1. Sampling small mammals (bats, rodents and shrews)
 - 2. Sampling bushmeat
 - 3. Sampling of carcasses of dead wildlife found in the Campo Maan and Lobeke National parks
 - 4. Collection of blowflies for characterizing biodiversity and pathogen presence
 - 5. Analyse samples collected applying molecular biology Carry out diagnostic test on samples applying DNA extraction and PCR
 - 6. Carry out high-throughput sequencing for genomic analyses
- B. Record data on all samples collected and analyses carried out on the project data base
 - 1. Record every sample collected every week and analyses carried out
- C. Collaborative tasks
 - 1. Coordinate project activities with the CREMER / INFORBIO PhD student
 - 2. Support One Health Team activities in the field and in the forest
 - 3. Prepare monthly reports for partners to high light progress in samples analyses
 - 4. Prepare trimester report for One Health Program – Campo and Lobeke
 - 5. Participate in field activities in the third landscape of the project (Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas, Central African Republic).



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Profile

Required qualifications

- At least a master's degree in veterinary medicine, Biology, Zoology or other related specialization
- Be enrolled on a PhD programme in a relevant field
- Experience in Human & Animal health, Molecular Biology and Epidemiology is an asset.

Skills and competencies required

- Physically fit to work in the field under challenging conditions and interested in tools and approaches in surveillance of wildlife health, including handling small mammals
- Proven scientific writing skills and competence in data analyses
- Competence working in a laboratory is an advantage
- Interest in learning laboratory protocols is required
- Knowledge of general relationship of human-wildlife health in Central Africa is an asset
- Mastery of the English language would be a plus.

Values & behaviours

- Adhere to WWF values: Respect, Courage, Integrity and Collaboration.

Working Relationships:

Internal

WWF One Health Team, responsible project IKI, Conservation Unit, Finance & Admin, Research, Surveillance and Logistics.

External

HIOH, CREMER.

How to apply:

1. Follow the link: https://cameroon.panda.org/apply_to_a_job/apply_for_a_job/ (with a computer, please do not use a mobile phone).
2. Choose the job **J224 – Student Research Intern**
3. Answer to the questionnaire
4. After filling the questionnaire, send your CV, cover letter, your degree certificate and proof of enrolment on a PhD programme via the email address recruit-cam@wwfcam.org. Please mention your name and the job reference in the email subject line. Example: Nana – J224 – Student Research Intern.

Deadline for receipt of applications: August 9th, 2026.

We kindly invite applicants to ensure that their applications strictly follow this procedure through to completion, as only submissions that fully comply will be considered.

Thank you in advance for your interest in this position. Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

WWF is an equal opportunity employer, committed to building a diverse and inclusive workforce. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals, regardless of gender, race, religion, experience, or background. The publication of any job, consultancy or service provider opportunity and any subsequent communications, interviews or discussions does not constitute a binding commitment by WWF. No contractual or financial obligation shall arise on the part of WWF until a formal written contract has been duly signed by both Parties following completion of the selection process.

All stages of this process remain part of the negotiation phase and are subject to WWF's internal validation and administrative approvals. WWF reserves the right, where necessary, to modify, postpone or cancel the process at any stage prior to formal engagement, without incurring any liability toward applicants or third parties.