Bonn, Germany

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Research Associate – Ecosystem-based Adaptation (Personnel Service Agreement – PSA)

Organizational Unit: United Nations University - Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)

Reference Number: 2021/UNU/EHS/PSA/RA/17

Application: hrbonn@vie.unu.edu

Closing Date: 04 April 2021

United Nations University Objectives:

The United Nations University (UNU) is an international community of scholars, engaged in research, postgraduate teaching and capacity development and dissemination of knowledge in furthering the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The mission of UNU is to contribute, through research and capacity building, to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems that are the concern of the United Nations and its Member States. For more information, please visit http://unu.edu.

United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) established in December 2003, is part of the UNU system, a worldwide network of research and training institutes. Its mission is to advance human security through knowledge-based approaches to reducing vulnerability and environmental risks. For more information, please visit http://ehs.unu.edu/.

Environmental Vulnerability & Ecosystem Services (EVES) Section:

The EVES section at UNU-EHS conducts original, policy relevant research addressing the vulnerability and resilience of social-ecological systems. Specifically, EVES aims to understand how social ecological systems are affected by environmental hazards of diverse nature such as water and land degradation, floods, droughts, and other hazards. EVES not only considers the impacts of single hazards, but also investigates multiple hazard situations, identifying cumulating or cascading impacts and feedbacks between hazards of contrasting nature such as floods and droughts. The concept of ecosystem services is of central importance in most of the research conducted by EVES researchers.

For detailed information please visit: https://ehs.unu.edu/about/departments/eyes#overview
FloodAdaptVN Project:

Central Vietnam is characterized by rapid urbanization, particularly in small and medium-sized coastal cities. At the same time, the region is facing an increase in precipitation and heavy rainfall events, which, combined with land use changes, result in more frequent and intense flooding. In this context, the overall aim of the FloodAdaptVN project is to analyze and ultimately reduce present-day and future flood risk in highly flood prone urban regions of Central Vietnam using the city of Huế and its hinterland as a case study. More specifically, the project aims at (i) better understanding and root causes, spatial patterns and dynamics of present-day and future flood risk, (ii) investigating both, entry points for and barriers to the implementation of risk reduction, risk transfer, and adaptation solutions (with a focus on ecosystem-based solutions), and (iii) developing a decision support tool for prioritizing among different risk reduction and adaptation measures based on their impact reduction, social acceptance, long-term sustainability and cost-efficiency. FloodAdaptVN is a four year project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) as part of the funding initiative “Sustainable development of urban regions”. UNU-EHS contributes to the project with three of its sections (i.e. VARMAP, EVES and MCII) and leads the assessment of flood risks and the work package on risk reduction, risk transfer and adaptation solutions. Additionally, UNU-EHS contributes to the development of future risk scenarios, planned capacity building, knowledge transfer, and dissemination activities in the project, as well as to the mainstreaming of project outcomes into planning and policy processes in the region.

Responsibilities:

Under the guidance of the Head of the EVES section and the project manager, the successful candidate will be entrusted with the following tasks:

- Undertake desk study and analyses to evaluate the role of ecosystem/land use change as a driver of flood risks in the river basin
- Contribute to the mapping of ecosystems, assess ecosystem services relevant to flood risk and collect and analyze ecosystem loss and damage data in the catchment
- Compile existing and planned protection goals as well as ecosystem-based risk reduction and adaptation strategies and needs at national, regional, catchment and local level
- Support the co-development of a multi-criteria catalogue for the evaluation of planned and possible additional ecosystem-based and/or hybrid risk reduction and adaptation solutions (e.g. cost-benefit, social acceptance, mal-adaptive consequences, co-benefits)
- Identify and propose possible ecosystem-based and/or hybrid risk reduction and adaptation options to address current and future flood risks in the river basin
- Evaluate and prioritize amongst different planned and possible additional ecosystem-based risk reduction and adaptation options
- Identify and evaluate co-benefits as well as potential mal-adaptive consequences of planned and proposed ecosystem-based risk reduction and adaptation options through desk study, stakeholder consultation and network analysis
- Assist in organization and preparation of workshops, regional networking fora and events
- Prepare research reports, policy briefs, factsheets, and presentations
- (Co-)author scientific articles and disseminate findings at relevant conferences and events
- Support the supervision of student assistants and interns working within the project
- Contribute to planned capacity building activities in the project and at UNU-EHS
- Perform other related duties as required in the EVES section
Required Qualifications and Experience:

We are looking for an early career candidate with a strong motivation to pursue a PhD in the context of the FloodAdaptVN project. The candidate should fulfill the following attributes:

- Completed Master’s degree with high academic standing in Geography, Environmental Sciences, Environmental Management, or other relevant discipline with an emphasis on climate change adaptation; preferably with previous experiences in flood contexts
- Familiarity with concepts and methods related to ecosystem services, social-ecological systems, flood risk assessment, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation; familiarity with ecosystem valuation approaches is an asset
- Field experience from developing economies is highly desired. Previous work experience in Vietnam is an asset.
- Strong methodological skillset for quantitative and qualitative empirical research. Knowledge of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and ecosystem service assessment tools is an asset.
- Excellent communication and writing skills (academic and non-academic) with fluency in spoken and written English; ability to communicate in Vietnamese is an asset.
- Demonstrated ability to synthesize complex information, regulations and policies and to translate into impactful communications and publications/reports/presentations.
- Initiative seeker; strong ability to carry out work independently; curious personality preferred.
- Reflected team player with strong interpersonal skills demonstrated by the ability to work in a multi-cultural environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity.

UNU is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages all candidates, irrespective of gender, nationality, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities to apply and become part of the organization.

UNU has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNU, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination.

Remuneration:
Remuneration will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Duration of Contract:
The successful candidate shall work under a Personal Service Agreement (PSA) for a fixed period of twelve (12) months. Further continuation of contract is desired, with the combined duration of appointments not exceeding six (6) years. This is a locally recruited post and no relocation allowances apply. The successful candidate will be employed under a local contract and will not hold international civil servant status nor is he/she a “staff member” as defined in the United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations.

Starting Date:
As soon as possible

Application Procedure:
Interested applicants should submit their applications by e-mail (to hrbonn@vie.unu.edu), and must include the following:
• A cover letter setting out how the qualifications and experience match the requirements of the position;
• A curriculum vitae and a completed and signed **UNU Personal History (P.11) form** downloadable from **UNU website**. Please avoid using similar forms provided by other United Nations organizations.
• A sample of academic writing, e.g. published article, blog post, or chapter of Master’s thesis;
• An indication of the reference number of the vacancy announcement (2021/UNU/EHS/PSA/RA/17).