



Virunga National Park is looking for an Economist / Political Scientist to lead an impact evaluation team (2 years contract based in Virunga National Park's HQ in the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

February 2021

Virunga is looking for someone with:

1. An academic degree (Masters or PhD) preferably in economics, public policy or political science with a strong quantitative background (candidates with a geography or conservation science degree will be considered),
2. An intellectual interest that lies at the development / environment nexus in Sub Saharan Africa (a knowledge of conflict-affected zones is a plus),
3. 5 to 10 years of experience. Prior experience in a developing country is a plus. (note: years of PhD will be counted as experience),
4. An interest to conduct rigorous and operational analysis that will inform strategic decision making
5. Strong quantitative skills, a knowledge of statistical software (e.g., R or Stata). Knowledge of GIS is an added advantage.

The park

Created in 1925, Virunga National Park is the oldest national park in Africa. It has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979 and has been on the List of World Heritage in Danger since 1994. It is located in the province of North Kivu, bordering Rwanda and Uganda. Virunga is home to a wide variety of ecosystems and of record number of species, including three taxa of great apes (mountain gorillas, eastern lowland gorillas, and eastern chimpanzees). In the 1970s, Virunga astonishingly recorded the largest number of hippos in the world at 29,000 individuals in and around Lake Edward. The park is managed as a public-private partnership between the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN), and a British-registered charity, Virunga Foundation.

Twenty-five years of conflicts have resulted into widespread poverty in Eastern DRC. Farming remains the primary economic activity of the five million people living in the direct vicinity of the park. For them, the park' conservation creates an immense opportunity cost. Based on ethics principle and a search of efficacy, the park management has embarked in an ambitious program that aims at making conservation efforts net-profitable for the surrounding communities and an engine for sustainable growth. By investing in the production of green electricity, agriculture, private sector development and tourism, Virunga ambitions to support the creation of over 100 000 jobs by 2030 and \$1billion of annual GDP by 2040.

The job

- You will be the head of Virunga's Monitoring and Evaluation department. The M&E department is central to the institution. It supports all departments and directly informs top management.
- You will oversee the work of a core team composed of five people (plus you). You and the team will conduct studies to inform decision making and planning on several key dimensions, including:
 - o Economic development (2 team members), touching issues related to access to electricity (4 power plants, over 15,000 customers and one million beneficiaries), private sector development (\$5M investment fund), and agriculture (target of 12,000 beneficiaries for agricultural production and transformation). Survey work can be conducted in partnership with Europeans universities. A



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- particular dimension consists of understanding whether economic development projects promote stability in the region.
- Ecological monitoring: (2 team members in turn supervising the work of 6 persons, 72 trackers and supporting 700+ rangers). Monitoring activities include the long-term daily monitoring of great apes.
 - Fishing monitoring: 1 team member with 10 full time enumerators tracking daily fish captures of 1,087 boats on Lake Edward since 2013
 - A few examples of questions you will provide inputs on include:
 - Quantifying job creation as a result of development programs
 - Understanding the impact of job creation on peace building and stability in the region, for example how the newly-created jobs provide an alternative to militias by targeting ex-militia members and young people who could have joined them).
 - Quantifying the impact of development activities, including shifts in the perception of the park by the local population
 - Understanding the impact of economic development on conservation
 - You will synthesize results in notes and reports for different audiences (e.g., Park management, donors, local leaders)
 - If you aim to publish your work in academic journals, you will be able to develop a few of the studies based on your own interests (all studies cannot be brought up to an academic standard)
 - You will work with other departments to tailor the interventions based on the results of your studies
 - Monitoring: you will ensure you collect the data requested by donors. You will assist in report writing and grant proposals.

The contract

Two years contract based in Rumangabo (the Park's HQ), about 1h30 north of the city of Goma. You will live with around 200 persons in Rumangabo including around 10 expats. Perks: It is a beautiful place to live in (5 species of apes are found in the camp including chimpanzees and orphan mountain gorillas. Incredible views on forests and volcanoes). Goma has a lively expat life (NGO and MONUSCO) that you will be able to join during weekends.

Competitive salary

Starting date: between April and May.

To apply (Cover letter + resume) or for more information: sdesbureaux@virunga.org

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. Deadline: March 15th 2021