UNIVERSITY INTERNSHIPS 2021
FIRE MANAGEMENT BEST-PRACTICES INTERN

Primary location  
Singapore and working from home

Duration  
3-6 months

Number of positions  
1

Organisation description  
PEOPLE NEED NATURE — Conservation International works to spotlight and secure the critical benefits that nature provides to humanity. Since our inception in 1987, we’ve helped to protect more than 6 million square kilometres of land and sea across more than 70 countries. Currently with offices in 29 countries and 2,000 partners worldwide, our reach is truly global. Building upon a strong foundation of science, partnership and field demonstration, Conservation International empowers societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature, our global biodiversity, for the well-being of humanity.

About the project  
Bushfire is widely and traditionally used for maintaining grasslands and pastures, crop fields, as well as hunting. Exacerbated by invasive species, climate change, and societal changes, bushfires are burning large areas of forests beyond human needs, with disastrous impacts on forest resilience/regeneration, water quality due to erosion, and the health of coral reefs further down. At times, uncontrolled fires also threaten the houses, belongings and even lives of local communities.

Uncontrolled bushfire and its associated risks and impacts are not unique to New Caledonia and are also prevalent in other Asia-Pacific geographies.

In order to reduce the scale and impact of future bushfires—both natural and anthropogenic—Conservation International has the unique opportunity to build a Community of Practice around best practices towards improved fire management strategies in the region.

In order to make best use of time and resources available, existing initiatives and gaps should be identified in relation to CI specific needs. While the student project shall set up some opportunities for a few events of effective shared learning, significant efforts to bring the community to a higher level of impact will require clear expression of needs and opportunities to support its structuration.

More information on CI New Caledonia’s terrestrial work:  
https://www.conservation.org/projects/mount-panie

More information on Natural Climate Solutions:  
https://www.conservation.org/blog/what-are-natural-climate-solutions
About the role

The intern will report to the Terrestrial Conservation Officer, CI New Caledonia and support CI’s strategy of Natural Climate Solutions and ridge-to-reef.

S/he will be part of an initial effort to understand best practices in land management, with a specific focus on bushfire and fire management through:

- Conducting internal surveys within CI’s Asia-Pacific field programmes to identify existing expertise, gaps in knowledge, and shared needs.
- Conducting a literature review on existing resources, publications, guides, best practices on improved fire management suitable for a CI context. Of particular interest are:
  - Methods and approaches that effectively demonstrate improved burning, not just efforts and theoretical approach, but effectively reduced number of occurrence of fires and extent of burnt areas or other relevant indicators.
  - Methods to monitor outcomes/impacts. Specific questions include i) the relevance and limitations of tree plantations to reduce burning, ii) the best practice to consider in preventive control burning, iii) the plant species that are known to block/halt fire (under medium fire intensity conditions).
- Approaches that (systematically) fail
- Identifying existing Communities of Practice on Improved fire management that are relevant to CI programmes.
- Support CI teams in strengthening conceptual models for robust theories of change on improved fire management.
- Proposing a framework for a Community of Practice focused on sharing resources for improved fire management strategies at CI, and potentially with partners and community members.

Qualifications

- Pursuing an Undergraduate or Master’s degree in Social Sciences, Geography, Life Sciences, Environmental Studies, or related fields
- Applicant must demonstrate research experience and capabilities, i.e. writing synthetic reviews, conducting surveys and workshops, social network design, animation
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office Suite – Conceptual Model, Open Standard for Conservation (Miradi)

Desirable skills/traits

- Independent thinker and researcher
- Effective communicator
- Interest in ecosystem-based adaptation and land management
Benefits

The intern will be provided with a monthly stipend of SGD 800-1,000 for 5 workdays per week.

If the internship requires travel, the intern can expect to receive a modest travel grant. However, all travel will be highly dependent on prevailing COVID-19 restrictions, programmatic needs, and available funding.

Application

To be considered for this internship, please apply to singapore@conservation.org with the subject line “Application: Fire Management Best Practices Intern – [full name]” and the following documents:

1. Curriculum vitae.
2. Cover letter, which should include the applicant’s dates of availability, interest in working with Conservation International’s field programmes in the Asia-Pacific, and any relevant experience working in an NGO or environmental conservation setting.
3. Portfolio and/or writing sample.