



## **SARCHI Chair on Biodiversity Value & Change in the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve Hosted by University of Venda & Centre for Invasion Biology Call for application: Postdoctoral fellowship**

The vision of the Chair is to create a vibrant hub for biodiversity science, training and conservation application within the SADC region, based in the newly proclaimed UNESCO Vhembe Biosphere Reserve of northern Limpopo Province, South Africa. The Chair is hosted by the University of Venda and co-hosted by the Centre for Invasion Biology (C·I·B) at University of Stellenbosch. The candidate will be registered at University of Venda, a rural-based university in northern Limpopo. Activities will be organised across four major themes: 1) Conservation biology & practice; 2) Ecosystem services and livelihoods; 3) Invasion biology; 4) Climate change. Successful candidates will join an active research team and complement a growing body of exciting ecological research centred in the Soutpansberg Mountains, a recognised Centre of Plant Endemism and a hotspot of plant and animal diversity.

A bursary of R200,000 pa (plus up to R60,000 project expenses) is available for a single postdoctoral fellow to be registered at University of Venda. The successful candidate will work with an enthusiastic and dedicated team of vertebrate and invertebrate zoologists, botanists, ecologists, conservationists, environmental managers, geographers and social scientists, to conduct research to understand patterns, drivers, threats and ecological services of regional biodiversity, with application to the management of the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve. He or she will be expected to work independently, to help with mentoring postgraduate students from disadvantaged backgrounds and to publish internationally competitive peer-reviewed scientific papers.

Key areas of interest and/or expertise for this person might include: proficiency with GIS technology, statistical modelling and ecology, experience with conducting biodiversity surveys, a passion for fieldwork, good communication skills and a sound understanding of principles of conservation biology and practical management and policies relating to nature conservation in South Africa.

He or she should have a PHD degree (preferably within the past five years) and an established ability to write and publish academic work and mentor postgraduate students.

Postdoctoral fellows (two years, renewable under exceptional conditions to maximum of four years) will receive a competitive bursary in addition to project expenses.

Applicants should submit a cover letter including a short motivation (1-2 pages) for their suitability for the position, together with CV, PDF copies of up to three recent publications and full contact details of three referees, to Prof Peter Taylor ([Peter.Taylor@univen.ac.za](mailto:Peter.Taylor@univen.ac.za)), SARCHI Chair, University of Venda. Please submit your application by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

