

Request for Concept Notes for Field Research

WILDLIFE & BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION—PROJECTS BEGINNING IN 2028

OVERVIEW

Earthwatch Expeditions by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab) supports field-based, participatory science projects that deliver measurable conservation outcomes and engage the public directly in hands-on field research. Support is both financial and through the contributions of citizen science participants that we recruit. We invite scientists to submit initial concept notes for research addressing urgent threats to wildlife and biodiversity as part of our mission to connect people with science and inspire action for a sustainable planet.

Wildlife populations worldwide face escalating threats, marking what scientists call the Sixth Extinction, with over 35% of all species expected to be at risk of extinction by 2050. Habitat loss, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and other human-driven pressures are driving these declines. Beyond the more charismatic megafauna, biodiversity in general underpins human health, food security, and climate resilience. In alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Earthwatch Expeditions by Nat Hab seeks research that supports wildlife conservation and species recovery, ecosystem restoration, and community engagement worldwide.

WHY APPLY

- **Advance your research** through a scalable, field-based model that expands both scientific output and conservation impact.
- **Increase data collection capacity** by working with multiple research teams per year, without adding operational complexity.
- **Focus on scientific design, fieldwork, and analysis**, while Earthwatch Expeditions manages project logistics, including accommodations, meals, transportation, and the participant experience.
- **Broaden the impact** of your work by engaging citizen-scientist participants and community members in data collection.
- **Strengthen local capacity** for long-term environmental management and stewardship.

PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS

- Keystone species, apex predators & food-web dynamics
- Species reintroduction & rewilding
- Habitat/ecosystem restoration in national parks & other natural areas
- Climate impacts on wildlife, wildlife habitats & migration corridors
- Habitat connectivity & species range shifts
- Strategies to increase endangered species survival
- Human-wildlife coexistence & conflict mitigation
- Braided knowledge systems, incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), western science, & participatory engagement in conservation

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS AND RESEARCH PROJECT CONTEXT

We welcome concept notes/research proposals from any location globally. Priority will be given to research that:

- Addresses critical conservation challenges;
- Offers strong, authentic, and engaging field-based research opportunities for participants;
- Integrates the research strongly within local communities, engaging stakeholders where possible, and involving local emerging or established scientists in the research;
- Can be implemented safely and consistently within a field research expedition model.

ABOUT EARTHWATCH

Earthwatch has been a pioneer in the field of expeditionary participatory science since 1971, funding scientists in over 130 countries. Our model pairs researchers with citizen-scientist participants, advancing both conservation outcomes and public understanding of science. Projects we fund produce rigorous, relevant, and impactful science. Incorporating participants from the general public into fieldwork broadens the impact of the research we fund by increasing their scientific awareness, understanding, and commitment to a conservation-minded, sustainable lifestyle.

In 2026, Earthwatch entered into a long-term licensing agreement with Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab), a conservation travel company whose values strongly aligned with our own. In this new iteration of the Earthwatch model, it will be known as **Earthwatch Expeditions by Nat Hab**. We will absorb the direct management of most project logistics (including accommodations, food, and transportation), freeing scientists to focus on leading field research and data collection.

FUNDING MODEL

- **Per-team field support model**, where research funding is generated through each expedition team and directly supports field execution and data collection.
- **Annual Amount**: Financial support ranges from USD \$20,000–\$80,000 (based on team size and participant numbers)
- **Duration**: Target of 5+ years, with long-term program development, annual review, and approval
- **Covers**: Field expenses during Earthwatch groups (equipment, permits, transport, field staff stipends). We will also cover food, accommodations, and transportation for scientists and field staff to research sites.
- **Excludes**: Salaries, tuition, overhead, capital equipment

ELIGIBILITY

- Hold a Ph.D. (or equivalent expertise) and affiliation with a recognized university, government, tribal agency, or science-focused NGO.
- Demonstrate capacity for long-term field research (5+ years preferred).
- Demonstrated and/or planned collaboration with local scientist(s) and/or community required.
- Prioritizes diverse representation and inclusion within research groups.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- Include field-based, participatory research where recruited participants collect data;
- Host 6-10 teams per year (with typically 8–15 participants per team), with participants providing 2-5 days of research support/fieldwork per team;
- Include educational components connecting research to the global context and issues;
- Teams to be run in English
- Prioritize sustainable local vendors and community partnerships;
- Share data with local stakeholders and, where possible, open datasets;
- Maintain at least one other source of financial or institutional support.

SELECTION PROCESS

- Scientific merit and alignment with the Earthwatch Expeditions by Nat Hab mission.
- Feasibility of the field model & participant involvement;
- Field safety paramount (including geographic location and research activities in the field);
- Conservation impacts and potential for measurable outcomes and outputs;
- PI qualifications and partnerships;
- Engagement of emerging or established scientists local to where the research takes place

Selected concept notes will be invited to submit full proposals, including detailed methodology, budget, and safety plans.

How to Apply: To submit your concept note, please follow this link: [APPLY HERE](#)

For questions or more details, please email the [Director of Research](#) or call +1 303-222-3711