



## Request for Proposals for Field Research Marine Biodiversity Conservation UK/Europe, Central America, Northeast Pacific, Galapagos and Caribbean

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Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization with the mission to “**engage people worldwide in scientific field research and education to promote the understanding and action necessary for a sustainable environment.**” Earthwatch is currently seeking proposals from field-based researchers to provide grants to address marine biodiversity conservation challenges. Of particular interest are projects which look at species’ interaction, conflict with ocean stakeholders and studies of anthropogenic impact on habitats for species of conservation concern.

Earthwatch will only consider proposals for field research that have a strong rationale for requiring involvement of non-specialists (Earthwatch volunteers) in a variety of scientific tasks. Earthwatch volunteers are highly motivated citizens from around the world who are interested in improving environmental understanding. A typical project would engage a minimum of 30 volunteers over 3-10 teams per annum. Each team can spend 3-12 days in the field. A priority audience for Earthwatch is young scientists; therefore ideal projects have flexibility to engage audiences such as high level school groups (15-30 participants, aged 16+). All projects are conducted in English.

Earthwatch encourages proposals that are interdisciplinary and/or transnational. Preference will be given to projects that directly contribute to environmental or social change on the ground as well as providing scientific evidence to inform management strategies and improve livelihoods of local communities. All projects should contribute to the scientific literature and improve public understanding of science. Professionals from any nationality are eligible to apply, but should be affiliated with a university or environmental organization and have in-country experience (and permits).

### **Concept Notes and Proposals**

Concept Notes for projects starting in spring or summer 2013 will be accepted through Friday, January 27, 2012. Invitations for full Research Proposals will be communicated in late February. Applications must be submitted online in English: <http://fs22.formsite.com/EarthwatchResearch/ConceptNote/index.html>

Research topics that may be considered for funding include, but are not limited to:

- *Understanding the relationship between ocean stakeholders and biodiversity – studies on resource competition or ecosystem service provisioning, which take into account stakeholder perceptions and sustainable livelihoods. E.g. activities such as fishing and unregulated tourism*
- *Examining effects of marine pollution e.g. marine debris, diffuse source pollution*
- *Research into habitat degradation and development of ecosystem management strategies*
- *Investigations into impacts of climate change on species and habitat interactions and improving conservation management strategies in anticipation of future change*
- *Understanding connectivity between habitats for migrating species and assessing impacts of increasing human use of the ocean. E.g. ship strikes, marine spatial planning*

### **Grants**

Annual grants are available to cover research related costs which can include equipment (<US\$1000), supplies, transport, support staff, food and accommodation during teams. The grant cannot cover scientist salaries, overheads, capital equipment. Grants are negotiated on an individual basis, but usually average around US\$20,000. Volunteer costs in the field (volunteer accommodation, food and transport in the field) will be budgeted for in partnership with Earthwatch. The field research proposals are tenable for three years, and potentially renewable in the fourth year.

### **Additional**

- Comfortable accommodations for volunteers must be in reasonable travel distance of the research site(s)
- Incorporation of time for volunteers to experience the surrounding environment and culture is encouraged
- See link for more information <http://www.earthwatch.org/aboutus/research/scientistopps/reqresprop/>

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**All questions should be directed to:**

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