Research Assistant
Job Description: January 2025

Organization

Amazon Conservation's mission is to unite science, innovation, and community to protect the Amazon—the greatest wild forest on Earth. As conservation pioneers since 1999, we have used science to guide our multi-pronged approach to environmental conservation and restoration in the western Amazon. Our efforts are geographically focused in the headwaters of the Amazon basin, where the Amazon forest meets the Andes mountain range in southeastern Peru and northern Bolivia. However, our Monitoring of the Andean Amazon Program (MAAP) uses satellite-based technologies to monitor 100% of the Amazon in real time and mobilizes action through a network of local partners in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela.

Position Overview

Amazon Conservation seeks a detail-oriented Research Assistant to support the development of the policy tracker module for a two-year project funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. This project aims to combat illegal gold mining across the Amazon by enhancing real-time monitoring, strengthening policy frameworks, and building the capacity of in-country partners.

Reporting to the Director of Strategy and Policy, the Research Assistant will work part-time to support the development of a policy tracker to monitor and report on the progress of national targets, laws, and regulations on gold mining. The Research Assistant may also help develop targeted training sessions for MAAP network partners to improve advocacy efforts with government agencies around policy recommendations. The Research Assistant should have an academic background in international relations, public policy and/or environmental studies and may be a current university student.

Ideally, the Research Assistant will also have an understanding of Amazon regional dynamics. This position requires professional fluency in English and Spanish and/or Portuguese.

1. Background

Illegal gold mining poses a significant threat to the Amazon Rainforest, leading to deforestation, biodiversity loss, and adverse social impacts. This two-year project, supported by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, focuses on enhancing monitoring technologies, strengthening policy frameworks, and building the capacity of local partners to combat these threats. The Research Assistant will play a critical role in the success of the project by supporting the development of the policy tracker module, which will compile and analyze relevant laws, regulations, and progress toward international goals across the nine Amazonian countries.

2. Objectives of the Position

The Research Assistant will assist the Director of Strategy and Policy in developing and implementing the policy tracker module, with a focus on compiling relevant laws, regulations, and progress toward international environmental goals. Additionally, the Research Assistant will conduct ad-hoc policy research, support the coordination of partner activities related to specific project outputs, and contribute to the overall success of the project's policy component.

3. Key Responsibilities

Research and Data Compilation (50%)
- Compile and organize relevant laws, regulations, and international commitments from the nine Amazonian countries.
- Assist in the development of the criteria methodology and maintenance of the policy tracker module, ensuring it is up-to-date and accurate.
- Conduct ad-hoc policy research to support the project's policy and advocacy efforts, including the preparation of policy briefs and reports.

Partner Coordination (30%)
- Coordinate with in-country partners on the implementation of the policy tracker, ensuring timely and effective collaboration.
- Support the organization of meetings and workshops related to the policy tracker module and other project activities.

Communication and Reporting (20%)
- Contribute to the preparation of high-quality reports, policy briefs, and other communication materials for diverse audiences, including technical and non-technical stakeholders.
- Assist in the documentation and dissemination of project progress, particularly in relation to the policy tracker module.

4. Required Qualifications and Experience

Research and Analytical Skills
- Bachelor's degree in public policy, environmental science, political science, international relations or a related field.
- Experience in conducting policy research and analysis, preferably related to environmental or conservation issues.
- Strong ability to synthesize and organize complex information from multiple sources.
- Familiarity with the Amazon region's environmental, social, and political dynamics is preferred.
- Experience working on initiatives related to natural resource management, conservation, or environmental policy.

Communication and Coordination Skills
- Strong written and oral communication skills, with the ability to prepare clear and concise reports and policy briefs and organize qualitative data (reference library management).
- Proven ability to coordinate activities with multiple stakeholders, including government officials, civil society organizations, and community groups.

Other Skills
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Demonstrated emotional intelligence and self-awareness, with the ability to effectively manage relationships, navigate complex interpersonal dynamics, and foster a positive team environment.
- Professional fluency in English and Spanish and/or Portuguese is required to facilitate communication with diverse stakeholders.

- Strong problem-solving skills and the ability to manage competing priorities effectively.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team, with limited supervision.

Project Management
- Minimum two years of experience in assisting the implementation of programs or projects, particularly in complex and multi-stakeholder environments (internships may count towards this requirement).
- Experience in natural resources management, conservation, environmental policy, or a related field, with a focus on the Amazon region.

Technical Expertise
- Master's degree in environmental science, geography, public policy, or a related field. Candidates in the process of obtaining their Master's degree will be considered.
- Experience with GIS, and data analysis in conservation or natural resource management projects.

Regional and Sectoral Experience
- Hands-on experience in the Amazon region, with a deep understanding of its environmental, social, and political dynamics.
- Experience in initiatives aimed at combating illegal deforestation, nature crimes, and promoting sustainable land use practices.

Communication and Advocacy
- Proven experience in policy development, advocacy, and engagement with government officials and international fora.
- Strong written and oral communication skills, with the ability to make effective presentations to diverse audiences.

This is a part-time position with a workload of 20 hours per week. Competitive salary based on experience. Contracting will be done through a consultancy contract (PJ for Brazil). The location for this position is flexible. Ideally, it will be based in Brazil or another key Amazonian country, but other remote-based arrangements may be considered.

5. Application Guidelines
Interested candidates are invited to submit their resume, cover letter, and list of three references to applications@amazonconservation.org with the subject line "Research Assistant Application."

Applications without all required materials will not be reviewed. Due to the high volume of applications, the organization will only reply to finalist candidates. No phone calls, please. Candidates are reviewed on a rolling basis. The position is open until filled and is available immediately.