

Agroforestry Internship

Description:

Choose between, or combine, the options below. Both will help local communities develop sustainable ways of satisfying their socio-economic needs.

- **Agroforestry** - Maintaining an organic agroforestry demonstration plot in the Lalo Loor Reserve, collect data for its long-term monitoring, and collaborate with local landowners on the development, improvement, or monitoring of their agroforestry plots
- **Bio entrepreneurship** - Strengthening local entrepreneurship initiatives such as the eco-tourism association in Don Juan. The project involves training guides, organizing their associations, and securing continuity of their work.



Project background:

Deforestation resulting from the advancing agricultural frontier is the primary threat to forests on the Ecuadorian coast. We need to find solutions that satisfy both the socio-economic needs, which rely on natural resources, while also helping to preserve these diverse ecosystems and their flora and fauna. Examples include agroforestry, silvopasture, and stimulating local bio enterprises. Over the past few years we have established our agroforestry plot (2016) within the Lalo Loor Dry Forest Reserve and have worked with local landowners to implement agroforestry systems on their properties (for more information, see the Corridor project). Additionally, we have supported local enterprises in the development of eco-tourism endeavors such as whale-watching and mangrove tours. The goal of this project is to demonstrate the possibilities for generating a sustainable income in the region. The specific examples we work on are (but are not limited to) an agricultural system that maximizes biodiversity while also creating a productive landscape, and the development of ways in which the conservation of environmental resources benefits the local communities.

What will you do?

Examples of possible activities are given, but this will vary depending on the season and your choice of the agroforestry and/or bio entrepreneurship options.

- Plant productive native plants as needed
- Maintain plot (watering, cleaning, and weeding as necessary)
- Catalog species and create a map documenting plantings
- Collect data on abiotic factors, planted trees (height and diameter), and biodiversity (birds and mammals).
- Collect seeds of fruits and timber trees
- Harvest as necessary
- Develop and maintain a nursery

- Maintain records of plantings, maintenance, and biodiversity monitoring
- Produce organic fertilizers
- Collaborate with local landowners and regional experts to evaluate various agroforestry methods
- Participate in meetings with local communities to disseminate results
- Contribute to workshops for local communities on ecological restoration
- Collaborate with Ceiba staff to organize and promote workshops for local corridor participants and tour guides on tourism or other methods of sustainable ways to generate alternative incomes

What will you learn?

- Identification and cultivation techniques of common tropical agricultural crops
- Principles and practices in organic agroforestry
- Conventional agricultural practices in the tropics
- The main economic factors supporting the Ecuadorian coast and alternative ways to generate income

What do we seek?

- Strong interest in botany, horticulture, forest ecology, and agroforestry
- Detailed and organized, with good data collection and management skills
- Ability to use keys and other resources to identify plants
- Interest in local social and economic circumstances
- Willing to conduct field work in rugged conditions

* Can be combined with the Conservation Corridor internship

