

The Nature Conservancy

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	AGRICULTURE STRATEGY DIRECTOR - AFRICA
JOB FAMILY:	Conservation
JOB NUMBER:	250007
LOCATION:	Nairobi, Dar es Salaam or Arusha
HOW TO APPLY:	Send CV to africa@tnc.org

Global human population is predicted to stabilize at 9.7 billion people by 2050. There is consensus that world food supply will need to increase by between 70 and 100% by then, not just to feed three billion extra mouths at the table, but to support the lifestyles of expanding middle classes in countries like China, India and Brazil, which are expected to reach developed country per capita income levels a generation from now.

This poses major challenges for conservation- especially in Africa, where 60% of the potentially available cropland in the world is located. Africa is critical to feeding the planet's growing population. Water issues are tightly linked to agricultural growth as 70% of global water consumption is for agriculture, water scarcity and water quality are major issues as we project out demand patterns for another generation.

To react to this increase in demand for food, The Nature Conservancy proposes that five principles must drive this new wave of agricultural demand:

1. **Delivery and storage systems must be improved.** A great deal of agricultural production in Africa is wasted from spoilage, directly contributing to local and regional food insecurity. Better storage and delivery systems stand the greatest chance of immediately increasing the net production of agriculture to the continent's local households.
2. **Production systems must intensify.** This has to be at the center of *conservation* thinking about agriculture, a radical departure from tradition.
3. **Intensification has to be sustainable.** This will be hard to accomplish. An increase in return per unit area means market mechanisms can stimulate agricultural expansion. Increasing inputs – particularly fertilizers - can have environmental costs.
4. **Some expansion of agricultural area is necessary:** “freezing the footprint” of agriculture may be possible in some places – in the US or western Europe - but is not a realistic option at the global level. In Africa we expect significant agricultural expansion. China, Brazil, India and the US are investing significantly in agriculture expansion in Africa today. Channeling that expansion where it will do least harm is imperative.
5. **Agriculture needs to intensify while maintaining the environmental services on which producers and society depend.** Clean water, clean air, and productive soils are the basic environmental services upon which all life depends. We must learn from the mistakes already learned from intensification in the developed world to improve this second wave of agricultural development.

The Nature Conservancy believes that **sustainable intensification** is the basis our global agriculture strategy. We are looking for an Agriculture Strategy Director to better define this strategy for Africa and to help position The Nature Conservancy to bring value-added science, policy and resource support to improve agricultural systems in Africa.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience working in the agriculture sector in Africa for at least 8 years.
- MS degree and a minimum of 10 years' experience in conservation or agriculture practice or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience working with current development, conservation, agriculture and financial growth trends and practices in Africa.
- Experience developing and maintaining partnerships with national governments, multi-national corporations, aid agencies and non-governmental organizations to advance the goals of a particular program.
- Experience directing a major program of strategic importance, including management/supervision of multi-disciplinary teams and fundraising.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The Agriculture Strategy Director will design The Nature Conservancy's agriculture strategy for Africa. This person will work closely with the TNC Global Sustainable Agriculture Strategy Director based in the US and with the Africa Conservation Director and Director of Science to develop a value-add approach for the Conservancy to help improve sustainable food security in Africa. This person will understand TNC's primary projects and create an agriculture strategy that supports these projects while positioning TNC to help complement existing efforts to increase food production in sustainable ways. To do this, the Agriculture Strategy Director will work with multi-national entities, NGOs, governments and major donors to create solutions that improve food security over the long term.

Building on demonstration projects in Tanzania and Kenya this person will serve as the principle contact to government agencies, other conservation organizations, foundations, the academic community and multi-national corporations. S/he is responsible for creating and maintaining key relationships to advance this strategy.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- MS degree and 10-12 years' experience in conservation or agriculture practice or equivalent combination of education and experience or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Demonstrated experience influencing, developing and implementing conservation or agriculture policy and plans at the country level.
- Knowledge of current development, conservation, agriculture and financial growth trends and practices in Africa.
- Experience in commercial farming or applied conservation or related field.
- Experience applying supply chain economics.
- Experience developing practical applications of scientific concepts and technical innovations for conservation purposes.
- Experience working with local communities and demonstrated understanding of small scale agricultural production challenges.
- Knowledge of methods and standards of biodiversity information systems and initiatives and experience conceiving and implementing strategic initiatives.
- Knowledge of political, social, cultural and economic affairs in east and southern Africa.

- Able to seek solutions independently while also demonstrating strong team working skills.
- Able to set goals and lead efforts strategically.
- Managing time and diverse activities under deadlines while delivering quality results.
- Delivering practical, adaptable products and services to customers.
- Communicating clearly via written, spoken, and graphical means in English.
- Proven interpersonal, communication and negotiation skills.

COMPLEXITY/PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Negotiates complex agreements, sometimes in political environments.
- Develops and implements creative ideas to improve overall performance in conservation strategies.
- Formulates, evaluates, and decides broad organizational policies and long-term programs.
- Anticipates, diagnoses, and resolves complex problems and identifies creative solutions.

DISCRETION/LATITUDE/DECISION-MAKING:

- Assesses decisions' potential impact on colleagues' work, public image, scientific credibility, and financial and legal standings
- Makes decisions based on incomplete or ambiguous information and accepts associated risks
- Makes independent strategic decisions frequently based on analysis, experience, and judgment

RESPONSIBILITY/OVERSIGHT – FINANCIAL AND SUPERVISORY:

- Broad management and leadership responsibility working across a matrix organization.
- Defines the agriculture strategy for TNC in Africa.
- Establish clear directions and set stretch objectives.
- Develops long-term strategies and achieves strategic goals and objectives.
- Identify, cultivate and solicit major donors in support of program activities.
- Overall responsibility for financial management of program, including setting financial goals, analyzing results, and taking corrective actions.
- Ensure that programmatic commitments, financial standards, and legal requirements are met
- Ensures that program complies with TNC policies and procedures and external (donor/legal) requirements

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERPERSONAL CONTACTS:

- Builds cooperative relationships and collaborates with diverse groups, including land owners, conservation partners, government officials, donors, board members, and the general public, to recruit support for the Conservancy and publicize Conservancy efforts.
- Commands attention, changes tactics midstream as necessary, and manages group processes during presentations or discussions.
- May speak with and in front of varied audiences on scientific topics and the Conservancy's mission; interacts and provides input/guidance to senior managers.
- Ability to establish excellent working relationships with outside partners, state/local/federal agencies, land managers, private landowners and the academic community. Leverages constructive and effective relationships inside and outside the Conservancy.
- Work effectively in high-tension situations and maintain composure under pressure. Diffuses high-tension situations comfortably.
- Work and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people, including scientists, preserve staff, and others, providing and obtaining needed information.
- Ability to articulate lessons learned regarding conservation initiative successes and failures.
- Ability to simplify and explain complex scientific data to general audiences.
- Creates and communicates a compelling vision; practices the Conservancy's core values.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL EFFORT:

The Agriculture Strategy Director may work in variable weather conditions, at remote locations, on difficult and hazardous terrain, and under physically demanding circumstances. These conditions may:

- require occasional physical exertion and/or muscular strain
- present occasional possibility of injury
- require long hours in isolated settings

This position may also:

- require frequent travel domestically and/or internationally
- require evening and weekend hours

The Nature Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer.