

# Self-directed Conservation Field Placement

Nilo Nature Forest Reserve, East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania

**Host:** Friends of Nilo Forest (FONF), Swiss conservation association (in formation), Aesch ZH, Switzerland — niloforest.com  
**Location:** Annex of the Nilo Forest Lodge at the boundary of the Nilo Nature Forest Reserve, near Misalai, Amani Division, Muheza District, Tanga Region  
**Duration:** 3 to 6 months (longer by arrangement)  
**Start:** possible now; rolling intake  
**Places:** 1–2 at a time  
**Contribution:** USD 1,200 per month, full board (the Annex, a separate 15 m<sup>2</sup> building with its own terrace, three meals, water, electricity, internet, laundry, local field partner). USD 40 per day for stays under one month. Travel, visa, insurance, research permit and transfers are the participant's responsibility.

## The site

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Nilo is a Nature Forest Reserve of about 6,025 ha, gazetted on 7 December 2007 under Tanzania's highest level of forest protection, the second largest forest block of the East Usambaras after Amani and part of the Eastern Arc Mountains. Records include c. 800 plant species with several *Saintpaulia* taxa, c. 100 bird species, the Usambara three-horned chameleon and the Angolan black-and-white colobus. Nilo Peak reaches 1,506 m. Rain falls in all months (1,200–2,200 mm). The reserve is the water catchment for more than 30,000 people in 17 villages. It is managed by the Tanzania Forest Service with limited enforcement capacity; illegal logging, poaching and encroachment are the main pressures. Compared with Amani, Nilo has almost no recent research or monitoring presence.

## The placement

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There is no existing programme. The placement is to build one. The participant designs and runs, with a local field partner, the first systematic monitoring of the reserve boundary zone. Expected building blocks, to be shaped by the participant's own proposal:

- Patrol routes along the boundary and into the reserve, recorded by GPS, with incident logging (cut stumps, snares, charcoal pits, encroachment)
- Recruiting and training two village forest monitors from neighbouring villages, and a simple reporting routine for them
- Baseline species records (camera traps, transects, acoustic recording, herpetology surveys, depending on skills and equipment brought)
- A field protocol and data structure that the next participant can take over
- Working-level contact with the Tanzania Forest Service ranger post in Amani; the participant does not negotiate agreements with authorities

Data belong to the participant for academic use, with a copy to FONF. Thesis projects (BSc/MSc) are welcome; supervision must come from the home institution.

## What is provided

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- Accommodation in the Annex, a separate 15 m<sup>2</sup> building next to the main house of the lodge, with a double bed and its own terrace
- Full board prepared by lodge staff

- Saidi, local guide and site manager, as daily field partner (Swahili, basic English)
- Internet (mobile broadband, c. 20 Mbps), grid electricity with solar backup, 4×4 transport to Muheza by arrangement
- Direct access to the reserve boundary on foot from the house

## Conditions

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- Remote site: 1 h 45 min of rough track from the tarmac road, no shops, nearest medical care in Muheza. Humid climate, steep terrain, 4–6 h walking on field days.
- Minimum age 21, physically fit, basic English required, Swahili an advantage, prior fieldwork abroad an advantage.
- Application with a one-page project sketch: what you would build in your time here and how.
- Two-week trial period; the remaining contribution is refunded if either side ends the placement then.

## Accommodation and contribution

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### Annex (placement students), per month, full board

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|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Single occupancy                                    | USD 1,200 |
| With companion (no work obligation, no data rights) | USD 1,800 |

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### Main building (relatives, supervisors, groups), per month, full board

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|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Single occupancy                     | USD 1,800 |
| Double occupancy                     | USD 2,400 |
| Three persons, third on the sofa bed | USD 3,000 |

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Included: own room, three meals, water, electricity, internet, laundry, field partner. Not included: travel, visa, insurance, research permit (COSTECH) and Tanzania Forest Service fees, transfers. The accommodation is the Nilo Forest Lodge; regular rates at [niloforestlodge.com](http://niloforestlodge.com).

## Contact

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Ralf Degenhardt, Founder, Friends of Nilo Forest — [ralf@niloforest.com](mailto:ralf@niloforest.com) — +41 79 681 21 06 — [niloforest.com/field-placement](http://niloforest.com/field-placement)

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Friends of Nilo Forest, association in formation, Chilegässli 12A, 8904 Aesch ZH, Switzerland. Version September 2026.