

PostDoc position transdisciplinary research in African rangeland-based food systems



at the German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture - DITSL in Witzenhausen, Germany

DITSL is a centre of expertise for transdisciplinary research for development and transformation in social ecological land-use systems worldwide. It specialises in innovation in livestock, farming and food systems in highly heterogeneous and variable environments (www.ditsl.org). DITSL conducts research in development (RinD) on agri-food systems, covering agroecology, rangeland management, human livestock environment interaction, agri-value chain development, food production, processing and nutrition in developing and transition countries mainly in Africa and beyond. Our long-standing research experience shows that sustainable change starts with learning and change of social practice of involved actors. To operationalize this perspective, we developed a collaborative learning approach that we use to implement our transdisciplinary R4D projects.

Currently, we run several projects on social-ecological issues in African rangeland ecosystems. We partner with a broad network of national and international research and development institutions. Most importantly we closely collaborate with pastoral land-users and other societal stakeholders from the outset of the project through to the application of co-developed social, organisational or technical innovations. Within these collaborations, we emphasise the importance of building trustful working relationships on equal terms, and of facilitating processes in which societal stakeholders are encouraged to take responsibilities and active roles for sustainable change.

To support our international and interdisciplinary research team, we seek a post-doctoral scientist who has realised the importance of knowledge integration and co-creation to achieve sustainable change, and is enthusiastic about participating in such change processes. The future position holder will be in charge of doing own research, and of responsibly co-supervising PhD and MSc students in our current projects dealing with rangeland use and governance in Kenya and Namibia.

You will fit well in our team if you have:

- ✓ high demands on the quality of your work
- ✓ passion for interaction with societal stakeholders and facilitating change processes
- ✓ feeling of responsibility and joy when enhancing learning in young scientists
- ✓ willingness to learn new methods and to familiarize yourself with new thematic fields
- ✓ availability for and experience in travelling particularly to African countries for field research

Depending on your professional experience and interests we will jointly identify and assign topics and tasks that suit both your and our interests and needs.

Professional requirements:

- PhD with a strong interdisciplinary orientation on an agri-food related subject, accomplished in social ecology, human ecology, human geography, social anthropology, development studies, agriculture, range management or related fields.
- Experience in conceptualizing, designing and doing transdisciplinary research and/or participatory action research.

- Experience in applying mixed-method approaches, particularly also with focus on qualitative analysis of data and information.
- Ability to and experience in understanding interests, perspectives and knowledge of local land-users and other local food system actors.

We offer a 3 year position paid according to TVH 13 (80 or 100%), potentially starting from 01.03.2023, and we are interested in building longer-term project-based employment opportunities for our team members. DITSL is an equal opportunities employer.

Application process:

Application documents comprise: Letter of motivation related to the topic you apply for, Curriculum vitae, Publication list, Summary of the PhD Thesis, Copy of relevant certificates, Names and contact details of 2–3 referees. Please submit these documents by email in a single PDF file to Prof. Dr Brigitte Kaufmann, DITSL, email: research@ditssl.org, deadline extended to 31.01.2023 (start of selection process).