Now Hiring: Natural Resource Economist

UCLA IoES is seeking a highly-motivated and pragmatic natural resource economist to conduct research and analysis for real-world problems. The economist will lead interdisciplinary projects focused on economic analyses to quantitatively evaluate strategic growth opportunities for ocean-based industries and activities in developing coastal states. He/she will present the findings and work with government agencies and the Waitt Institute team on sustainable blue economy planning in those countries. The economist’s work supports the Blue Prosperity program at UCLA. With funding from the Waitt Foundation, this program engages coastal states on using marine spatial planning to support marine protection and sustainable development of their blue economies.

The primary function of the economist will be working in partnership with the Waitt Institute and partner governments. These projects will seek to quantify the economic impact of different policy-, infrastructure-, and business-development opportunities. In general, the emphasis of the research projects will be placed on strategy and process building, as opposed to implementation or execution of the recommendations.

Types of anticipated place-based projects include:
- Estimate the impact to fisheries and tourism revenues if certain areas of the ocean were to be closed to fishing;
- Use elasticities to derive optimal hospitality and fishing tax rates and project future revenues over a 10 year time period;
- Execute a comparative market analysis to identify competitive advantages of pursuing development of particular blue economy industries;
- Forecast energy prices as renewable energy infrastructure is installed;
- Conduct a tradeoff analysis for impacts of two policy scenarios using econometrics and other quantitative tools; or
- Integration of biodiversity and ecosystem management into development planning and production sector activities.

The economist will serve as the lead for economic evaluations for the Blue Prosperity @ UCLA program and will oversee the work of other contributors. He/she will work closely with other researchers at UCLA including those at the business, law and public policy schools. He/she will communicate results directly with high level government stakeholders. Because the work is responsive to governments’ needs, expect a dynamic and applied portfolio of work, with individual projects being executed over months, not years.

Key attributes that will allow a candidate to succeed and thrive:
- Demonstrated experience leading consulting projects for governments including those of a technical assistance and capacity building nature;
- Deep knowledge of quantitative analysis tools;
Experience in one or, preferably, more of the following areas: economics and natural capital accounting, ecosystem-based management, marine spatial planning, coastal zone management and innovative financing;

A flexible nature as projects are subject to shifting due to a variety of factors, including weather, government decision-making, scheduling, etc.;

An entrepreneurial mindset with a propensity for creative thinking and problem solving in data-poor conditions; and

Engaging and clear communication skills, both written and verbal.

Education:

PhD with a few years of applied research experience or Master’s degree with several years of experience in economics, development economics, economic planning, environmental/natural resource economics, quantitative economics, or equivalent field.

Experience:

Minimum 5 years of relevant experience at the international level working on conservation and/or sustainable development economics, particularly in developing countries. Relevant experience can include areas such as: environmental and natural resource economic assessment and valuation, pioneering approaches and mobilizing resources to support natural capital management, and economic development and financing planning and budgeting;

Demonstrated experience conducting applied economic assessments and valuation studies guided by specific policy questions;

Experience leading the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of different policies, strategies or development programs/projects; and

A strong preference will be given to candidates who have worked with or for blue economy industries such as fishing, shipping, renewable energy and tourism.

The position will be based in Los Angeles and require travel to foreign countries multiple times a year, which may include extended stays (3 weeks).

The position is a one-year contract with likely renewal for additional years based on performance. Generous UC benefits (health insurance, retirement, paid leave) provided.

For additional information about the position and to apply, please consult the posting on the UCLA hiring system: https://hr.mycareer.ucla.edu Requisition Number: 30609.

Desired start date is November 2019.