**OVERVIEW**

**Position:** Asian Toad Program Coordinator

**Reporting to:** Asian Toad Project Leader

**Term:** Full-time 2-year contract position, beginning as soon as possible.

**Location:** Toamasina, eastern MADAGASCAR

**Applications:** Send CV including contact details for three references and letter of motivation to radakaboka.mada@gmail.com by **26th September 2019** detailing relevant experience.

**BACKGROUND**

The Asian or black-spined toad *Duttaphrynus melanostictus* is a recent invasive species in Madagascar (discovered in 2014 but likely to have arrived around 2010) and poses a very serious threat to the environment, human health, and the economy. Its area of incursion, on the east coast near the port city of Toamasina, has doubled in size since 2014 to an estimated 220 km2. The Asian toad is highly invasive; it is a prolific breeder and, being a generalist feeder, is successful in adapting to many different environments including the highly degraded landscapes in and around the city of Toamasina. Modelling efforts predict that if left unchecked, the toad could invade most of the extensive lowland areas of Madagascar. The Asian toad is toxic and a recent study suggests that the majority of Madagascar’s wildlife will be susceptible to the toxins. In a country where no native toads exist, the native wildlife is very naive to the threat. All potential predators of the toad will be at high risk and several anecdotal accounts have already been collected of animals dying whilst trying to ingest toads. Furthermore, there are risks to the incredibly rich and unique amphibians of Madagascar through competition and the potential transmission of novel diseases. As one of the top ten listed biodiversity hotspots in the world, the invasion of the Asian toad into Madagascar poses an enormous risk to worldwide biodiversity.

Already in 2016 the population of Asian toads was estimated at over seven million adult individuals. Amphibian eradications have never been achieved at this scale anywhere in the world and the toad’s distribution has at least doubled since the time of that estimate. With present available technology, therefore, there is no chance of eradication. However, a major new program is planned to control and mitigate the impacts of the toad, to try to limit dispersal of the toad into new areas (especially those of high biodiversity value), reduce the distribution of the toad, and mitigate the impacts of the toad on local people and wildlife. Efforts thus far to eradicate/control the toad have been disjointed and carried out on a small-scale, so this program represents the first opportunity since the toad’s discovery in 2014 to assemble a team dedicated full-time to controlling and mitigating the impacts of the Asian toad.

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will be appointed to guide the development and implementation of the Asian Toad Control and Mitigation Program in Madagascar. The TAG will consist of a small, select group of individuals who have been involved long-term in the Asian toad response in Madagascar, who are familiar with the invasion history and have combined experience in invasive species management, herpetology, Madagascar’s biodiversity, local legislation and political issues relating to the toad. The Program Coordinator will be supported by the TAG throughout the duration of the 2-year posting.

**JOB SUMMARY**

The Program Coordinator will take responsibility for the development of the Asian Toad Control and Mitigation Program in Madagascar in collaboration with the TAG and will be the primary person responsible for the program’s delivery and execution. It will involve developing and overseeing a holistic program to tackle the invasive Asian toad population in Madagascar most likely through delimitation, containment, localized eradication and the setting up a detection/reporting infrastructure to better monitor the toad’s distribution and dispersal. The job will require the advancement of multiple high-level collaborations necessary to achieve mission success. A critical aspect of the role will be to help build capacity within Madagascar to deal with the Asian toad invasion.

**TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Technical/Field

* Lead the field effort to determine the current area of incursion of the Asian Toad in Madagascar with the use of methods sensitive to detection of low density populations.
* Identify, in collaboration with the TAG, partners and experts, agreed goals to contain and/or mitigate the impacts of Asian toads in Madagascar.
* Develop a strategy to achieve the agreed program goals
* Develop and implement the logistical and technical aspects of the Asian Toad program in the field
* Facilitate invasive species workshops for staff/partners
* Oversee the accurate collecting and archiving of data from the field
* Ensure appropriate health and safety standards for staff and contractors

Project Management

* Assemble, train, motivate, and lead a support team (in remote field conditions)
* Meet administrative and financial objectives
* Prepare and deliver brief monthly field updates and budget reports
* Prepare biannual detailed progress reports

Communication/Collaboration

* Work in collaboration with Madagascar’s Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and the regional branch of MEDD (DREDD) to ensure open communication and compliance with Malagasy laws/regulations
* Work in collaboration with other relevant ministries in Madagascar to facilitate the program (eg. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture etc.)
* Contribute towards the development of a National Toad Action Plan to guide the national response to the Asian toad invasion
* Consult with the program Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on a monthly basis
* Consult with the larger international community of experts on invasive species regarding development of the program and communication of results and progress
* Build relationships with primary stakeholders to win support – both political and financial - for the Asian toad program; this will include extensive consultations with local communities across the area of incursion
* Meet with potential donors, funders and partners (e.g., IUCN, UNEP, UNDP, ADB) to highlight the issue and access potential avenues for rapid funding, to be supported in this role by the TAG
* Coordinate, in collaboration with MEDD and DREDD, awareness campaigns to inform the local residents of the impacts and risks posed by toads
* Coordinate the development of a reporting network by which new Asian toad sightings outside the present incursion area can be reported
* Help facilitate complementary research by independent third parties to better understand the ecology, dispersion, behavior and impacts of the Asian toad

**Note: We understand that this is a very diverse role that we are seeking to fill. We would like to clarify that the main priority and emphasis for the Program Coordinator’s role will be to develop, coordinate and implement the field control, delimitation and mitigation program. Support will be provided for the other tasks through the TAG.**

**SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE**

The Asian Toad Program Coordinator will be self-motivated, well organized, collaborative and experienced.

Mandatory Requirements:

* Minimum Bachelor’s degree in Biology or related area, and +10 years’ experience in invasive species projects
* Working knowledge of biosecurity, invasive species management, early detection, containment methods and ecological impacts of invasive species on native species and ecosystems
* Demonstrated scientific and technical knowledge and experience in terrestrial invasive fauna eradication/control methods
* Proven ability to live and work in multi-cultural contexts, preferably with international experience working in developing countries.
* Management and administration experience including ability to lead a support field team, meet logistical and financial goals, and manage performance of a large-scale collaboration
* Demonstrated skills in networking, collaborating and liaising with stakeholders and donors such as local communities, NGO’s, development aid agencies, Embassies and Consulates, and other organizations
* Excellent and timely written and verbal communication skills (in English)
* Excellent data management skills

The following are desirable but not required.

* Proficiency in French or Malagasy is highly desirable
* Knowledge of invasive species policy at the national and international levels
* Experience with GIS software