

20 October, 2011

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

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(Funding Resource): Stanford's List of African Grants and Fellowships

This site, created by Stanford University's Libraries and Academic Information Resources, contains a list of funders that give grants and fellowships to African individuals and organizations.

For more go to: <http://library.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/grants.html>

(Call for Nominations) Human Rights Watch seeks Nominations under the Hellman/Hammett Grant Program

Human Rights Watch is currently seeking nominations for the Hellman/Hammett grant program aimed at supporting writers all around the world who have been victims of political persecution and are in financial need.

The grants, named after the late American playwright Lillian Hellman and novelist Dashiell Hammett, typically range from \$1,000 to a maximum of \$10,000. Forty-eight writers from 24 countries received Hellman/Hammett grants in 2011 in recognition of their commitment to free expression and the courage they showed when facing political persecution.

Besides providing much needed financial assistance, the Hellman/Hammett grants focus attention on repression of free speech and censorship by publicizing

the persecution that the grant recipients endured. In some cases the publicity is a protection against further abuse. In other cases, the writers request anonymity because of the dangerous circumstances in which they and their families are living.

The writers eligible for this grant are the ones, who are targeted for expressing views that their governments oppose, for criticizing government officials or actions, or for writing about subjects that their governments do not want reported.

Over the past 22 years, more than 700 writers from 92 countries have received Hellman/Hammett grants of up to US\$10,000 each, totaling more than \$3 million.

The program also gives small emergency grants to writers who have an urgent need to leave their country or who need immediate medical treatment after serving prison terms or enduring torture.

Emergency nominations are accepted throughout the year.

Last day for submissions: December 10, 2011.

For more go to: <http://www.hrw.org/hhgrants/nominations>

(Call for Abstracts) IWA seeks abstracts for presentation at Water Convention 2012 during the Singapore International Water Week

International Water Association is now seeking abstracts for the Water Convention 2012 to be held during the Singapore International Water Week (SIWW) 2012 from July 1 to 5, 2012 at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands. Prospective authors can submit abstracts for either oral or poster presentations.

Water Convention 2012 aims at bringing together the researchers, industry leaders, and practitioners to share and exchange thoughts on sustainability. This will be done through topics such as water technology solutions, planning and management of water resources, utility practices, and water quality and protection of public health.

Themed "Water Solutions for Liveable and Sustainable Cities", SIWW 2012 will be organized in conjunction with the 3rd World Cities Summit and the inaugural CleanEnviro Summit Singapore

About Water Convention 2012 and Themes

In line with the overall theme of SIWW 2012, "Water Solutions for Liveable and

Sustainable Cities”, the Water Convention will provide a platform for water professionals to share experiences and explore, in particular case studies and practical applications that showcase technological solutions and/or management strategies which improves the efficiency and effectiveness of water and wastewater systems, as well as examine issues related to urban water planning and water quality and health specifically in the East Asia, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East regions. Water Convention 2012 will continue its focus on a wide range of topics along the four main themes:

1. Delivering Water from Source to Tap
2. Effective and Efficient Wastewater Management
3. Planning for Sustainable Water Solutions
4. Water Quality & Health

In addition to the technical sessions, the Water Convention will also feature the “Hot Issues” Workshops, which made a highly successful debut in 2011. The Workshops are scheduled to be held on Sunday, 1 July 2012, prior to the start of the technical sessions and will focus on the four main themes of the Water Convention. Each of these 3-hour workshops are designed to be highly interactive, with panel discussions to facilitate two-way exchanges of ideas on ‘hot’ or new and emerging issues in Asia. The Workshops are open to all Water Convention delegates. Additional registration is required for trade visitors and exhibitors.

Last date for submission is November 15, 2011

For more go to:

http://www.siww.com.sg/sites/default/files/SIWW_2012_Call_for_Papers2.pdf

(Call for Photos and Video) Connect4Climate invites African Youth to submit Entries for the Photo and Video Competition on Climate Change

Connect4Climate (C4C) is seeking entries for the photo and video competition on climate change focused on African youth aged 13 to 30. To participate in this competition you can send your photos or videos (60 seconds or less) telling a story on climate change or present a cool idea for solutions to climate change issues.

The goal of C4C is to raise awareness about climate change issues around the world, with an initial focus on Africa. C4C, together with its knowledge partners, aims to act as a convener of all parties with an interest in raising awareness

about climate change issues and participating in an interactive, global dialogue on climate change. With the help of their broad coalition of partners, both big and small, they are kickstarting an interactive dialogue on climate change issues amongst African youth and global social media users. With roughly 70% of Africa's total population under 30, the Connect4Climate campaign will tap the rich potential of African's youth as powerful agents of social change.

Competition Categories

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Forests
- Gender
- Health
- Water

Prizes

C4C will be awarding more than 60 prizes, including cameras, mobile phones, computer tablets and solar backpacks. Winning entries will be exhibited at the UN Conference on Climate Change (COP17) in Durban, South Africa, this December. World leaders and prominent climate change thinkers will get a chance to look, listen, and learn about these climate stories generated by African youth from around the continent.

Last date for submission is November 15, 2011

For more go to: http://www.connect4climate.org/about_c4c

(Article) Why protecting the world's wildlife is good for our wallets

A new world body on wildlife and ecosystems protection being set up by the UN must avoid blaming developing nations, where most of the world's biodiversity loss is occurring, says a top British scientist.

Overconsumption by rich western nations is as big a driver of global environmental degradation as the rapidly growing populations of developing countries, says Professor Bob Watson, a leading figure in setting up the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

The new body – modelled on the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – will assess how and why the natural world is being degraded, what it will cost society, and what can be done to halt the process.

But it must avoid rows between rich and poor countries, says Professor Watson,

an ex-head of the IPCC, who is Chief Scientific Adviser to Britain's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. "If they think this is just the white world, the developed world, telling them what to do, that'll be the end of it ... The climate debate has been, 'you rich countries got rich by using cheap fossil fuels, and now you're telling us not to use them.' We must not get into that," he said. Regional assessments of biodiversity problems must be "owned" by the regions concerned, he said. So if there is a regional biodiversity assessment of Latin America, scientists from Latin America will carry it out, not foreign scientists.

For more go to: <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/nature/why-protecting-the-worlds-wildlife-is-good-for-our-wallets-2364701.html>

(Article) Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change in Africa

Large parts of Africa are already affected by extreme climatic events such as droughts and floods resulting from the highly variable climate. This process is expected to become worse as a consequence of long-term changes in the climatic system. Whenever they occur, these extreme events negatively impact livelihoods, especially those of the poor. Local economies also get negatively affected due to the population's high and direct dependence on natural resources. For instance, over ninety percent of agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa is rain fed. Indeed, Africa has been identified as one of the continents most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

It is now widely accepted that climate change is a development and environmental challenge. Climate change poses additional problems to degraded environments, high levels of poverty, food insecurity and HIV/AIDS already affecting large parts of Africa. Unless this situation is addressed, many vulnerable populations could find their situations worsening, and many countries may not make any progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There is also a risk that the gains made in development thus far may be lost, as climate-related disasters cause damage and result in myriad losses.

Implementing relevant, effective, and timely climate change adaptation is particularly important for African countries, as it would decrease human suffering, improve livelihoods, human and environmental health, as well as socio-economic development.

Global climate change will result in rising temperatures and increased water evaporation from soils, resulting in further land degradation. Climate change is likely to be a continuing driver for the fundamental changes already including:

- reductions in the quantity and quality of grazing land due to desiccation,

vegetation change and species loss

- worsening access to water supplies as water table falls.
- Increased surface run-off which makes capture and storage more difficult and causes erosion
- rising levels of conflict over natural resources and water supply

In addition climate change is likely to bring new challenges:

- Temperature rises could threaten animal health
- Increasing variability and new climate extremes could result in more extreme droughts and, at times, floods.

The following areas of action could strengthen existing household adaptive capacity and community solidarity, in order to avoid strategies that further increase vulnerability:

- Raising awareness on climate change: Since community awareness (including that of other NGOs working in the area) on climate change and its impacts are very low, raising awareness is critical. Current and projected climate change trends and impacts will need to be shared with school students, teachers, the community, policymakers and other stakeholders. This should go a long way in improving the community's preparedness for climate change.
- Improving water availability and irrigation systems: Because of erratic rainfall, droughts have been more frequent and of larger magnitude in recent years. Water availability has fallen because groundwater recharge is lower as a result of rainfall being confined to fewer days during the summer leaving the rest of the year bone dry. Possible interventions should include the introduction of drip irrigation systems, which maximise on scarce water resources.
- Off-season cash crop planting: Erratic rainfall has reduced maize crop production and threatens food security. To combat this, off-season horticultural crops grown under irrigation are highly recommended. Income generated will allow farmers to purchase grain and/or maize meal, and farming inputs as well as create employment for men, women and school-leavers.
- Improved land management and forest conservation: Tree felling, both for domestic and commercial purposes, is widespread in Muniyawiri. Project interventions, therefore, should be targeted at improving the state of natural resources, particularly forests. Orientation training, exposure visits, workshops and meetings should be organized. Support for woodlot and tree nurseries and restoring degraded land should also be provided while controlled grazing and browsing should be encouraged to promote natural forest regeneration.
- Integrated crop production: Long rotation crops, like fruits, that are more resilient to erratic rainfall are recommended. It is envisaged that planting both long and short rotation crops will help farmers fulfill long- and short-term needs. Ideally, farmers should also be trained to use marginal land and temporal gaps through intercropping and agroforestry. Increasing agricultural biodiversity has

proved to be a key livelihood strategy for coping with changing and more challenging environmental conditions in other drought-prone parts of Zimbabwe, such as Chivi (Masvingo Province) and Gwanda (Matabeleland South), and can be replicated in Munyawiri.

- Community-based weather monitoring: To understand changes in local weather patterns, a simple weather station could be established, preferably at one of the local secondary schools. This will provide information on daily minimum and maximum temperatures, rainfall and humidity. The data will help the community understand how local weather patterns are changing over time. In a few years, communities will be able to draw concrete conclusions regarding the changing climate.

Other proposed interventions include: Livestock keeping education, extension and marketing development, grazing management, production of small grains (sorghum and millet), conservation farming, environmental education, community-based seed banks, entrepreneurship development (targeting especially women), post-harvest storage and processing development, water harvesting and management (consolidated gardens), sustainable use of wetlands and social networks (safety nets).

For more go to:

http://www.acts.or.ke/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3&Itemid=25

(Resource) World Bank on Climate Change

This resource includes statistics, articles, blogs, etc. addressing the World Bank's take on climate change and its affects across the world. According the World Bank climate change is expected to hit developing countries the hardest. Its effects—higher temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, rising sea levels, and more frequent weather-related disasters—pose risks for agriculture, food, and water supplies. At stake are recent gains in the fight against poverty, hunger and disease, and the lives and livelihoods of billions of people in developing countries.

For more go to: <http://climatechange.worldbank.org/> and visit:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2010/Resources/5287678-1252586925350/Africa-WDR-2010-booklet.pdf>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused

organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>. We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.