

Dear Sir or Madam,

I was recently looking at pictures of big cats and local people from my internship time in South Africa last year. Not surprisingly, my interest for African wildlife and African communities resurfaced. The possibility to work with the cheetah and with the community at the same time would be a challenging and educational opportunity.

When I was a teenager I dreamed to become a doctor but animals and nature inspired me to pursue a career in ecology and planet sustainability. Throughout my study Wildlife Management the subjects: large carnivores, conservation, wildlife research, communities and Human-Wildlife Conflicts appeals to me the most. This inspired me to become a Human-Wildlife Conflict researcher and educator. Since then I have been steered towards national and international Human-Wildlife research projects. As a last year bachelor student and future academic, I hope to narrow the gap in knowledge on how to reduce Human-Wildlife Conflicts and how to maximise the benefits that wildlife brings.

During my national and international experiences I saw animals and humans suffering; emotional farmers were losing their crops, baboons troops were losing a group member, a farmer was ready to pay a hunter to shoot a leopard, citizens that were afraid for the returning of the lynx and birdwatchers that saw their favourite species declining. It was painful to see, however I saw also a lot of positive developments; hunters and farmers that are open for suggestions to solve Human Wildlife Conflicts, children becoming aware of their environment, agreements between countries and opposite parties that try to understand each other in order to solve the problem. These experiences and my natural communication skills will help me to contribute to CCF as a foundation that values not only animal aspects but human aspects as well.

In my studies and internships I have developed and improved several methodological, field and digital skills relevant for research projects. I reinforced my ability to read, interpret and analyse information and developed an academically-rooted personal point of view. During my current internship in Slovenia I have the opportunity to improve my Excel skills by exploring and processing large databases of information. My writing skills and communication skills improved when visiting the Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre (ACDB) in Romania and the LIFE LynxConnect project in Spain. Of the last visit I wrote a report for the European Commission. In the field I have worked with camera traps placed in bushveld, forest and meadows that record chacma baboons or Eurasian lynx or meadow birds. For analyses I use mostly SPSS but my new project is discovering R. GIS I use to develop maps. I am familiar with the programs Camelot and DigiKam which I used to tag camera trap photos of wild animals in Slovenia and South Africa. I expect that these skills will be useful when conducting research for CCF.

I am an ambitious and enthusiastic person that finds personal development very important. When I am not exploring nature, doing sports or being with family and friends I start with new inspiring courses from data science to animal ecology to writing. This helps me to solve problems and to reflect on my actions. The opportunity to work with your team would put me in an exciting research surrounding and I am very motivated to participate in the good work you are doing. I would be honoured if I can assist in changing the world to save the cheetah, let me help. Thank you very much for considering my request.

Yours sincerely,

Ariadne Kibbelaar