



SEOSAW Quarterly Newsletter May 2022

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Herbaceous Protocol Workshop



SEOSAW ran an Herbaceous Protocol Training Workshop in Morogoro, Tanzania at the Kitulangalo Forest Reserve plots, 15-25 March 2022. The training covered how to sample grasses and other non-woody vegetation according to the GGG (Global Grassy Group - globalgrassygroup.github.io/) protocol. The GGG protocol is a standardised method of collecting herbaceous species composition and functional attributes. SEOSAW also trialed the new herbaceous biomass and shrub protocols.

This field workshop was hosted by TAFORI (Tanzania Forestry Research Institute), University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), and the University of Edinburgh (UK). SEOSAW also engaged with students from Sokoine University of Agriculture who joined us in the field to learn about herbaceous sampling methods. This training brought together early career foresters and ecologists from TAFORI (Tanzania), Dar es Salaam University (Tanzania), Forestry Training Institute-Olmotonyi (Tanzania), SAEON (South Africa), Kenya Forest Service, Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe, East African Herbarium-National Museums of Kenya, and Karatina University (Kenya) to learn new skills which they can utilize at their own sites as well as fostering new and existing collaborations.

New Protocols Coming Soon!



SEOSAW has been developing and trialing new protocols including: adoption of the [Global Grassy Group](https://globalgrassygroup.github.io/) (<https://globalgrassygroup.github.io/>) protocol on ground layer diversity (to be published soon), herbaceous biomass (to be uploaded on the SEOSAW website soon), and

shrub composition and structure (in development). These protocols have all been designed as complementary to the SEOSAW tree, regeneration, and coarse woody debris protocols for a full estimation of vegetation biodiversity and biomass on SEOSAW plots. 'Social' protocols are also in development, with pilot land systems surveys being tested recently in Tanzania, Angola, and Namibia, as well as a human-environment dimensions workshop being planned for later this year.

Data sheets and translations of the tree, regeneration, and coarse woody debris protocols will soon be made available in Portuguese, French, and Swahili on the SEOSAW website.

Science Meeting- June 10



There will be a Science Meeting on **June 10, 13:00-15:00 GMT+1**. It will focus on fieldwork successes and network expansions that have occurred over the past year. It will be a good overview for people new to SEOSAW.

<https://ed-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/83200803604>

Meeting ID: 832 0080 3604

Passcode: SEOSAW22

SEOSAW Overview (10 minutes)

Field Updates (50 minutes)

- Zimbabwe Forestry Commission
- Tanzania Forestry Research Institute
- University of Lubumbashi, DRC
- Kenya Forestry Research Institute

Student Flash Talks (30 minutes):

Eight students from six countries have already expressed their intention to present.

Protocol Introductions (20 minutes)

[Join the Steering Committee!](#)



We are recruiting **two to five** new SC members to start in September 2022. We encourage members at all career stages to apply, especially early career and student members. We want the SC to be as representative of SEOSAW and its diverse members as possible!

To apply, please fill out this [form](#) by June 17.

Prior to applying, please review the SEOSAW Steering Committee [Terms of Reference](#) and make sure you can meet the expectations and time commitment.

Updates from the Field



A new pilot permanent plot was set in Wedza, Zimbabwe by master's student Eddie Nyamugadza and Professor Clemence Zimudzi from University of Zimbabwe. They will be returning to the field soon to set up more plots in comparable human-utilized and protected areas.

Dr.'s John Godlee, Kyle Dexter, and Francisco Maiato Goncalves visited Bicuár National Park, Angola in April and May. They field tested several new SEOSAW protocols including herbaceous biomass, shrub, leaf traits, and land system surveys.

In February, Dr. Vera De Cauwer led a field trip to Kanovlei, Namibia to recensus existing plots. She was joined by three students and Dr. John Godlee.

Dr. Jonathan Muledi and Urbain Mumba are working hard to place and recensus plots in DRC. They are planning to revisit some plots in July 2022.

Zimbabwe Data Workshop



In March, SEOSAW Co-Chair Dr. Casey Ryan and Lorena Benitez visited the Zimbabwe Forestry Commission (ZFC) to hold a data cleaning and analysis workshop. The workshop served as a test run for what future SEOSAW data workshops might look like. Topics covered included how to clean and format data for SEOSAW, analysis of diversity from one-off plots, and growth rates analysis from permanent plot data.

Opportunities



SEOSAW steering committee member, Dr. Mariska te Beest, is advertising **two PhD positions** with her lab at Utrecht University. Please see the links below for information:

- The effects of warming and fire on biodiversity – carbon storage relations in Afrotropical grasslands (1.0 FTE) via <https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/working-at-utrecht-university/jobs/phd-position-faculty-of-geosciences-the-effects-of-warming-and-fire-on-biodiversity-carbon-storage>
- Biodiversity, climate action and land-use change in African grasslands (1.0 FTE) via <https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/working-at-utrecht-university/jobs/phd-position-faculty-of-geosciences-biodiversity-climate-action-and-land-use-change-in-african>