

# Clark Labs Strengthens Conservation Collaboration

Clark Labs at Clark University in Massachusetts, USA, has teamed up with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to provide a research seminar geared specifically at real-world conservation projects. The seminar, entitled 'Wildlife Conservation Research Seminar', will explore various remote sensing techniques and spatial analytical tools for different patterns of environmental degradation in different landscapes.

The four landscape areas to be explored are all locations that WCS has been working on with local partners: South American Flamingo Habitat, Western Madagascar, Adirondack State Park, and Mongolian Grassland.

This relationship will contribute to Clark University's newly launched Liberal Education and Effective Practice [LEEP] initiative. Clark University is committed to helping students make the link between knowledge and action more explicit, thereby preparing them to address the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

This Wildlife Conservation Research Seminar provides invaluable applied research experience. Not only will the students gain an education in GIS, remote sensing and conservation practices, they will also be provided with a skillset for the real world, including project management, professional presentations and networking.

The use of remote sensing for conservation purposes is on the rise. Clark Labs' IDRISI Selva software will be utilised for these projects. Students will explore the analytical potential of both the Earth Trends Modeler and Land Change Modeler applications integrated within IDRISI. The Land Change Modeler was purpose-built for land change and its impacts on conservation and biodiversity, while the Earth Trends Modeler facilitates the analysis of changes over time in image time series.

Students will work in small groups on collaborative conservation projects for four distinct regions: Madagascar, South America, New York State and Mongolia. Each of these projects has specific conservation challenges. Specifically, the students will study general landscape dynamics including land cover change, interannual variations in productivity, soil erosion, coastal sedimentation, and localised habitat changes.

Clark Labs and the Wildlife Conservation Society have had a long-standing relationship and have collaborated on several projects. This new endeavor will expose Clark University students to the real challenges that conservation organisations such as WCS manage and monitor on a daily basis.

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