

Hohenheim graduate students receive grant from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for research documentary and 'Sharingback' initiative

Two Hohenheim graduate students, Humair Hayat and Lena Michler, conducted research for their Masters theses among Nama pastoralists in South Africa in 2015, with two follow up visits in 2016 and 2018. After witnessing a mostly extractive research culture in this area they founded the initiative 'Sharingback' which aims at enhancing the sharing and co-dissemination of knowledge gained through research with local populations who are directly or indirectly involved in research processes.

In this project of 'Sharingback' Humair Hayat and Lena Michler are focusing on the position of marginalised livestock herders and nature conservation practices in a protected area in South Africa. Furthermore, 'Sharingback' is intended to continue in several other countries within the scope of different socio-ecological studies, based on the belief that adopting equitable knowledge-gathering and sharing practices is not just a matter of ethical compliance, but is crucial for the sustainability of ongoing and future research (for further information visit the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Sharingback>).

The grant received from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in September 2018 will enable Humair Hayat and Lena Michler to stay engaged in this initiative in South Africa and to complete a documentary, envisaged for release at the end of 2019. In March 2018 the trailers of the documentary were shared with more than 100 local community members during an official ceremony in the town of Kuboes, Richtersveld, South Africa. This event directly led to discussions with park management and other stakeholders on how some of the challenges revealed by this research might be addressed in the future.

The Masters theses were situated at the Institute of Tropical Agricultural Sciences, University of Hohenheim, supervised by PD Dr. Anna C. Treydte (Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology, Tanzania and University of Hohenheim), PD Dr. Stefanie Lemke (Coventry University, UK and University of Hohenheim) and Dr. Marc Cotter (University of Hohenheim). Humair Hayat and Lena Michler were invited by Tim Hart from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to present their fieldwork encounters and this initiative at a seminar in Pretoria, South Africa, on 26 February 2018, where preliminary aspects of this project

were presented and constructive, positive feedback was provided by seminar participants with respect to the documentary. The scientific part of this film and research project is supervised by PD Dr. Stefanie Lemke.

Humair Hayat has academic and professional experience in agriculture and rangeland management and a passion for media communication. His background provides an ideal basis for disseminating research outcomes through the medium of film.

Lena Michler is a PhD student at the Institute of Tropical Agricultural Sciences University of Hohenheim since April 2017, engaging in research with pastoralists in the Dzungarian Gobi desert, Mongolia. The aim of her study is to better understand pastoralist's grazing strategies in relation to a co-management approach between the local pastoralists and the management of the protected area Great Gobi B SPA.

Key data of the project:

Title: Film and research project on the Nama population in South Africa

Granted funding/donor: €64,386 (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ)

Project duration: 01.02.2018 - 31.12.2019

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