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Taking on the mantle

By

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How does one make a lovely flower beautiful? My predecessor, Dr. Israel Borokini, leaves me with this predicament by a slew of achievements under his stewardship including but not restricted to the E-mentorship program, student research awards, Young Women Conservation Biologists program, Diversity Equity Inclusion and Justice or DEIJ policy, presidential service award, and international agreements.

I realize my upcoming tenure as your president will be all about consolidation of Israel's efforts, and steer the ship backed by the experience, talent, professionalism, and zeal of the Section's board of directors. Towards this end, I have a list of things to do. The registration of the Section as an NGO in Rwanda would be soon completed. As an NGO, we would offer the chapters to new countries, leverage the increased continental coverage to bolster our friendship with the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group and its partners, USAID, African Wildlife Foundation, Conservation International, The Jane Goodall Institute, Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Resources Institute and Worldwide Fund for Nature.

We will work towards an annual Africa Diaspora Biodiversity Symposium (ADBS) to get likeminded Africans share a common platform for a conversation on conservation. We introduced the Student Research Grants this year to extend new opportunities in conservation science to youngsters, and to augment conservation science in the continent. Let us catalyze the science into conservation practice through these grantees. I will work to get more funding for the award of more student grants. I will also work for the Section to invest in our local communities to tackle Africa's most pressing biodiversity threats like unsustainable hunting and fishing (legal or otherwise), habitat destruction, and climate change, to name a few. Research grants will help us understand the biological consequences of these threats. Equally important are ecological restoration and remediation measures needed to bolster the research findings.

The annual African Congress for Conservation Biology (ACCB) is a crucial platform for members to showcase their conservation contributions. It is a springboard for the International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB). We are organizing the 31st ICCB in Kigali, Rwanda from 23rd to 27th July 2023. The venue is the iconic Kigali Convention Center. What could be a better start to my tenure than working for the success of the upcoming ICCB? See you then in Rwanda!

Badru Mugerwa is the incoming president of the SCB Africa Section