Call for Expressions of Interest for Book Chapters

Proposed edited book: Social view of Socotra island: people, culture, heritage

Editors: Nataša Slak Valek (Zayed University, United Arab Emirates) and Ahmad Abdelmoneim (University of Socotra, Socotra Island)

The proposed book focuses on Socotra Island, geographically based in Yemen, and aims to explore the island from the social sciences point of view. We are inviting social science researchers to submit a book chapter proposal about people indigenous to Socotra, Socotri cultures, heritage, but we also welcome contributions from business, tourism, linguistic, communication, and anthropology. In this book, we want to focus on social sciences of the island. While a lot has been published in natural science about Socotra’s endemic species, biodiversity and nature in general, social scientific research of the island is very limited. We therefore want to address this gap with the proposed book.

Socotra is an island located in the Arabian sea, officially part of Yemen, and relatively unknown. It is considered to be one of the most remote, biodiverse and naturally rich place in the world (Sindaco, Metallinou, Pupin, Fasola & Carranza, 2012; Brown & Mies, 2012). The archipelago of Socotra was once part of the African continent, and the now long-term separation has led to a high degree of endemism and unique flora (Brown & Mies, 2012; Danme & Banfield, 2011, Maděra et al., 2019), which has resulted in an immense research interest among naturalists and evolutionary biologists (Batelka, 2012). As such, Socotra has gained a lot of attention from the natural science that has mainly focused on understanding of ‘new’ species, unique in the world. On the other side, very little has been published about people indigenous to Socotra, their behaviours, cultures, language and their understanding of the world.

Thus, we call for book chapters proposals that with a clear Social Science approach to Socotra. The purpose of the book is to publish research about the people of Socotra and not about its nature.

The Socotra Archipelago has long been a land of mystery. It is unknown as a tourism destination for many, however is a popular destination for adventurers, photographers and travellers who like to travel to remote and undeveloped places. Socotra has limited resources of electricity, which is provided by diesel generators, Internet is very slow and limited to certain points on the island. There are no shopping malls or five-star hotels. Roads, schools and hospitals have been built only recently. Many homes do not have a washing machine, hence women washing their clothes in rivers is a common sight. The island people do not know the development as we do, which makes it principally interesting to research. In terms of religion, Socotri is a traditional muslim society, which needs to be considered in the research process, especially in data collection which may involve taking pictures or recordings.

Kasim & Al-Gahuri’s (2015) tried to interview Socotri people about tourism development in the island, and have faced many challenges such as language barriers, lack of understanding the meanings and interviewing content, lack of support for the anticipated research results. The challenge is not only in understanding the language, but understanding phenomenas like e.g. tourism. We can ask a Socotri if they would like the island to develop for tourism, but they may not fully understand what ‘developing tourism’ means. Some of indogenous island people have never travelled or seen a developed city. Thus, words like ‘developed’, ‘tourism
destination’ or ‘washing machine’ may be unfamiliar terms for them. Therefore new and innovative research methods that are sensitive to Socotra people needs to be applied.

We understand that many will need to travel to Socotra for the purpose of writing a book chapter and collecting data for your research.

**Optional:**

**To encourage chapter proposals, University of Socotra will provide 20 flight tickets from Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates) to Socotra Island (targeting 20 book chapters) and 7 overnight stays in Socotra for every accepted proposal.**

If multiple authorship applies, only one author will be eligible for a sponsored flight ticket. If you do not need a flight ticket, you can still send a chapter proposal.

Please submit your interest by:

1. 300-500 words of the purpose of your research. Focus on the methods and purpose, be very specific as we need to understand WHAT exactly will be researched.

2. If applying for a flight ticket Abu Dhabi – Socotra – Abu Dhabi: explain the reasons behind a need to travel to Socotra for the research purpose.

   Please include points 1 and 2 in one document file (not two).

3. Your CV with bibliography.

We are expecting your expressions of interest no later than December 1st, 2021.

After reviewing all proposals, we will select those eligible for a flight ticket.

Full manuscript submissions will be due October 2022.

This book will be proposed for Springer, with publication anticipated for the first part of 2023.

Interested authors should email their interests (point 1, 2, 3 above) to Dr. Nataša Slak Valek (natasa.slakvalek@zu.ac.ae) no later than 1 December 2021.

**References:**


