

PhD position in landscape-scale biodiversity research

We are seeking a PhD student with a background (MSc degree) in ecology, biology, environmental sciences, or a closely related discipline. The successful applicant will be based at the Department of Evolutionary Biology and Environmental Studies of the University of Zurich, Switzerland.

Research of the past decades has made clear that ecosystems provide services to humans that are of enormous economic value. At the same time, experiments have shown that biodiversity matters for ecosystem functioning. However, this evidence stems from relatively small and artificial setups. It thus currently remains unclear whether the mechanisms identified also operate in real-world ecosystems and to which extent their functioning is threatened by biodiversity loss.

The successful candidate will analyze biodiversity-ecosystem functioning relations at the landscape scale. The analysis will span sites in a range of biomes that are distributed around the globe, and make use of existing ground-based and remotely-sensed data on the diversity of ecosystems and their functioning. The broader objective of the study is to evaluate how mechanisms change with scale, and whether and how biodiversity matters for landscape-scale functioning.

We are looking for highly motivated, enthusiastic, and independent applicant who has a strong interest in ecological questions and data analysis, and in work across disciplines. Although training will be provided, prior experience in statistical data analysis, the processing of large data sets, or in programming are an asset. A high standard of written and spoken English is essential.

The successful applicant will be supported and supervised by Pascal Niklaus, together with Florian Altermatt and Bernhard Schmid:

http://www.ieu.uzh.ch/en/staff/member/niklaus_pascal.html

http://www.ieu.uzh.ch/en/staff/member/altermatt_florian.html

http://www.ieu.uzh.ch/en/staff/member/schmid_bernhard.html

The PhD project is part of the large interdisciplinary research programme "Global Change and Biodiversity" of the University of Zurich, Switzerland (<http://www.gcb.uzh.ch>). The programme offers exciting opportunities for training and interactions with other researchers, both within and across disciplines.

The appointment is for four years, starting no later than October 1, 2017. Salaries will follow University of Zurich regulations. The University of Zurich is the largest University of Switzerland and offers outstanding work conditions, a high quality of life in Zurich, and an excellent support environment.

To apply, please send a single pdf containing motivation letter, complete CV, and the names of two references to pascal.niklaus@ieu.uzh.ch, with subject URPP-GCB-PAN-17-01. Application deadline is May 31, 2017.