

VACANCY

PhD position in Geography and Sustainable Development

In the context of the R4D research project titled “Managing telecoupled landscapes for the sustainable provision of ecosystem services and poverty alleviation”, the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Bern is offering a PhD position in Geography and Sustainable Development on the following topic:

Assessing the impacts of telecoupling on land use change, ecosystem service provision, and human well-being in a forest-frontier context in north-east Madagascar

Land use decisions in tropical forest-frontier landscapes are increasingly driven by distant actors, leading to trade-offs between globally important ecosystem services and local livelihood needs.

DUTIES

In light of these challenges, this PhD study will conduct research in two case study sites in north-east Madagascar with the following objectives:

- to map current and past land use using high-resolution images and participatory methods
- to analyse spatial ecosystem service trade-offs
- to investigate the impacts of land use change on human well-being

Methods will include participatory land use mapping, spatial modelling in GIS, and interviews with local stakeholders. The PhD student will present results in peer-reviewed journals and at international conferences. Further, the PhD student will join the International Graduate School North-South (www.igs-north-south.ch).

REQUIREMENTS

Profile of applicants: Priority will be given to qualified applicants with a background in environmental sciences, geography, or biology. Qualified applicants with other disciplinary backgrounds will be considered as well. Experience with spatial analysis in GIS and experience with social-science interview techniques are an asset. Good basic knowledge of French and English is required for this PhD position. The applicant should be willing to conduct fieldwork in a very remote rural region of Madagascar. A willingness to live and work in the capital city Antananarivo is desired.

DETAILS

Supervision: Dr. Peter Messerli of the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern

Funding: 3 years, in accordance with the standards of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

Location: CDE, University of Bern, Switzerland and ESSA-Forêts, University of Antananarivo, Madagascar:
www.cde.unibe.ch

Starting date: January 2016 (or as soon as possible thereafter).

For further information contact: Julie Zähringer, julie.zaehringer@cde.unibe.ch

Application deadline: 15 November 2015

Application materials: Please send your CV, an electronic version of your master’s thesis, three references, and a letter of motivation to: personaladministration@cde.unibe.ch.