

VACANCY

The Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) specializes in sustainability science, development and transformation. One of the University of Bern's strategic centres, we foster research, education and implementation for sustainable development in close collaboration with our academic partners in the global North and South.

CDE invites applications for a

PhD: Finding transformational pathways to sustainable supply chains (full time)

The PhD is part of the interdisciplinary project "Deliberative diets: Connecting producers and consumers to value the sustainability of Swiss food system scenarios", funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation's (SNSF) Sinergia programme. The project starts from the perspective that the environmental, social and economic impacts of feeding the Swiss population are immense, largely falling outside of Swiss borders. New transdisciplinary methods are thus needed to track the multidimensional impacts of the Swiss food system. By providing scientifically robust, ethically grounded and value-led policy recommendations, dialogues between science, society and policy will be fostered in order to navigate the trade-offs and to create transformational pathways towards sustainability.

Taking a food systems perspective, the empirical focus of the PhD study will be on two supply chains (cacao from Ecuador, almonds/olive oil from Spain). Based on this analysis, the candidate will develop and assist the co-creation of shared visions for future food systems. By way of understanding motivations and decision-making behaviour of supply chain actors, pathways to transition towards food system sustainability shall be charted.

TASKS

Conduct a PhD in Geography and Sustainable Development e.g.

- Map supply chains, actors and their functions
- Conceptualize and implement a format to co-create criteria and visions of food futures with farmers and consumers
- Assess motivations and decision-making behaviour of stakeholders via a mixed-method design
- Synthesize the human dimension of food system sustainability and determine leverage points for transformation
- Conduct extensive field work
- Closely collaborate with colleagues and partners at CDE, in Ecuador, Spain, Switzerland and beyond
- Present your research at scientific conferences
- Publish results in international peer-reviewed journals

YOUR PROFILE

- Master degree in social sciences: (Social) Geography, Economics, Sociology, Sustainability Science or related backgrounds
- Methodological skills in key techniques of the social sciences such as mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methods, survey design, ethnography

- Proficiency in software for data analysis and presentation (STATA, R, MAXQDA)
- Interest in conceptual questions of sustainability and transformations
- Experience in transdisciplinary methodologies and facilitation is a plus
- Commitment to develop excellent research skills through further training and supervise students at BA and MA levels
- Very good skills in Spanish and English (oral and written); knowledge of any other Swiss national language are a plus
- Record of previous field work, in particular in countries of the global South
- Willingness to engage in an interdisciplinary environment
- Ability to work independently, with an ambition to achieve team goals

WE OFFER

- A highly motivated, dynamic, and intercultural research environment, committed to inspire sustainable futures
- Team membership in the Sinergia frontier research project “Deliberative Diets”
- Close support by the project team and colleagues at CDE, extensive networking opportunities
- Collaboration with project partners from the Sustainability Assessment Group at FIBL (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture) and WSL (Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research)
- Participation in the International Graduate School North-South (www.igs-north-south.ch)
- Fully funded 4-year PhD position, including fieldwork budget
- Employment terms of the University of Bern, Switzerland, according to the standard levels of the Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF.

DETAILS

Place of duty: CDE, University Bern, Mittelstrasse 43, 3012 Bern; with extended presence and fieldwork in Ecuador and Spain to be negotiated

Start of employment: 1 February 2022, or as agreed

Duration: 4 years

Application documents: Please send your letter of motivation, CV with academic/professional certificates, and contact details of two references (no reference letters needed at this stage) together as a single PDF document to: personaladministration.cde@unibe.ch

Additionally, kindly send us a pdf of your master thesis in a separate PDF document.

Application deadline: 17 October 2021

For more information: We look forward to your application. For more information, please contact Dr. Sabin Bieri sabin.bieri@unibe.ch.

CDE values diversity and is committed to equal opportunities; applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates who meet the stated criteria.