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William
-----**1) 3RD EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER MEETING – STILL TIME TO SIGN UP**

The official deadline for abstracts for the BES-TEG meeting has now passed (31st Jan) but we still have **some spaces for speakers**. If you are still planning on coming but have not submitted an abstract yet then please do so as soon as possible, Alternatively, if you would like to change your presentation from a poster to a talk then please let me know.

Francis Brearley (F.Q.Brearley@mmu.ac.uk)**2) TROPICAL PLANT IDENTIFICATION COURSE 2009 – ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW**

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is organizing a two-week Tropical Plant Identification Course to run from 27 April to 8 May 2009.

The course will concentrate on approximately 60 of the most commonly encountered tropical plant families and comprises of short lectures complemented by extensive hands-on practical sessions using herbarium specimens to demonstrate the key characters for each family. Taught by botanists from Kew's Herbarium – all with an in-depth knowledge of the plants and habitats of the tropics – the course has been designed for conservation and environment professionals, and is also suitable for graduate students, ethnobotanists, ecologists and zoologists.

The course fee for non-Kew staff is £700 (£350 for students/NGOs), but this does not include accommodation, food etc. In certain circumstances the fee can be reduced or waived - please contact the organizers. Applications for a place on the course should be made using the form on the attached flier.

Further information and copies of this poster can be obtained from the course coordinators: Tim Utteridge (t.utteridge@kew.org) or Gemma Bramley (g.bramley@kew.org)

BES recognised event

APPLY FOR Student conference and meeting support grant

http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/articles/grants/attendmeetings/#student_support

2) TWO FUNDED PHD STUDNETSHIPS IN TROPICAL ECOLOGY – UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

a) The other half of the equation: global variation in tree mortality

University of Leeds, United Kingdom

Supervisor: [Oliver Phillips](#); Co-supervisors: Simon Lewis, Emanuel Gloor; Microsoft Research supervisor: [Drew Purves](#)

Future changes in the global forest carbon cycle could have major impacts on future climate. Whereas we now have a relatively advanced ability to model the input of carbon into forests, via tree growth, almost nothing is known about global variation in and/or the climate dependency of the outputs, which are dominated by tree mortality. By collating a unique, global forest inventory data set, and analysing this data by using computational statistics, this project will, for the first time, uncover the global-scale climate dependency of tree mortality, and produce a model of this dependency for use in predictive models of the forest carbon cycle.

Outcomes

The project will produce important outcomes of four different kinds. First, in developing and parameterizing forest models, the project will provide the information necessary to test contrasting hypotheses about the patterns, and causes, of rates of tree mortality at global scales. Such is the state of knowledge at present that tests of these hypotheses constitute important and novel scientific findings in their own right, lending themselves to being written up as exciting and high-profile scientific publications. Second, the project will produce one or more explicit models of tree mortality for use in analyses of the global carbon cycle and carbon budget, and in dynamic global vegetation models (DGVMs). Third, the project will produce data analysis and parameter estimation algorithms tailored to studying global variation in rates that are also subject to various other forms of local control (in this case, species identity, tree size, and perhaps others). These algorithms will be made available in a user-friendly form, and may therefore be taken up for use in future analyses of the global carbon cycle, or various other studies not anticipated here. Fourth, the project will provide the student with state-of-the-art training in data analysis and biogeochemistry, and experience of forest ecology, including in the field in the tropics. Scientists with this kind of interdisciplinary skill set are in short supply and will be increasingly in demand in the coming years and decades.

This is a prestigious fully-funded position, supported by the Microsoft Research PhD Scholarship Programme. It will draw largely on databases and expertise in tropical forest ecology developed by our research group, and will involve collaboration with leading researchers worldwide (see e.g., <http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/projects/rainfor/>)

For application details see <http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/applications.html>

b) Relationships among biodiversity, carbon storage, and productivity across the world's tropical forests.

This fully funded project is a NERC CASE award and will be conducted in collaboration with staff at the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC). Funding covers UK fees and an enhanced annual stipend of £14,290.

Application details are available on the School's website

<http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/apply.html>

Closing date for applications: 2nd March 2009

Tropical forests contain more species than any other biome, and are extraordinarily carbon-rich and productive so affecting the rate of human-induced climate change. It is likely that this role will become formally recognised within climate change policy, with implications for the future of forests themselves. Thus from both scientific and policy viewpoints, understanding how diversity

and function vary within tropical forests, and their relationship, is important and timely.

This project will tackle some of the most important outstanding scientific questions: (1) if the most carbon-dense and productive forests are also the most diverse, (2) whether high biodiversity boosts carbon storage and productivity, by maximising ecosystem resource-use efficiencies, or whether any relationship between the two is simply coincidental, (3) if the carbon *sink* in tropical forests is partially determined by diversity, and (4) whether increases in carbon stocks through time measured since 1980 coincide spatially with model predictions. We are developing a unique database making it possible to tackle these questions across the world's tropical forests (>300 plots in Amazonia, Africa, Asia, and Australia).

You will use data on biomass, growth, and wood density to estimate site productivity and tree diversity, and apply these estimates to determine how biomass and productivity vary with diversity (c.f. Phillips et al. 1994; Keeling and Phillips 2007). Relationships between diversity and productivity are complicated by two-way causality and by co-varying environmental variables; a range of statistical techniques will need to be applied to quantify and control for such factors. There may be opportunities for fieldwork to complement the large-scale analysis. The successful candidate will already have experienced or advanced statistical analysis (e.g., path analysis, multi-level modelling) -or be able and willing to pick up these skills quickly-, in ecological theory and techniques, and will be motivated to pursue a career in quantitative ecology or conservation policy.

You will work within the Ecology and Global Change group, joining a dynamic team researching on every tropical continent (see e.g. RAINFOR and AfriTRON websites). Collaboration with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre will ensure you are familiarised with the policy issues and will provide additional support up to £2K p/a.

Project-related questions to Professor Oliver Phillips (Chair, Tropical Ecology) and Dr Simon Lewis (Royal Society Research Fellow)
O.Phillips@leeds.ac.uk, S.I.lewis@leeds.ac.uk

Application details: <http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/applications.html>

Funding Notes

UK citizens (or EU citizens who have been resident in the UK for the last 3 years) can apply for one of our departmental NERC Quota Awards. UK and EU citizens may also be eligible for one of a number of UOL scholarships available. please see:
<http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/postgraduate/funding.html>

Project details: <http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/research/eco/projects.html>

4) RAINFOR AMAZON FOREST INVENTORY NETWORK

<http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/projects/rainfor>

“About RAINFOR

The Amazon Forest Inventory Network (Rede Amazônica de Inventários Florestais, Red Amazónica de Inventarios Forestales) is an international network that has been established to understand the biomass and dynamics of Amazonian forests. Since 2000 we have established a systematic framework for long-term monitoring of this region, which holds more biodiversity, water, and vegetation carbon, than any other region of the planet. RAINFOR has worked step-by-step, including partners across the nations of Amazon, taking account of the potentially strong modulating role of environmental variables like soil nutrition, and the need to help develop a new generation of Amazon ecologists.

RAINFOR was first established as part of CARBONSINK, the European contribution to the large-scale biosphere-atmosphere experiment in Amazonia (LBA). The European Union supported overall co-ordination 2000-2, and some fieldwork, as well as training in 2004-6 ("PanAmazonia"). The Max-Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry (Germany) also contributed to co-ordination and fieldwork (2002-4). The National Geographic Society (US) and the Royal Society (UK) have also supporting fieldwork (Peru 2001, 2003). More recently the U.K. Natural Environment Research Council helped expand our network and support similar research activities in Africa (AfriTRON), Asia, and Australia. Since December 2007 RAINFOR has been supported by the Andes and Amazon Initiative of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation."

5) RESEARCH: SIGHTING OF BROWN BEAR IN MANASALU CONSERVATION AREA OF NEPAL

We are working for Brown bear presence and absence survey in Nepal specially Manasalu Conservation Area (MCA) of Nepal. Our study conformed that there are Brown bears in MCA of Nepal.

Please visit our web for details:

<http://www.brtf.org.np/information/news/43>

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6) HIGHLIGHTS FROM: BES JOURNALS AND TEG MEMBERS

a) Functional Ecology, Volume 23, Issue 1, 2009.

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/121640880/issue>

Pages: 119-125

Force-velocity trade-off in Darwin's finch jaw function: a biomechanical basis for ecological speciation?

Anthony Herrel, Jeffrey Podos, Bieke Vanhooydonck, Andrew P. Hendry

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/121448198/abstract>

If I've missed anything or you want YOUR paper featured here just let me know...

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