HUMBOLDT-UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN

The Geography Department at Humboldt-University Berlin
seeks highly qualified and motivated candidates for a

PhD Position on Land-Use Impacts on Biodiversity in the Bolivian Chiquitania

One PhD position (TV-L HU E13, 67%) for 3.5 years.
Starting date: from 1st July 2023.

Reference number: DR/024/23

The successful applicant will study the **impacts of land-use change on birds and mammals in the South American Chiquitania and Gran Chaco**. These ecoregions are global hotspots of agricultural expansion, triggering rapid and widespread deforestation. Understanding how these changes impact biodiversity is important to identify effective conservation strategies. In this context, the successful candidate will assess how recent land-use change affects the habitats and populations of birds and mammals of conservation concern. To do so, the candidate will use existing wildlife data and collect new wildlife data (e.g., using camera trapping, bird point counts, or sound recorders). Using these data, the applicant will assess how individual species, and bird and mammal communities, as a whole, vary across different land uses, and how they respond to changes in land use. The candidate will join the research team working on the project- *SystemShift* (https://hu.berlin/SystemShift), funded by the *European Research Council* (ERC). *SystemShift* brings together an interdisciplinary group of researchers to develop and test new conservation approaches, integrating Land System Science and Conservation Science. The project focusses on tropical dry forests and savannas globally, with case studies in the Chiquitania and Gran Chaco. The candidate will work closely with local partners in academia and conservation organizations in Germany, Argentina, and Bolivia.

The candidate will join the Conservation Biogeography Lab (https://hu.berlin/biogeo) in the Geography Department. The group seeks to carry out cutting-edge research to understand where and why land use is changing, how these changes impact biodiversity, and which strategies can effectively balance conservation goals and land use. Our research approach brings together concepts and methodologies from geography, spatial ecology, social science, conservation planning, econometrics, and remote sensing. We collaborate intensively with researchers and research institutions worldwide, and we are active contributors to a range of international science networks such as *FutureEarth*'s Global Land Programme or different IUCN initiatives. We strive to collaborate closely with local conservation organizations and stakeholders. We do this in the hope of producing a scientific basis that can inform policy making, conservation planning, and action to help navigate land systems towards sustainable futures. The working language of the group is English.

We seek a candidate with an above-average MSc (or equivalent degree) in ecology, conservation, or related fields. We expect a passion for research and a strong interest in biodiversity conservation, land use and sustainability. A sound background in conservation science and wildlife ecology, expertise in biodiversity models (e.g., species distribution models, occupancy models), good

knowledge of spatial data analyses and statistics (using GIS and R), as well as Spanish language skills are required. We also expect excellent command of the English language, good communication skills, and readiness to work in an international research team. Desired skills include experience in field ecological methods, regional experience, knowledge of scripting languages (e.g., GDAL, Python) and experience in translating science to conservation practice.

We offer a position in an international, young, and dynamic team with an excellent scientific track record. Payment will be according to a PhD position (TV-L HU E13 67%), with an annual gross salary of about 36,000-39,000 EUR, depending on prior experience. Employment at HU Berlin offers a wide range of benefits, including health insurance. Funding for field work, skills training, and participation in scientific conferences is available. HU Berlin is one of Germany's top-ranking universities and hosts a nationally and internationally leading Geography Department, with research foci on Land Use Change, Climate Change, Sustainability Science, and Urban Studies. The department contributes to the *Integrated Research Institute for Transformations in Human-Environment Systems (IRI THESys)* and is closely linked to research institutions in the Berlin-Brandenburg area, including to the *Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW),* the *Leibniz Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries (IGB), the Museum of Natural History (MfN),* the *Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change (MCC),* and the *German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ)*. Berlin is Germany's largest city with an inspiring metropolitan flair, a vibrant cultural scene, large green spaces, and a family-friendly environment. We seek to increase the proportion of women in academia and specifically encourage qualified female scholars to apply. Likewise, non-German Citizens are specifically encouraged to apply. Applicants with disabilities will be given preferential consideration given equivalent qualification.

Applicants should include (1) a letter of motivation (max. 2 pages), (2) a full CV, (3) a writing sample (e.g., publication, part of a thesis), and (4) contact details for two references. Please send the application electronically in a single PDF file to Ms. Camille Dammann (camille.dammann@hu-berlin.de). Please provide the reference number to this position in the content line of your email.

Application deadline: 12 of April 2023

For further information please contact Prof. Tobias Kuemmerle (tobias.kuemmerle@hu-berlin.de) or Dr. Alfredo Romero Muñoz (alfredo.romero@hu-berlin.de)

Please note that the legally binding version of this advertisement is the German version, which can be found at: https://www.hu-berlin.de/de/service/arbeit/stellen