Open PhD position in remote sensing of genetically relevant forest traits (Ref: URPP-GCB-MES-18-02)

We invite applications for a PhD position in remote sensing of genetically relevant forest traits.

The University of Zurich (UZH) Research Priority Programme (URPP) on Global Change and Biodiversity (GCB) is an established interdisciplinary research program (http://www.gcb.uzh.ch). Biodiversity is both a response variable affected by global change drivers and a factor modifying ecosystem processes and services that are essential to human well-being. An improved capability to predict the consequences of changes in drivers will aid improved prediction of the state of the environment. The URPP GCB implements innovative avenues in this research domain by using a latitudinal gradient approach based on interactions, feedback and scale, to provide a more reliable and robust knowledge of global change processes.

Global change (namely land use change, climate change, invasions, exploitation, and pollution) influences biodiversity and vice versa. We are looking for a motivated candidate, capable of doing research at the disciplinary boundaries of geocology, genetics and remote sensing. We therefore invite applications for a PhD position in remote sensing of genetically relevant forest traits.

This project will link remotely sensed trait information of forests across a range of forested test sites (ranging from boreal over temperate to tropical) to phylogenies and genetic structure to infer partial taxonomies of regional communities. Remote sensing technologies to be used include imaging spectroscopy and laser scanning across a range of scales.

The successful applicant will be based in Zurich and embedded in a supervisory team including Michael Schaepman (http://www.gcb.uzh.ch/en/aboutus/people/schaepman.html), and Felix Morsdorf (http://www.gcb.uzh.ch/en/aboutus/people/morsdorf.html) You will work in the Department of Geography, which hosts several research groups working on a variety of topics assessing the key drivers of global change and biodiversity.

To apply, all applicants must have a completed master’s degree in environmental science, ecology, remote sensing or a closely related science field. Applicants must be able to work with statistical tools and scripting languages (i.e. Matlab, Python, R). Experience in doing lab work (e.g. HPLC, microsatellites) is an asset, but not required. A high standard of written and spoken English is mandatory. The position can start as soon as a suitable candidate is found. Salaries correspond to the UZH regulations of PhD salaries.

We are looking for a highly motivated, enthusiastic and independent person with a passion for science to join our team. We offer outstanding working conditions, a high quality of life in Zurich, and an excellent support environment.

Please send your application (including position reference URPP-GCB-MES-18-02) as one single PDF file (motivation letter, complete CV, and names of 2 references) to isabel.schoechli@uzh.ch. Selection of candidates will begin 1 April 2018. For further questions, please contact michael.schaepman@geo.uzh.ch or felix.morsdorf@geo.uzh.ch.