Postdoc: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services f/m

For 1.0 fte

Vacancy number: 1.2011.00222

Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
The Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences (FALW) offers a range of Bachelor and Master programmes. Research at the faculty focuses on the fields of the life sciences, health sciences, environmental sciences and earth sciences. World-class teaching and cutting-edge research activities go hand in hand. FALW works together with other faculties like medicine, exact sciences, economics, psychology and social sciences. The faculty’s research facilities can be categorized as excellent. The faculty’s international focus fosters cross-border collaboration, leading to substantially improved quality and greater impact of our research results.

The applicant will be based at the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM). IVM is an interdisciplinary research institute at VU University Amsterdam that sits within the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences (FALW). Since its creation in 1971, we have built up considerable experience in dealing with the complexities of environmental problems. The successful candidate will make, on behalf of IVM, a leading contribution to the recently funded ‘CONNECT’ project: Linking biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services: advancing insights in tradeoffs and synergies between biodiversity, ecosystem functioning and ecosystem service values for improved integrated biodiversity policy. This project is funded by the BioDiversa program (www.biodiversa.org) and is a collaboration between 5 European research groups led by IVM. Within IVM the project is embedded in the departments Spatial Analysis & Decision Support and Environmental Economics.

Tasks
Biodiversity policy is increasingly influenced by evidence about the role of biodiversity in the provision of ecosystem services. However, the current state of scientific knowledge and empirical evidence is inconclusive and does not provide a sufficiently robust basis to make definite statements about whether securing the provision of specific ecosystem services will also guarantee biodiversity conservation, and vice versa. Conserving land for biodiversity purposes is often beneficial for some ecosystem services but at the expense of other ecosystem services. This is especially the case in many European landscapes where human activities have since long shaped biodiversity and landscapes. There is a need to improve and integrate existing research methods from different natural and social science disciplines for the analysis of potential synergies, conflicts and associated tradeoffs in support of effective policy and management. The objectives of the ‘CONNECT’ project are twofold. First, to scientifically investigate the relationship between biodiversity, ecosystem service provision and socio-economic values in European landscapes. Secondly, to effectively translate and embed the scientific research findings in the existing biodiversity and ecosystem services policy community and public debate.

The successful candidate will take a leading role in coordinating the CONNECT consortium and actively contributing to the different workpackages linking ecosystem function to ecosystem service provision and its values. Both general concepts and application in a Dutch case study are foreseen.
Requirements
• A completed PhD degree in the field of spatial ecology, environmental economics, geography or environmental sciences;
• experience in complex projects with multiple partners; preferably some experience in project management;
• affinity with an interdisciplinary working environment;
• excellent research and publication skills, proven by a strong publication record;
• experience with quantitative methods and (spatial) models.

Further particulars
The appointment will be for a period of 3 years starting preferably end 2011/early 2012. You can find information about our excellent fringe benefits of employment at www.workingatvu.nl like,
• remuneration of 8,3% end-of-year bonus and 8% holiday allowance
• discounts on collective insurances (healthcare- and car insurance)
• ‘t Olifantje provides professional childcare on the VU campus.

Salary
The salary will be in accordance with university regulations for academic personnel, and depending on experience, range from a minimum of €2.977,- gross per month (salary scale 10.5) up to a maximum of €4.374,- gross per month (salary scale 11) based on a fulltime employment.

Information
For additional information and full project proposal please contact:
Prof. Dr. Peter Verburg
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E-mail: peter.verburg@ivm.vu.nl
website: www.ivm.vu.nl

Application
Applicants are requested to write a letter in which they describe their abilities and motivation, accompanied by a curriculum vitae and one or two references. Written applications should be sent before October 17th, 2011 to:
VU University Amsterdam
Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
Attn.: Dr. Y.K.M. Kops, Managing director
De Boelelaan 1085, 1081 HV Amsterdam, The Netherlands
It is also possible to apply by e-mail to: falw-vacatures@vu.nl.

Please mention the vacancy number in the e-mail header or at the top of your letter and on the envelope.

Any other correspondence in response to this advertisement will not be dealt with.