

PhD student for NWO project COMADAPT

Project Title

Community-wide micro-evolutionary adaptation to anthropogenic stress: context dependency and ecological implications (COMADAPT)

Project Description

The natural environment changes due to human influences. This causes stress in wild animals. Stress can have major consequences for the function that animals fulfill in the ecosystem. However, some animals can adapt quickly evolutionarily. When studying the ecological consequences of such adaptations, ecologists usually limit themselves to the study of a single species. However, the functioning of ecosystems depends on many species that influence each other's evolution and that differ in the extent to which they can adapt. What is new about our approach is that we will study the consequences of rapid evolution explicitly in a community context. The project COMADAPT is an NWO Enw-M1 project.

Job description

We here advertise a project for one PhD student. You will combine field work with carefully designed evolution experiments in outdoor mesocosms to quantify the degree to which contemporary evolution mediates the response of freshwater zooplankton populations to salinization, an increasingly important anthropogenic stressor. More specifically you will test the working hypothesis that rapid evolution contributes to a dampening of stressor effects on population performance and as such mediates the populations' impact on community composition and ecosystem functioning. You will explicitly adopt a community-wide perspective by simultaneously addressing the evolutionary response of multiple species in a community context and by exploring how this context affects micro-evolutionary trajectories. The work will involve field work, the set-up and monitoring of outdoor mesocosm experiments and the execution of a variety of laboratory and in-situ experimental assays. You will publish

your work in international peer reviewed journals and write and defend a PhD thesis.

Job requirements

You have a master's degree, preferentially with a background in evolutionary, aquatic or ecosystem ecology. You have strong experimental skills and you are familiar with the statistical analysis of data. Experience with mathematical modeling is a plus. You have a strong intrinsic motivation for doing curiosity-driven science. You are highly quality-oriented and able to work both independently as well as collaboratively in a team. You are proficient in English, including scientific writing.

What do we offer?

We offer the opportunity to develop a wide range of empirical and analytical skills on a topic that is at the frontier of ecological science. You will enjoy many opportunities to learn from discussion and collaborations with scientists from NIOO as well as from external research groups. You will work in a very professional environment with state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and you will be advised and supported by highly skilled and specialized technical staff. You will also have access to training courses offered by the doctoral school and through the KNAW, including a variety of topical courses on statistical analysis, modeling, scientific writing, career guidance etc.

Your workplace

You will work at the Department of Aquatic Ecology of the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW), located in Wageningen, the Netherlands, under the daily supervision of dr. Steven Declerck, and in collaboration with Prof. dr. Paul van den Brink (Wageningen University and Research). The Department of Aquatic Ecology at NIOO-KNAW is a dynamic, diverse and respectful group of enthusiastic aquatic ecologists, with ample opportunity to socially and scientifically interact.

For more information

Please contact: Dr. Steven Declerck, Senior Researcher,
s.declerck@nioo.knaw.nl, [+31 \(0\) 317 47 34 00](tel:+3120317473400).

Application details

In your application, please include a cover letter with your motivation and relevant experience, a CV, and 1-3 professional referees (name, address, telephone &

email). Deadline for applications is 15 November 2022. Applications received later than this date will not be considered.

About the NIOO

The Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW) is a top research institute of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). NIOO-KNAW focuses on fundamental and strategic research on individual organisms, populations, communities and ecosystems.

Terms of employment

Depending on education and experience, the salary amounts to a minimum of € 2.541,- and a maximum of €3.247,- gross per month for full time employment, scale P under the Collective Agreement for Dutch Universities (CAO Nederlandse Universiteiten), excluding 8% holiday allowance and 8.3% end-of-year bonus. There are excellent fringe benefits.

Diversity and Inclusion

Everybody is different. Fortunately, as this makes working together more delightful and often leads to better end results. The NIOO believes in a working environment in which everyone feels welcome and appreciated. A working environment in which attention is paid to individual quality and where development opportunities are paramount. Together we strive for an inclusive culture in which we embrace differences. We would like to get in touch with candidates who can contribute to this culture thanks to their background and experience.

We will not respond to any supplier enquiries based on this job advertisement.

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