



Reference Number 160/2019

**TECHNICAL CONSULTANT (M/F/D)  
FOR DATA DISCOVERY AND MOBILIZATION ON TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE  
AND BIODIVERSITY IN FORMER SOVIET UNION COUNTRIES**

SUPPORTING THE RESEARCH PROJECT: 'SHEDDING LIGHT ON BLIND SPOTS IN LAND-USE AND BIODIVERSITY CHANGE'

limited to 1 year  
50% of a full-time employment  
salary: Entgeltgruppe 9 TV-L

The German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig and Leipzig University offer the aforementioned position in Leipzig as soon as possible. The preferred starting date is August to October 2019 or shortly thereafter.

**Background**

Changes in agriculture are an important reason for changes in biodiversity and ecosystems. For a better understanding of these effects, and to advance sustainable development across the world, it is crucial to have detailed information on changes in both agriculture and biodiversity. Many former USSR countries are now experiencing rapid changes in agricultural land-use, with potentially strong impacts on biodiversity. Yet, in the global databases that Western scientists have put together to study these changes, this region is underrepresented. This can be explained by language barriers and differences in scientific and civil culture between scientists and practitioners from both regions. To help bridge this gap and to contribute to a better understanding of the effects of agricultural changes on biodiversity in former USSR countries, we offer an exciting position as technical consultant at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv), an interdisciplinary and collaborative working place. The project is supervised by Dr. Carsten Meyer (iDiv's [Macroecology & Society group](#)) in collaboration with Dr. Roel van Klink (iDiv's [synthesis centre](#)), Prof. Jonathan Chase (iDiv's [Biodiversity Synthesis group](#)), and Prof. Nico Eisenhauer (iDiv's [Experimental Interaction Ecology group](#)).

**Tasks**

- Your main duty will be the discovery and collation of data on biodiversity and land-use change in former Soviet Union countries, with a focus on regions that are currently underrepresented in global scientific databases.
- The data you will seek include datasets on biological communities (e.g., from ecological field studies on plants, birds, earthworms) as well as datasets on land-use and land management (e.g., census statistics on agriculture and forestry, spatial data on land tenure).
- After short introductory training, you will initially focus on "remote" data discovery via online searches of (mostly) Russian-language databases, scientific and grey literature (reports), and statistical yearbooks. You will harmonize and integrate these datasets into scientific databases to support ongoing research projects on the biodiversity impacts of land-use change.
- You will contribute to the development of a collaborative network by establishing contacts with data holders via email and/or telephone and soliciting written data requests (in Russian). You will furthermore plan and carry out an extended trip (2-3 months in early-2020) to several former Soviet Union countries (for example, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan), where you will work together with local contact points (for example, at university libraries, NGOs, and governmental agencies such as statistical offices or environmental/land administration agencies), to access offline databases and non-digital literature.
- You will be fully integrated into the research project. Occasionally, you will be asked to perform other project-related tasks (e.g. contributing to its administrative management).

**Requirements**

- You are a state certified technician or have an equivalent degree and experience.
- You have excellent Russian-language skills in written and spoken form. Strong English-language skills are also expected. Knowledge of other languages used in the study region will be an advantage, but is not a prerequisite. We seek candidates who can traverse intercultural boundaries and communicate in a highly professional manner with

stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. Personal cultural ties to a former-Soviet Union country, and/or prior experience working in the region will be an advantage.

- You are highly motivated to contribute to a large database compilation effort; this requires attention to detail, tenacity, and tolerance to frustration.
- You can work independently over extended time periods and take responsibility for the success of your project.
- You have excellent organizational and time-management skills.
- While this is not a prerequisite, any prior experience in working with a programming language (e.g. R), GIS (e.g. QGIS), or a database program (e.g. MySQL, PostgreSQL, MS Access) would be beneficial.
- Personal interest in relevant fields (e.g. Ecology, Agriculture, Forestry, Environmental Management, Land administration or similar) is advantageous.
- Your place of work is the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) in Leipzig. Note that this position entails extended travel to several former-Soviet Union countries. A valid passport from a country permitted to travel to these countries is required.

Kindly send your application with reference file number 160/2019 via our application portal under <https://apply.idiv.de>. Applications are accepted until 5 August 2019. We prefer applications via our application portal, hard copy applications can be sent to:

**German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research – iDiv  
Human Resources Department  
Deutscher Platz 5e, 04103 Leipzig**

**Applications should include:**

- brief cover letter describing motivation, professional interests & relevant experience
- tabular curriculum vitae, including a detailed account of relevant technical skills, language skills and prior experience
- one letter of recommendation from a past supervisor as contact details of two professional/ scientific references
- if applicable, digital copy of degree certificates

For queries on the application process, please contact our HR Department ([hr@idiv.de](mailto:hr@idiv.de)); for project-related questions, kindly contact Dr. Carsten Meyer ([carsten.meyer@idiv.de](mailto:carsten.meyer@idiv.de)). Severely disabled persons are encouraged to apply and will be given preference in the case of equal suitability. Applying via e-mail is questionable under data protection law. The sender assumes full responsibility.

iDiv is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse and inclusive community that collectively supports and implements our mission to do great science. We will welcome, recruit, develop, and advance talented staff from diverse genders and backgrounds.

**Privacy information**

*The personal data contained within your application documents or obtained during the interview will be processed exclusively for the purposes of the selection process for the position advertised. The legal basis for such data processing is Section 11(1) of the Saxon Data Protection Implementation Act (Sächs DSDG) in conjunction with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The controller for the application process within the meaning of the GDPR is the addressee of the application, as specified in the respective advertisement. When processing your application, your personal data will be passed on within Leipzig University to*

- members of the selection committee
- the human resources management teams
- the Commissioner for Equal Opportunities
- the Disability Officers and
- if necessary, the Staff Council

*as part of their organisational or statutory responsibilities.*

*Your personal data will be erased no later than six months after completion of the selection process. In accordance with the GDPR, subject to the relevant statutory requirements you have the following rights vis-à-vis the addressee of the application with regard to your personal data: right of access (Art. 15 GDPR); right to rectification of inaccurate personal data (Art. 16 GDPR); right to erasure (Art. 17 GDPR); right to restriction of processing (Art. 18 GDPR); and right to object to processing (Art. 21 GDPR). If you have any questions, please contact the Data Protection Officer at Leipzig University (office: Augustusplatz 10, 04109 Leipzig). You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection.*