

Leipzig, March 13, 2019

Leipzig University offers the following position:

**Student/ Research assistant**  
**Data support for project: 'Mapping global land-use changes'**  
**incl. option for BSc./MSc. thesis**  
(8-16 hrs/week, ideally for 1-2 years)  
Salary: depending on your personal profile, 9.87 €/h to 11.49 €/h

Land use, mainly for agriculture and forestry, is a central topic for *Global Change* and *Sustainability*. Detailed information on global land-use patterns is crucial for biodiversity, climate, food security, and many other research fields. Accurately mapping land-use patterns requires mobilizing data on the quantities of produced commodities and on the technologies used. To help develop cutting-edge land-use datasets in a highly interdisciplinary and collaborative environment, we offer a student/ research assistant position at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv). Splitting the position into two, each with 8 hrs/week, is an option. The project is supervised by Dr. Carsten Meyer (head of iDiv's [Macroecology & Society group](#)).

**Job description:**

- Your main duty will be the discovery, collation, and management of global land-use datasets, pertaining to the extent, intensity, and management type of the three dominant classes of human land-use (cropping, grazing, and forestry). These include census data published by national or subnational statistical offices, as well as point data on different land uses from ecological field studies or household surveys that are published in online databases and scientific literature.
- You will harmonize and integrate these datasets into a database to support a research project on mapping global land-use patterns and their recent historical changes.
- Occasionally, you will also be asked to perform other tasks related to this project (e.g. literature research).
- You will be fully integrated into the research activities of our working group. We also welcome students interested in carrying out their BSc/MSc thesis in our lab.

**Requirements / expected profile:**

- You are currently a BSc or MSc student in a related research discipline (e.g. geography, agricultural sciences, forestry, environmental resource management, ecology, etc.).
- We seek candidates who are highly motivated to contribute to a large database compilation effort. This requires attention to detail, tenacity, and some tolerance to frustration, as well as excellent organizational and time-management skills.
- As you may interact with data holders from diverse backgrounds, strong skills in communicating professionally are also required. Excellent English language skills are a prerequisite, and skills in other foreign languages would be an advantage.
- Prior experience in a database program (e.g. MySQL, PostgreSQL, MS Access), a programming language (e.g. R), and/or GIS (e.g. QGIS) would be beneficial, but is not a prerequisite.
- Your place of work is the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) in Leipzig. Part-time home office options may be arranged in exceptional cases for students from outside Leipzig.
- We are looking for students who are motivated to support this project for at least a year.

You will be employed as student/ research assistant via Leipzig University. We offer you the opportunity to carry out your BSc or MSc thesis project in our group (joint supervision with faculty from UL, MLU, UFZ, or the university where you are enrolled as a student is possible).

The preferred starting date is **June to August 2019** or shortly thereafter. **Applications are accepted until the position is filled.**

**Applications should include:**

- brief cover letter describing motivation, research interests & relevant experience
- tabular curriculum vitae, including a detailed account of relevant technical skills and prior experience
- if applicable, access to one of your recent projects relevant for this position (e.g. paper, GitHub repository)
- if applicable, digital copy of BA certificate (or equivalent)

Applications should be directed to Dr. Carsten Meyer ([carsten.meyer@idiv.de](mailto:carsten.meyer@idiv.de)) in a **single PDF file with reference "HIWI Global mapping" in the subject line**. Applying via email is questionable under data protection law. The sender assumes full responsibility. Severely disabled persons are encouraged to apply and will be given preference in the case of equal suitability.

We are 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.

The **German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv)** is a DFG National Research Centre located in Leipzig and jointly hosted by the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU), the Friedrich Schiller University Jena (FSU), the Leipzig University (UL) and the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ). Its central mission is to promote theory-driven synthesis and data-driven theory in the emerging field of Biodiversity Science. The concept of iDiv encompasses the detection of biodiversity, understanding its emergence, exploring its consequences for ecosystem functions and services, and developing strategies to safeguard biodiversity under global change.