

Post-Doctoral Opportunity in Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Rubenstein School of Environmental and Natural Resources, University of Vermont

Project Background

The Tropical Andes of Colombia are undergoing a series of social, political and ecological changes. Recent political events, resulting in a reconciliation between the government and paramilitaries, have opened the way for economic development and land-use change in areas formerly considered dangerous. As such, Colombia can expect economic and demographic shifts with potentially negative impacts on the ecological integrity of the region. The region is a zone of critical conservation importance that transcends eight Endemic Bird Areas yet we currently have a lack of understanding of how social and economic processes will play out across this landscape, and in turn, how this will affect the ecosystem services and biodiversity of the region.

Responsibilities

The post-doc will focus on the social and economic drivers of land use and land-use change with the aim of improving our understanding of this question:

What are the costs and benefits (including social costs and benefits) of landuse change and conservation in this landscape?

The post doc will scope and lead an assessment of ecosystem services, conduct field studies and lead surveys across multiple areas where bird endemism is high in this landscape. This project is part of a larger project looking at the impacts of land-use change on biodiversity across the entire Colombian Andes, including scientists from the University of Sheffield, UK, the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, and the Humboldt Institute. The selected post-doc will work in tandem with the biodiversity team to evaluate the magnitude of any biodiversity-economic tradeoffs. In doing so, this post-doc will help assess the impacts and best management of land use (e.g. farming) on species and the economic costs and benefits of several different development scenarios for the Tropical Andes of Colombia.

This is a two-year position based at the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Vermont. We seek a candidate with a proven track record of analysis and publication in the environmental economics arena, and with fieldwork experience designing and analyzing of socio-economic surveys. A proficiency in Spanish is desirable.

We offer an annual salary of \$49,000 plus benefits, and a discretionary fund to support research costs and travel. Postdocs will also have opportunities for professional development (e.g., teaching, media and communications training). We are looking to fill this position immediately.

Eligibility and application:

Candidates must have completed a PhD by their start date, and no earlier than 5 years before it. Competitive candidates will have a strong record of success in natural or social sciences, a demonstrated commitment to interdisciplinary work, a keen interest in connecting research to policy, and high potential to become global leaders in sustainability.

If interested, please send a cover letter, CV, and any relevant publications to bfisher@uvm.edu.

About the University of Vermont:

The only comprehensive university in the state and Vermont's land-grant institution, UVM enrolls 13,000 students, including 1,500 graduate students, and attracts more than \$138 million in research awards

annually. The campus overlooks Lake Champlain, between the Adirondack and Green Mountains, and is surrounded by the small, historical city of Burlington, perennially voted one of America's best places to live. The University of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Applications from women and people from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are encouraged.