



## Agroscope Job Advertisement

### Title

PhD position: Long term changes of Swiss grassland biodiversity – trends and causal factors

### Introduction

The research project “**Patterns and drivers of epochal changes in grassland biodiversity in Switzerland: The Square Foot Project**” explores the changes of Swiss grassland biodiversity across Switzerland, based on historical vegetation records dating back more than 100 years. We will quantify the trends in plant species diversity and evaluate the main drivers of change. The PhD project will be conducted in close cooperation with a second PhD student at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences ZHAW (Prof. J. Dengler).

### Tasks

- You will be involved in data collection on grassland plots across Switzerland: Localizing historical surveys, repeating vegetation plots, identifying reference grasslands, conducting vegetation surveys.
- You will record detailed information on soil and vegetation characteristics on the selected plots.
- You will participate in conceptualizing the approach for evaluating the drivers of biodiversity change.
- For selected locations, you will evaluate the historical changes of land use, agricultural management, climate, etc. as potential drivers of change.
- You will evaluate the relative importance of drivers of change for grassland biodiversity.
- You will perform statistical analysis and write scientific papers and thesis.
- You will be involved in the communication of the project findings to stakeholders.

### Requirements

- Master or equivalent University degree in Ecology, Biology, Environmental Science, Agricultural Sciences.
- Proven knowledge in botanical survey techniques and plant species identification.
- Interest in modelling, spatial analysis (GIS) and advanced statistical analysis
- Interest in stakeholder involvement and transdisciplinary communication
- Achievement-oriented, communicative personality with a capacity for teamwork.
- Fluent in German or French and in English.

### Information on Agroscope

Agroscope is the Swiss federal centre of excellence for research in the agriculture and food sector. Its researchers carry out their work at a number of sites in Switzerland. Headquartered in Bern-Liebefeld, Agroscope is attached to the Swiss Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research EAER.

The Agroscope Department for Agroecology and Environment at Zurich-Reckenholz conducts research for an environmental friendly and competitive agriculture. This PhD position will be affiliated to the research group Agricultural Landscapes and Biodiversity.

We offer a varied job in a dynamic work environment, as well as thorough training and a modern research infrastructure. Flexible working hours and good social benefits are among the perks of this position.

**Place of Work**  
**Salary Category**  
**Employment Level**

8046 Zurich-Affoltern  
According to the standards of the Swiss National Science Foundation  
100%

### Application Address

If you are interested, we look forward to receiving your online application (documents in a single PDF file) at [human.resources@agroscope.admin.ch](mailto:human.resources@agroscope.admin.ch) (ref.nr. 43627).

For further information, please feel free to contact Dr. Felix Herzog, research group leader, [felix.herzog@agroscope.admin.ch](mailto:felix.herzog@agroscope.admin.ch), +41 58 468 74 45. Please do not send applications to this e-mail address. Application deadline: 8 November 2020. Start date: 1 January 2021 or as per arrangement. The contract duration is for four years.