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Department of Botany and Biodiversity Research  
Biodiversity Dynamics & Conservation Group  
Rennweg 14  
A-1030 Vienna

Open PhD position in Tropical Agroecology & Conservation

## “Ecological intensification and multifunctionality of cacao agroforestry systems in Peruvian landscapes (ECO-CACAO)”

**Background:** Improving the conservation of biodiversity and associated ecosystem services while increasing sustainable food production requires the development of novel land-use approaches. Tropical cacao agroforestry systems can support biodiversity and benefit from pest control and pollination services depending on local and landscape management factors. However, cacao production in its range of origin is currently hampered by poor use of native cocoa diversity, frequent pest and disease outbreaks and lack of biodiversity-friendly management. This project aims to quantify the relative role of local management and landscape context on multiple ecosystem services (provided arthropods, birds and bats) such as pollination, biological pest control and crop productivity in Peru.

**Position announced:** The position announced will focus on the multifunctionality of Peruvian cocoa agroforestry systems from a multidisciplinary perspective. Studies of functional diversity and multitrophic interactions of birds, bats and arthropods will be linked to the economic and societal relevance of ecosystem services such as natural pest control and pollination for the sustainable development of cacao agroforestry systems.

**Qualifications:** The position requires a master degree in ecology or a related field. Core requirements for carrying out this work are (a) high aptitude, motivation and ideally prior experience with fieldwork in the tropics; (b) good previous knowledge and a high interest in multidisciplinary, statistical data analysis and scientific publishing; (c) very good Spanish and English skills (at least B2 level). Qualifications in population and landscape ecology, agroecology, socio-ecology, zoology and conservation science are required - with multiple and cross-disciplinary qualifications being a plus, as well as previous statistical knowledge and in peer-reviewed publications from these fields. In addition, experience in the field of science communication is desirable, as the results of this project are to be communicated to different stakeholders, decision- and policy makers.

**Offer:** The position is for three years, and, in accordance with the standards of the Austrian Science Fund, for 30 h / week ([approximately 30,000 € gross salary per year](#)). The remaining 10 hours are meant to be spent for work required to acquire the academic degree. The successful candidate will be part of the University of [Vienna's Doctoral School of Ecology and Evolution](#). All positions include health and other social insurance according to Austrian laws.

**Application:** **The application deadline is 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022.** If you are interested in this position, send a letter of motivation and a CV (incl. a list of your scientific presentations and publications, and contact details of two reference persons) to [bea.maas@univie.ac.at](mailto:bea.maas@univie.ac.at). Please, merge all submitted documents into **one single PDF file** starting with your family name and use the **subject “ECO-CACAO Application”** for your Email. We will contact applicants 1-2 weeks after the deadline to invite them for a first round of interviews between mid-February and mid-March 2022. The position shall be filled by 01<sup>st</sup> May 2022 at the latest.

**Further information:** The main working place is the Department of Botany and Biodiversity Research at the University of Vienna. Field work will mainly be conducted in Peru, in the area of the National Park Cordillera Azul. At the Department, the successful candidate will be part of the *Agroecology and Biodiversity Conservation working group* that is [closely linked to other working groups at the Department](#), as well as to international [collaborators in Peru](#), the University of [Göttingen](#) and the University of [Würzburg](#) who will support this project.

Please contact the project PI [Bea Maas](#) ([bea.maas@univie.ac.at](mailto:bea.maas@univie.ac.at)) if you need any further information.