

Researcher, FairFrontiers, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN)

1 position for Researcher in Ecological/Environmental science, to be located at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature in Kyoto, Japan

Project description

Fair Frontiers (Fair for Whom? Politics, Power and Precarity in Transformations of Tropical Forest-Agriculture Frontiers). Website : <http://www.fairfrontiers.sakura.ne.jp/home/>

Forest frontiers are rapidly being converted to the production of commodity agriculture throughout the tropics, leading to radical transformations in landscapes and livelihoods. Diverse land uses in frontiers – often mixed swidden cultivation systems and forest mosaics under some form of customary tenure – provide multiple ecosystem goods and services, and support social, cultural and livelihood needs. This diversity is being lost with increasingly high social and environmental costs.

In this intersection of economic growth ambitions, ecological changes and the politics and power dynamics underlying forest and land use decisions, we question: *whose interests drive transformations of forest-agriculture frontiers, who benefits and who is made precarious? What are the different ecosystem service-human wellbeing bundles associated with specific development trajectories? What are possible policy options that can deliver sustainable and equitable outcomes?* The research will be carried out in the Congo Basin (Cameroon, DR Congo), mainland Southeast Asia (Laos) and Malaysia Borneo (Sabah, Sarawak).

Job description

The candidate will carry out research activities under Module 2 (*Ecosystem service bundles in changing forest-agriculture frontiers*) of the FairFrontiers project, in close collaboration with country partners and project module leads. Specifically, the selected candidate will carry out the following tasks:

- 1) Analyses of environmental change associated with development and deforestation in forest frontiers across 5 case study regions. Drawing on open data from different sources, literatures, government statistics, and data collected by project members, the candidate will carry out qualitative and quantitative analyses on changes in ecosystems and ecosystem services in the study regions and support a comparative analysis across the study sites.
- 2) Field based research to evaluate biodiversity and ecosystem services in changing forest-agriculture frontiers. The research will be conducted in close collaboration with country partners. The data will be collected using a mixed methods approach and analysed in combination with social data.

The Researcher will be involved in methods training, supervision of field research assistants, and data management in the case study regions. The Researcher will also support project management and administrative tasks as required.

Qualifications

- 1) PhD or equivalent in ecology, environmental science or related disciplines. Familiarity with ecosystem services is desirable.

- 2) Ability to conduct original research in collaboration with other project members across different disciplines. Demonstrated experience of working in interdisciplinary research teams is desired.
- 3) Fieldwork experience in rural regions is required. Experience working in Central and Sub-Saharan Africa is preferred.
- 4) Familiarity with both qualitative and quantitative methods is an advantage.
- 5) Statistical skills, and knowledge of programming languages like R is required, knowledge of GIS and remote sensing is an advantage.
- 6) Scientific proficiency in English and French is required. Japanese language skills is an advantage.

Terms of employment: Fixed term contracts, renewable annually until 31st March, 2026. A preference will be given to candidates who can start immediately.

Salary and insurances: Daily wage 15,170 JPY, plus commuting and housing allowances. Successful candidate will be enrolled in the Health Insurance and the Employees' Pension Insurance, and the Employment Insurance in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

To apply, please submit the following documents in English:

- 1) Curriculum vitae
- 2) cover letter explaining your interest, motivation and expertise for the position (2 pages maximum)
- 3) list of publications, and copies of what you consider as your two most important papers/publications
- 4) at least two references and their contact information

Application Deadline: **9 June 2023** by 17:00 Japan time

Selection Process

A short list will be made by a selection committee on the basis of application materials. Only shortlisted candidates will be informed and invited for an interview.

E-mail your Application Materials to:

Prof. Grace Wong, project leader, FairFrontiers

E-mail* : [grace.wong\[a\]chikyu.ac.jp](mailto:grace.wong[a]chikyu.ac.jp) and [ayami.kan\[a\]chikyu.ac.jp](mailto:ayami.kan[a]chikyu.ac.jp)

([a] should be substituted by @ when in use)

* Please submit to both of the above two e-mail addresses.

Others :

* Travel cost (flight and per diem) will be provided for the relocation to Kyoto in accordance with the regulations of RIHN.

** RIHN seeks to prevent passive smoking by prohibiting smoking in all our facilities except in designated areas.