

Bi-national PhD Fellowship

SOCPacific project

Location: Montpellier, France & Bremen, Germany

We are inviting applicants for a three-year, full-time position as a PhD research fellow in the French-German project “*A Sea of Connections: Contextualizing Fisheries in the South Pacific Region*” (SOCPacific). Starting in May 2018, this interdisciplinary project (anthropology, geography and political ecology in dialogue with marine biology, ecology and geology) is based on synergies between the French National Research Institute for Development (IRD) and the Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Research (ZMT) and is co-led by Dr. Elodie Fache (IRD, GRED) and Dr. Annette Breckwoldt (ZMT & AWI).

This bi-national fellowship will allow the PhD candidate to engage in a joint doctoral program, at the University Paul Valéry Montpellier 3 in France (Ecole Doctorale 60 “Territoires, Temps, Sociétés, Développement”, <https://ed60.www.univ-montp3.fr/>) and at the University of Bremen in Germany (Faculty 8, Social Sciences, <http://www.fb8.uni-bremen.de/en/home/>).

Short background of the SOCPacific project:

The South Pacific region represents a unique context in which local communities and their political representatives are increasingly committed to integrated management of marine resources and spaces after a predicted dissolution of related community-based activities in the 1970s. This holds especially true for fisheries, the main field of activity in this oceanscape and a critical component of local livelihoods, national and regional economies, and global fish supplies. Fisheries remain one of the most important concerns on the national and regional policy agendas in the Pacific.

Recent studies have started to take into account the multi-faceted aspects of Pacific fisheries by articulating ecological and economic perspectives. Our project aims at broadening this endeavour by re-embedding coastal and oceanic fisheries in their wider context and by exploring the large web of socio-cultural, geopolitical and policy connections within which fishing practices occur.

For this, we will conduct an interdisciplinary and multi-level analysis across diverse scales and dimensions of fisheries, fisheries management and marine governance in the South Pacific region, including local perceptions and practices, global changes and drivers, and national and regional management frameworks and strategies. This analysis will focus on three study areas: New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Fiji where fieldwork periods will be conducted.

Three thematic areas will be at the core of the project’s cross-sectional investigations:

- 1) An environmental anthropology assessment of social values of places and resources in connection with offshore and inshore fisheries;
- 2) A socio-political ecology perspective on interwoven fisheries and conservation issues within marine protected areas (MPAs);
- 3) A policy analysis of the inclusion of fisheries in marine spatial planning (MSP).

Job description:

The PhD research fellow will dedicate 100% of her/his work time to the SOCPacific project, in close collaboration with its international research team.

Her/his dissertation will mainly focus on the above-mentioned second and third thematic areas (i.e., conservation and MSP). While the exact theme will be determined depending on the candidate’s

portfolio and qualifications, the dissertation shall specifically target aspects related to questions such as:

- How do South Pacific fisheries connect with biodiversity conservation norms and policies?
- Does the size of MPAs impact fisheries and is impacted by fisheries?
- What role does the degree of integration between conservation initiatives and multiple uses of marine resources play in defining the status of fisheries within MPAs?
- As spatial planning is expanding to open sea spaces and is becoming a standard in marine governance, how will fisheries adjust to other sectors of activities?
- What specific challenges do straddling species (such as tuna) raise with regard to MSP?
- To what extent do marine borders and sovereignty issues between states affect the inclusion of fisheries in MSP?

This unique research opportunity will include a shared residency of 18 months in Montpellier (IRD) and Bremen (ZMT) respectively, as well as a 12-month fieldwork period in Vanuatu, Fiji and/or New Caledonia. These field investigations will mainly draw on ethnographic methodologies, especially non-participant and participant observation and qualitative interviews in selected sites. Additional methods, specifically targeted towards the integration of stakeholders and experts, are also planned, such as mental maps for the exploration of conservation initiatives and issues, and participatory modelling for MSP analyses.

Embedded in the larger context of SOCPacific, and in close collaboration with other team members, the PhD research fellow will also contribute to a literature and policy review focused on fisheries and marine conservation in the South Pacific region. This will include the collection of regional data on small- and large-scale MPAs, border and geopolitical issues, tuna spatial ecology, fleets' strategies and efforts, and emerging MSP policies.

The PhD research fellow will also gain valuable project management experiences by assisting the principal investigators in tasks related to the general coordination of the project, such as:

- the organization of the meetings and the final conference;
- the storage and handling of the project's data;
- the production of mid-project and final reports; and
- the ongoing development of the project's website.

In addition to the completion of her/his dissertation, the PhD research fellow will participate in the three types of results dissemination planned in the project: paper presentations on international conferences; policy briefs; peer-reviewed articles and a special issue in a high-ranking peer-reviewed journal.

The academic and financial support for this PhD fellowship will be shared between the National Research Institute for Development (IRD) – through its research unit GRED (Governance, Risk, Environment, Development, <http://www.gred.ird.fr/>) – and the Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Research through its Social Science Department (ZMT, <http://www.leibniz-zmt.de/en/research/scientific-departments/social-sciences.html>). The PhD research fellow will therefore be jointly enrolled and supervised in France and Germany, a setup that will provide the candidate with critical insights into the everyday research activities at these two institutes.

Necessary qualifications and requirements:

Applicants will:

- hold a master's degree (or be about to earn one) in a social science discipline, preferably in geography or political ecology;
- have demonstrated skills in literature review as well as in data collection and analysis;
- have very good writing and communication skills in English;

- be ready to join and integrate in an inspiring international and interdisciplinary research environment;
- have the ability to work independently, while being an active member of a team and diligently participating in collective work;
- have a strong interest in working on/in the South Pacific region.

Furthermore, applicants will agree and be able to:

- be based in Montpellier, France, for the first six months of the dissertation (May 2018 - October 2018); then
- conduct a year of fieldwork in total in Vanuatu, Fiji and/or New Caledonia (to be defined), including work with local coastal communities in rural contexts (November 2018 - October 2019); and finally
- be based in Bremen, Germany, for the second part of the dissertation (November 2019 - April 2021).

Desirable qualifications and requirements:

French and/or German language(s) proficiency would be appreciated, but is not required.

Prior fieldwork experience in tropical countries will be preferred.

How to apply:

Please send your application by email to Annette Breckwoldt (annette.breckwoldt@awi.de), Elodie Fache (elodie.fache@ird.fr), and Estienne Rodary (estienne.rodary@ird.fr), including the following documents (combined in a single pdf file):

- a cover letter,
- a CV,
- a summary of your master's project(s)/dissertation(s),
- the names of two referees,
- letters of recommendation are also welcome.

Deadline: 12 March 2018

IRD and ZMT are equal opportunity employers and promote professional equality between women and men.

Other important dates:

Interviews of short-listed applicants (using Skype or another videoconference device): 21-28 March 2018

Final decision: 31 March 2018

Start of the contract: 1 May 2018

For further information:

Annette Breckwoldt (annette.breckwoldt@awi.de)

Elodie Fache (elodie.fache@ird.fr)

Estienne Rodary (estienne.rodary@ird.fr)