

Postdoctoral fellowship: blue carbon ecosystems in South Africa

Application deadline: 30 November 2024

Applications are open for a full-time, two-year postdoctoral position to be hosted by the von der Heyden lab at the School for Climate Studies and the Department of Botany and Zoology at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. The successful fellow will take on a leading role in projects that seek to build technical, theoretical and applied aspects around measuring carbon from vegetated coastal ecosystems in South Africa, with a specific focus on salt marshes. This project is in collaboration with Prof Janine Adams at Nelson Mandela University and Dr Janine Colling at Stellenbosch University and will help support national and international efforts to quantify carbon sequestered in coastal ecosystems. The postdoctoral stipend is funded through the DSI/BIOGRIP initiative (www.biogrip.ac.za).

Qualifications and experience: Preference will be given to applicants with a background in the quantification of carbon from either marine or terrestrial ecosystems, and we welcome applicants who have both field and analytical experience of (blue) carbon and associated data. Applicants with a background in botany, biochemistry, geology or soil science and with an interest in marine systems and coastal biodiversity are also welcome to apply.

Additional considerations:

- 1) a publication record reflecting the level of experience, with at minimum two papers (at least to 'in review') in international, ISI-accredited journals; the outputs need to demonstrate senior/lead authorship.
- 2) valid driver's license is a requirement due to the extensive field work along the South African coastline.
- 3) strong writing and communication skills, including an interest in science communication
- 4) motivated, independent, and willing to engage and mentor postgraduate students at several levels (ranging from Honours to PhD). Experience with student supervision is preferred, as is a demonstration of teaching at undergraduate level.
- 5) willingness and physically able to work in remote environments.

Responsibilities: We are looking for individuals that are able to work independently, but also have proven leadership skills. Applicants are required to be highly collaborative and be able to plan and lead field trips, as well as analyse data, writing and publication of peer-reviewed articles, presentations at national and international conferences, and science communication initiatives. The postdoctoral fellow will be required to take the lead in funding procurement and to explore additional networking opportunities. Mentorship and some teaching opportunities will be possible for the successful fellow depending on level of experience.

Duration and remuneration: This is a two-year position, starting in early 2025. A competitive salary of R300,000/annum is available. Please note that applicants need to have obtained their PhDs no later than 2021 to be eligible to apply.

Background: The postdoctoral fellow will be based at the von der Heyden Lab at Stellenbosch University, one of Africa's leading aquatic (marine, estuarine and freshwater) research groups specializing in the use of molecular tools to understand patterns and processes driving southern Africa's rich marine biodiversity. We are home to 'Project Seastore', a collaborative project working on the conservation and restoration of seagrass meadows in South Africa. We are a dynamic lab, with a strong emphasis on research excellence as well as student training and support. You can find out more about the von der Heyden lab and marine research at Stellenbosch University here:

www.vonderheydenlab.com, via FaceBook: www.facebook.com/vonderheydenlab or on Twitter: @vonderheydenlab.

The vdH lab is housed in the Department of Botany and Zoology at the University of Stellenbosch and is affiliated with the School of Climate Studies. This university is one of the top-ranked in the southern Hemisphere, with strong undergraduate and postgraduate training and research. Stellenbosch is a historical, safe and vibrant community surrounded by magnificent mountains, close to the sea. Find out more at www.sun.ac.za.

Queries and applications: Please direct all enquiries to Prof. Sophie von der Heyden (svdh@sun.ac.za). In order to apply, please submit (1) a detailed CV with all relevant experience including publications and conference attendance, (2) three contactable referees, (3) a letter of motivation, detailing research experience and why you would be a good fit for the group.

We are committed to supporting candidates based on excellence as well as equity.