The Earth and Life Institute at Université catholique de Louvain in Belgium seeks highly qualified and motivated candidates for

**One Postdoctoral researcher & one PhD student position, on land use change and international linkages in Southern African emerging agricultural frontiers**

These researchers will contribute to the European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grant project MIDLAND, starting in 2016 and led by Dr Patrick Meyfroidt. Within this project, **two positions are open**. Payments will be based on Belgian regulations, depending on prior research experience, and will include the benefits of the Belgian social security such as health insurance. **Starting date: Between June and September 2016.**

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<th>ERC Starting Grant MIDLAND - Developing middle-range theories linking land use displacement, intensification and transitions</th>
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| The project focuses on understanding the processes that condition and shape the emergence and development of agricultural frontiers, i.e., areas with abundant land and natural resources relative to labor or capital, and rapid land use change. The focus is on the dry forests and savannas region of Southern Africa and its linkages with distant places.

Building on place-based and cross-country empirical studies, and novel approaches to analyze linkages between distant social-ecological systems, we will analyze: (i) The strategic field of actors’ coalitions, institutions and distant linkages in emerging frontiers; (ii) Structural links between land use displacement through international trade, leakage, and local land use changes in importer and exporter countries; (iii) Pathways of agricultural expansion and intensification in tropical landscapes; and (iv) The conditions for transformative governance of land systems to sustain ecosystem services and livelihoods. |

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<th>Position 1: One Postdoctoral researcher, 2 years: Actors’ coalitions, institutions and distant linkages in emerging agricultural frontiers.</th>
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<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> To understand the role of different actors and institutions, local and distant, in creating and shaping the emergence of a land use frontier.</td>
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**Research description:** The research will investigate how distant and local actors form coalitions to create the necessary conditions for the development of the frontier, and for positioning themselves in the incoming competition for land and natural resources.

The research will draw on interviews and other data sources to understand logics of the actors in relation with the geographic, economic, political and cultural context of the field. The work will involve field surveys in the study region itself – i.e., Southern Africa, with a more specific focal area likely in Mozambique –, but also travels and contacts with the international decision centers of the main actors, public and private.

**Profile required:** A researcher holding a PhD degree, experienced in social sciences theories and methods of fields analyses, qualitative and quantitative research, institutional analysis and social networks, as well as land system science including geomatics, theories of agricultural and land use change, social-ecological systems, tropical land uses.

Experience in fieldwork in tropical/developing regions, as well as ability to interact with different people ranging from rural smallholders to high-level decision-makers will be crucial. Knowledge of Portuguese is a strong asset. The candidate should demonstrate an excellent command of the English language, good communication skills, and ability to work in a research team and to establish a local and international network.

*This position is for two years.*
Position 2: One PhD student, 2 years renewable for 2 years:
Linking land use displacement, leakage, and land changes

Objectives: To develop and test theories to explain the conditions under which land use displacement results from leakage due to land use and conservation policies versus other causes, how different pathways of forest transition result in more or less land use displacement or leakage, and when land use displacement results, in the sink region, in intensification versus expansion of land use.

Research description: The research will investigate structural relations between land use intensification, land use displacement and forest transitions, testing different economic, macro-sociological and land use theories related to trade and processes of land use change including the theory of environmental Kuznets curve, ecological modernization, pollution haven, ecological unequal exchange, comparative and absolute advantage, competitive advantage of nations, new economic geography, induced intensification and forest transition theories.

The research will draw on cross-country panel datasets of socio-economic, institutional, demographic, cultural, and high spatial resolution trade and land use variables.

Profile required: A graduate (MSc or equivalent) in geography, economics, land system science, environmental science, sociology, or equivalent, with skills in spatial econometrics, industrial ecology and social theories, in particular in macro-sociology and environmental sociology. Skills in geographic information science will be useful too.

The candidate should demonstrate an excellent command of the English language, good communication skills, ability to work in a research team and to establish a local and international network.

The candidate needs to fulfill the requirements to access the PhD program at Université catholique de Louvain.

This position is for two years, renewable for another two years.

The Earth and Life Institute is the flagship research center in the University of Louvain on sustainability and Earth System science. We offer to join a cutting edge team in land systems and social-ecological systems science, strongly connected to international research networks, and located in a vibrant university campus close to the capital of Europe.

To read more about the Institute's activities, please see: http://www.uclouvain.be/eli
To read more about the PhD program at Université catholique de Louvain, please see here:

These offers correspond to Euraxess advertisements 34077814 and 34079506:
http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/jobDetails/34077814
http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/jobDetails/34079506

Candidates should submit a cover letter detailing qualifications and research interests, CV, and names of two (for the PhD position) or three (for the postdoc position) referees to:
Dr Patrick Meyfroidt
patrick.meyfroidt@uclouvain.be

Application deadline: May 31, 2016.