

## **Deliberation for position as Associate Professor or Professor within plant ecology**

### **Background**

The Faculty of Environmental Sciences and Natural Resource Management (MINA) has a vacant permanent full-time position as Associate Professor or Professor within the field of plant ecology. MINA has four strong sections with a varied academic focus, comprising approximately 70 permanent scientific members, as well as about 100 PhD candidates and postdoctoral fellows. The new position will be in the Ecology and Natural Resource Management section, where the successful candidate will join an excellent group of 20 scientific staff members covering a broad specter of natural sciences such as plant ecology, wildlife ecology, insect ecology, fish and freshwater ecology, conservation biology, restoration ecology, tropical ecology, and nature-based tourism. The section has an active plant ecology group, working with various topics within climate and environmental change effects on plant community diversity, ecosystem processes, biotic interactions, and conservation biology. We wish to complement and strengthen the plant ecology group with a colleague with a research profile, or interest in developing research within restoration ecology.

MINA's vision is to be a key player in knowledge production and dissemination within ecology and nature management. MINA is NMBU's academic environment for knowledge about nature and the environment, sustainable use and management (the balance between use and protection) of natural resources. MINA is Norway's leading academic institution in field-based ecological research and teaching, and we are seeking to consolidate and expand our niche in field-based ecology. MINA prioritizes field- and laboratory teaching, emphasizing species and ecosystem knowledge. The student education programs in both BSc and MSc in ecology and natural resource management score high on the annual student national evaluation ("Studiebarometeret"), and students highlight the field-based teaching as a primary reason.

The new position will ensure both strong knowledge production and help maintaining the high quality of our studies in ecology and natural resource management in a lifelong learning perspective. The advertised position is described on this basis.

## **Research**

MINA seeks to hire a person with solid expertise in plant ecology, and a field-based research profile. Research should be process-oriented, focusing on responses to environmental conditions, biotic and abiotic interactions, or function in terrestrial ecosystems. Restoration of natural systems is becoming increasingly important in Norway and elsewhere, and background from restoration ecology is strongly desirable. When working with restoration ecology in Norway, knowledge about the Norwegian nature management authorities is also an advantage. The faculty currently offers one course focused on restoration ecology. This is a popular course among students, and many students are writing master's theses within this topic. MINA has one associate professor in zoology working specifically with restoration ecology. We wish to strengthen this aspect of the program with a plant ecologist. The appointed person will be responsible for supervising master's and PhD students within plant ecology, and, preferably, within restoration ecology. A solid background in statistical analyses and the use of R is preferred.

The potential for interdisciplinary collaboration with other research groups at MINA, both within and across sections, will be viewed positively. MINA wishes to increase its portfolio of externally funded projects and we are looking for a person who will strengthen the opportunities for collaboration between research and nature management authorities and increase access to external research funding. We are looking for an ambitious researcher who is motivated to build a research group with PhD students and postdocs.

## **Teaching**

Excellence in teaching and pedagogy is desired. The position will have responsibility, in collaboration with the rest of the plant ecology group at MINA, for developing and teaching a master's level course focused on plant ecology, plant diversity, and plant ecological methods, including field course activity. As such, a person with expertise in Norwegian or Scandinavian vegetation communities is preferred.

Other relevant teaching responsibilities will be within conservation and global change biology, in collaboration with other faculty members at MINA.

Based on the desired expertise discussed above, the new position will have the following tasks:

- Developing and teaching a master's course in plant ecology
- Teaching in conservation biology, global change biology and/or restoration topics
- Initiating, obtaining project funding, and conducting research within restoration ecology of plants and other aspects of plant ecology
- Publish scientific articles and communicate to the general public
- Supervising BSc, MSc and PhD students, and activities directed to "life-long learning"/continuing education
- Participate in the development of BSc and MSc programs
- Participate in administrative tasks

### **Academic qualification requirements**

The candidate must have a PhD degree in a relevant topic in ecology or biology and have an academic background that aligns with the proposed work tasks. The candidate's motivation for both teaching and research must be included in the application. Applicants will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Academic requirements:

- PhD in in plant ecology or biology
- A substantial list of high-quality publications in plant ecology and related fields
- Experience in conducting field-based research
- Oral and written communication skills in English

Experience and characteristics that will be emphasized, but not required:

- Background in restoration ecology
- Knowledge about Scandinavian vegetation
- Knowledge about the Norwegian conservation management system
- Experience in supervising MSc and PhD candidates
- Solid background in statistical methods and use of R
- Ability to initiate, obtain project funding and carry out research projects
- Experience from interdisciplinary research
- Oral and written communication skills in a Scandinavian language

The applicants will also be evaluated according to the applicant's vision for their future research and teaching at MINA, which should be described in the application.

**Personal characteristics/suitability**

It is required:

- Good work ethic and cooperation skills
- Ability to establish contacts and develop collaborative networks
- Ability to create a pleasant and productive atmosphere for students and colleagues.

Candidates shortlisted for the position will be required to give a trial lecture. Candidates without formal pedagogical competence are obliged to complete a course in university pedagogy within two years. If the candidate does not speak a Scandinavian language, they must be willing to learn Norwegian within two years after appointment. The administrative language at NMBU is Norwegian and we expect the successful candidate to be able to teach and contribute to/follow discussions with students and colleagues in Norwegian within two years.