**PhD position The Function of Subtidal Reefs for fish in the Wadden Sea (1.0 FTE)**

**Organization**

The Function of Subtidal Bivalve Reefs for fish in the Wadden Sea

The University of Groningen is a research university with a global outlook, deeply rooted in Groningen, City of Talent. Quality has been our top priority for over four hundred years, and with success: the University is currently in or around the top 100 on several influential ranking lists.

The Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) is the largest faculty within the University. We offer exclusive education and research in a wide range of science and engineering disciplines, from classical disciplines such as mathematics, astronomy and mechanical engineering, to interdisciplinary fields such as artificial intelligence, pharmacy and nanoscience. Our community has an open and informal character with students and staff from around the world. Do you want to become part of it?

Research environment:
Research will be performed in the Conservation Ecology group at the Groningen Institute for Evolutionary Life Sciences (GELIFES), which comprises several other strong, internationally recognized research groups in the field of marine biology and ecology.

This PhD position is embedded within the “Swimway” project, which is funded by Waddenfonds, Ministerie van LNV, Rijkswaterstaat and the three northern Dutch provinces. The research will be conducted in close collaboration with Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Wageningen Marine Research/Wageningen University, the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, the Waddenvereniging and Sportvisserij Nederland. In this project, 4 PhD students will closely collaborate and address different questions regarding Wadden Sea fish and nature management. Other collaborations will involve a broad range of stakeholders in the Wadden Sea area, including NGO’s and fisheries organizations.

**Job description**

The Function of Subtidal Reefs for fish in the Wadden Sea

The Wadden Sea is a UNESCO world heritage site, renowned for the most extensive intertidal mudflat system in the world. In the ‘Swimway’-project, we will empirically test potential conservation and restoration measures to restore and improve the fish community in the Dutch Wadden Sea. This sub-project aim to describe the value of sublittoral shellfish reefs for fish, and test how different management strategies influence this value. Underwater oyster-, blue mussel- and polychaete-reefs used to cover the sublittoral habitat in the Wadden Sea; providing shelter, recruitment substrates and a rich resource for a wide variety of fish. In this project you will test the importance of underwater habitats for fish, estimate whether the simplification of the underwater habitat have led to a poor nursery function for fish, and explore if we can design management strategies that improve such a function.

You will estimate the value of different underwater habitats for fish by developing acoustic monitoring together with scientists from AVI-Bremerhaven and Oldenburg University. To empirically test effects of reefs on the fish community you will collaborate with other PhDs on ongoing restoration experiments (constructing subtidal reefs) on different scales. You will then compare effects on the fish community by active restoration, with the effect of protecting naturally developing reefs. Your research will result in clear recommendations for nature managers regarding the management and development of underwater reefs as valuable habitats for fish.

**Qualifications**

• you hold a MSc degree (or will graduate before appointment date) in Biology, Marine Biology, Ecology or Environmental Science
• you have experience with fieldwork and designing field experiments
• you are a real team player, willing to work with a diverse group of researchers, technicians and project stakeholders
• you have excellent communication skills and are motivated to disseminate results to both scientific peers and a broad audience
• you are willing to consider your research in a conservation perspective
• you have strong quantitative skills
• you have an excellent command of the English language (oral and written)
• you have the ability to work independently in challenging environment
• you have a proactive, inquisitive, enthusiastic, creative and self-reliant mind-set
• you are strongly motivated to obtain a PhD degree

**Conditions of employment**

The University offers you in accordance with the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities:
• a salary of € 2,325 gross per month in the first year, up to a maximum of € 2,972 gross per month in the last year for a full-time position
• a full-time position (1.0 FTE)
• a holiday allowance of 8% gross annual income
• an 8.3% year-end bonus.

How to apply
Do you meet our qualification criteria? If yes, you may apply for this position until 8 January 2020 24:00 pm / Dutch local time by means of the application form (click on "Apply" below on the advertisement on the university website).

Interviews will take place on 24 January

Please add the relevant vacancy number as indicated above in your application and include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, and contact information of three academic referees.

The University of Groningen is an equal opportunity employer and we value diversity at our organization. We do not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status or disability status. Our selection procedure follows the guidelines of the NVP Recruitment Code and the European Code of Conduct for recruitment of researchers from the European Commission.

NVP: [https://nvp-plaza.nl/download/?id=7714](https://nvp-plaza.nl/download/?id=7714" \t "_blank)
European Commission's European Code of Conduct: [https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code](https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

Unsolicited marketing is not appreciated.

**Information**

For information you can contact:

* Britas Klemens Eriksson (b.d.h.k.eriksson@rug.nl)
* Anieke van Leeuwen (anieke.van.leeuwen@nioz.nl)
* Wouter van der Heij (vanderHeij@waddenvereniging.nl)

Please do not use the e-mail address(es) above for applications.