**PhD position: Essential fish habitat in the Wadden Sea**

**The department of Coastal Systems (COS) of the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (Royal NIOZ) is looking for a highly motivated PhD candidate to take part in our research on fish ecology. We are searching for a candidate with a background in biology, marine biology, ecology, environmental science, or a related subject. The research is part of a larger collaboration in Swimway, a project where a consortium of academic institutions and NGOs study the fish community in the Wadden Sea.**

**LOCATION: ROYAL NIOZ TEXEL (THE NETHERLANDS)**

**VACANCY ID:**

**CLOSING DATE:**

**THE project**

The Wadden Sea is a UNESCO world heritage site and renowned for being the most extensive intertidal mudflat system in the world. In the ‘Swimway’-project, we will study conservation and restoration measures to help restore the fish community in the Dutch Wadden Sea.

Habitat use by Wadden Sea fish depends on local (a)biotic circumstances. Preserving or restoring essential fish habitats is of major importance for enhancing population persistence and growth. This sub-project aims to develop generic spatially structured life-stage-based models for a quantitative description of fish' dependency to essential nursery habitats. As input for these models we will use existing knowledge and new data acquired through lab experiments on abiotic requirements for different species and their life-stages. We particularly want to find out what are the essential and optimal conditions for growth and survival in different life-stages. We will use hydrodynamic 3D models to visualize available habitat for focal fish species, according to the current situation and in future scenarios. Your research will result in clear recommendations for managers regarding the restoration, management, and development of Wadden Sea habitats now and under projected climate change. The theoretical and analytical work will be carried out at NIOZ, while lab experiments will be conducted at Wageningen Marine Research/Wageningen University.

**ORGANIZATION AND LARGER SWIMWAY PROJECT**

This PhD position is embedded within the “Swimway” project, which is funded by Waddenfonds, the Ministry of LNV, Rijkswaterstaat and the three northern Dutch provinces. The research will be conducted in close collaboration with Rijks Universiteit Groningen, Wageningen Marine Research/Wageningen University, the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, the Waddenvereniging and Sportvisserij Nederland. In this project, several 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 organisations.

**THE DEPARTMENT**

The Department of COS studies integral coastal ecosystems and their populations of fish, birds, and other marine animals in the North Sea and Wadden Sea as well as on a global scale. The department focuses on key physical, chemical and biological processes that determine the productivity and the ecological functioning of coastal areas. The coastal system is studied as a unity by considering the interrelations between the key compartments of the ecosystem (water, sediment, microalgae, macrozoobenthos, parasites, fish and birds).

**THE CANDIDATE**

We are looking for an excellent, highly motivated student (MSc), ready to develop and share new insights in a [multidisciplinary and international research environment](https://www.workingatnioz.com/research.html). A background in biology, marine biology, ecology, environmental science, or a related subject are expected. Candidates with experience in experimental work and/or modelling or with strong analytical and numerical computational skills will be preferred.

Due to the international character of the research group, advanced communication skills in the English language are expected and the ability and motivation to disseminate results to both scientific peers and a broad audience will be an advantage.

**CONDITIONS**

Employment of this position at Royal NIOZ is by [NWO](https://www.nwo.nl/en) (The Dutch Research Council). We offer a position for 4 years (fulltime) with a salary compliant to the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Research Institutes, a pension scheme, a holiday allowance of 8% of the gross annual salary, a year-end bonus, and flexible work arrangements.

You may expect attractive secondary employment conditions. We offer generous relocation expenses for employees coming from abroad and support with finding accommodation. The PhD defence will take place at the University of Groningen, where the candidate will have the opportunity to take part in the professional development courses of the Graduate School of Science and Engineering (GSSE)

**MORE INFORMATION**

Please apply using [this link](https://www.workingatnioz.com/our-jobs/phd-student-%E2%80%9Cfish-ecology%E2%80%9D.html).

For additional information about this vacancy, please contact **dr. Anieke van Leeuwen**(tenure-track scientist and supervisor).

For additional information about the procedure, please contact **Sigrid Moerbeek**(senior HR advisor).

Please visit the Department of Coastal Sciences [**here**](https://www.nioz.nl/en/about/cos)**.**

**Closing date for applications: 8 January 2020 24:00 pm. Please note: job interviews are foreseen for 30 January, on Texel.**