

1 Ph.D.-Position - Coral Reef Ecology -

The **Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Ecology (ZMT) GmbH** in Bremen is a member of the Leibniz Association, which is supported by the German Federal and State Governments. Through its research, Leibniz-ZMT GmbH contributes to developing science-based strategies for sustainable use of tropical coastal systems (www.zmt-bremen.de).

The ZMT has a vacancy for a Ph.D. student to start in February/March 2012 within the framework of the new project *Biogeochemical Interactions Of Coral Reef Ecosystem engineers (BIOCORE)*. Scleractinian corals and reef sponges fulfill key ecosystem engineering functions in tropical coral reef ecosystems, not only due to their high benthic coverage on the exposed (corals) and cryptic (sponges) reef framework compartments, but especially by substantially influencing reef biogeochemical element cycles. Corals continuously release large amounts of energy-rich organic matter into reef waters. However, our knowledge on the utilization of this energy source is largely limited to microbial degradation processes only. Reef sponges and their associated microbial community (i.e. sponge holobiont) take up large amounts of organic matter of still unknown origin and exhibit massive cell shedding, i.e. a constant release of particulate organic matter, suggesting the induction of a significant recycling “sponge loop” for bulk and coral-derived organic matter within the reef ecosystem. BIOCORE will conduct integrated laboratory and in-situ stable isotope pulse-chase experiments to follow, in a qualitative and quantitative way, the cycling of coral-derived organic matter within coral reef biogeochemical element cycles and in particular the suggested “sponge loop” induced by the sponge holobiont. The work for this project will be carried out at the Red Sea and in the ZMT laboratories. The appointment is for a three-year period. Salary will be according to the German TV-L 13 for a half-time position.

Requirements:

Applicants should hold a Master or Diploma degree in marine biology, ecology, geobiology or related fields and should ideally have experience with coral reef ecology and physiology.

Application:

To apply, please send a motivation letter, a complete CV with list of publications and skills, and names with email addresses and phone numbers of two referees in a single pdf-file to the address below. Only short-listed candidates will be notified.

Closing Date:

January 31, 2012 or until a qualified candidate is identified. The Leibniz-ZMT GmbH is an equal opportunity employer. Disabled persons with comparable qualification receive preferential status.

Contact:

Prof. Dr. Christian Wild
Leibniz Center for Tropical Marine Ecology GmbH
Fahrenheitstr. 6, 28359 Bremen, Germany
Tel: +49 (0) 421-23800-114, email: christian.wild@zmt-bremen.de