

SNH/SEPA PhD Studentship subject areas for 2013

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) are government bodies responsible to Scottish Government Ministers and, through them, to the Scottish Parliament. The task of SNH is to secure the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural heritage – the wildlife, habitats and landscapes which have evolved through the long partnership between people and nature. SEPA is Scotland's environmental regulator and adviser, and has a key role in controlling pollution, and working with others to protect and improve our environment.

SNH and SEPA manage a vigorous Research Programme. As part of developing our research work linked to operational priorities, we will fund up to three PhD studentships. In 2013, successful applications will be drawn from one or more of the following areas:

- a) **The Marine environment and renewables, and novel energy applications**, reflecting the growing importance of this sector and the many research questions being posed.
- b) **Research in support of the refreshed Scottish Biodiversity Strategy**, which is developing close ties between work on biodiversity and the health, education and business sectors.
- c) **Development of new ecological indicators of soil quality and their relationship to rural land use**, to support the implementation of the Scottish Soil Framework, and to address wider soil biodiversity issues.
- d) **Adaptive management of environmental conflicts**, to support the development of the Wildlife Management Framework, which includes tackling wildlife crime.
- e) **Helping nature adapt to climate change**, to develop work on the adaptation principles in SNHs action plan *Climate change and nature in Scotland (2012)*.
- f) **Diseases and pathogens of wild plants and animals**, covering responses, management and adaptation measures.
- g) **Peatland restoration and management**, notably quantifying carbon loss as a result of peat erosion in the uplands and links to land management, and to further develop our understanding of Scotland's GHG emissions.
- h) **Public attitudes to development and the environment**, to consider sustainable development and management approaches, with greenspace and rural applications welcomed.

Applications are sought from UK University/Research Institute staff wishing to secure such a studentship. The annual stipend for the studentships will be **£13,595** (running

for 3 years), with up to **£3,732** per year being provided for University fees. The closing date for applications is Wednesday **19 December 2012**. **Applications can only be accepted from staff**; prospective students interested in taking up one of the SNH/SEPA awards should discuss this with a potential supervisor in a university or research institute. An announcement on the successful applications will be made in early February 2013.

An application form is available by post from:

Paul Robertson, SNH, Great Glen House, Inverness IV3 8NW

or by email from Paul.Robertson@snh.gov.uk

If you have scientific enquiries about SNH studentships, contact:

Professor Des Thompson, Principal Adviser on Biodiversity at SNH, Silvan House, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT

Or email: Des.Thompson@snh.gov.uk