Assessing species' vulnerability to nutrient enrichment

Department: Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development
Research group: Environmental Sciences
Supervisor: Jerry van Dijk & Annegreet Veeken
Email address: J.vanDijk2@uu.nl, G.A.veeken@uu.nl
Telephone number: +31629135847

Project description

Natural and semi-natural grasslands are an important ecosystem type in the world, they span large areas and can be of high biodiversity. However, the species composition of grasslands is changing. Among the most notable drivers for this change in species composition is nutrient enrichment by fertilization and nitrogen deposition. In the project DiviN-P funded by Biodiversa+, we try to understand the vulnerability of grassland species and communities to nutrient deposition. We furthermore aim to understand the interaction between nutrient enrichment, climate change and invasive species. In this way, we plan to make recommendations for the management and protection of grasslands in Europe. In the larger DiviN-P project, we combine different approaches, including modelling, experimental manipulation, analysis of field data and elicitation of stakeholders.

In your role, you will assist with the lab analysis of biomass samples that are collected at field sites across Europe. You will furthermore assist with the data analysis of this dataset, which will include collection of data on traits, range size and nutrient niche. With this data, we would like to design vulnerability indices for the species in the dataset.

Job requirements

We are looking for an enthusiastic student with an interest in grassland ecology and conservation. Tasks will include lab and data analysis in R. Experience in this is not necessary, willingness to learn these skills is.