

## PhD position in Forest Ecology and Climate Change Adaptation

**Location:** Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, University of Liege, Belgium

**Duration:** 2 years (that can be extended up to 4 years)

**Start Date:** the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2025

The Forest Resources Management Unit of the University of Liege - Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech is seeking a highly motivated PhD student to join a research project focused on understanding the impact of climate change on forest ecosystems. This position offers the opportunity to contribute to cutting-edge research on the physiological and ecological processes driving tree growth and mortality under changing climatic conditions.

### Project Overview

Forests are vital for biodiversity and ecosystem services, yet their resilience is increasingly challenged by climate changes. This project investigates how the growth of different tree species responds to climatic events at annual and intra-annual scales. By studying species-specific growth patterns, environmental drivers, and physiological mechanisms, we aim to improve predictions of forest dynamics under future climate scenarios. The research involves monitoring the growth of 300 trees from 10 species at 30 sites in southern Belgium using automated dendrometers; quantifying environmental conditions, including soil moisture, air temperature, and relative humidity; conducting physiological measurements on a sub-sample of 90 trees to analyze hydraulic strategies, embolism sensitivity, and mortality risks; contributing to international collaborative efforts.

### Candidate Profile

- **Education:** Master's degree in Forest Ecology, Plant Biology, Environmental Science, or a related field.
- **Skills and Experience:**
  - Strong interest in forest ecology and climate change.
  - Experience with fieldwork, dendrometers, or physiological measurements is a plus.
  - Knowledge of statistical analysis and modeling (e.g., R, Python) is an advantage.
  - Good organizational and communication skills.
- **Field work:**
  - Availability to work in the field, sometimes outside normal working hours (e.g. early in the morning).
  - The ability to drive to field sites is a plus.
- **Languages:** Proficiency in English is required; knowledge of French is a plus but not mandatory.

### We Offer

- 2-year full-time PhD position that can be extended up to 4 years.
- A dynamic research environment at Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, University of Liege, Belgium.
- Flexible hours and telework
- Opportunities to collaborate with international research teams.
- Support for professional development and training.
- Lunch benefits, as well as sports, culture or commuting support.

### How to Apply

Candidates should submit the following documents in a single PDF file:

1. A cover letter detailing your motivation and suitability for the position.
2. A CV, including relevant coursework, research experience, and publications (if applicable).
3. Contact details for two academic or professional references.
4. Copies of academic transcripts and degrees.

**Deadline:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2025

**Submission:** Send your application to [gligot@uliege.be](mailto:gligot@uliege.be)

For more information about the position, feel free to contact [gligot@uliege.be](mailto:gligot@uliege.be).

Join us in advancing our understanding of how forests adapt to a changing climate and contribute to solutions for one of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time.

## Host institution

The faculty (Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech) is located 30 minutes from the heart of Europe (Brussels). Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech is hosted in an old abbey at the heart of the city of Gembloux. The institution's buildings and most of its residential accommodation apartments are very close to each other, ruling out the need for a car. The Faculty has approximately 1,250 students and 550 staff members. As soon as you arrive on campus, relationships can easily be formed, both with students and staff. The Faculty Sports Association (ASAG asbl) invites you to discover more than 25 different sports. The Faculty restaurant offers hot meals, cold dishes, sandwiches and other snacks.

The University of Liège is the largest French-speaking public university in Belgium. It brings together over 5,700 members of staff on 4 campuses, including 3,600 teachers and researchers active in all fields of human and social sciences, science and technology, and health sciences. It welcomes almost 27,000 students of 123 different nationalities in one of Europe's most multicultural and dynamic cities, less than an hour from Brussels and Cologne, two hours from Paris and three hours from London and Amsterdam. As a player in the social and environmental transition, ULiège supports students in their role as responsible citizens (training in sustainable development issues, Green Office, etc.) and promotes ethical, transdisciplinary and open research. Committed to its local community, it contributes to its socio-economic development and develops numerous partnerships, notably with the University Hospital of Liège. Global and united, it is a member of the European UNIC alliance and has one of the most extensive networks of collaborations in the world. ULiège offers attractive career paths in a high-quality working environment that promotes well-being, diversity and equal opportunities. Since 2011, it has been proud to bear the European Human resources strategy for researchers (HRS4R) label, reflecting its commitment to open, transparent and merit-based procedures. It also recognizes the quality and diversity of research in line with the recommendations of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA). ULiège promotes the internationalization of its academic staff and facilitates the hosting of international researchers through its EURAXESS center.

