



Map of Switzerland indicating the spread of ash dieback (map: Swiss Forest Protection, WSL)



Master's thesis opportunity

Ash tree dieback effects on instream wood

Context:

The ascomycete fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (synonym: *H. pseudoalbidus*, basionym: *Chalara fraxinea*) is a new invasive pathogen causing severe dieback of *Fraxinus spp* in Europe. In Switzerland, the disease was first reported in 2008 in the northwest, from where it expanded rapidly to other regions. The influence of this disease on instream wood supply, decay and storage is unknown. Instream wood (i.e., downed trees, trunks, rootwads and branches in rivers) is a key element of river ecosystems. Therefore, it is important to understand the effects of ash dieback on river ecosystems.

Goals:

The goal of this project is to better understand the role of ash dieback on instream wood dynamics.

Knowledge and skill required:

High motivation. Interest and motivation for fieldwork in riverine environments. Basic knowledge of GIS and remote sensing would be an advantage. Good knowledge of English.

Collaboration:

SNSF Project led by Prof. Virginia Ruiz-Villanueva (RivES Research Group <https://wp.unil.ch/rives/>)

Keywords: instream large wood, riparian vegetation, river ecosystem, Fraxinus dieback

Working place: Fieldwork in several Swiss rivers (to be defined) and work at IDYST, Geopolis, UNIL-Mouline, CH-1015 Lausanne, Switzerland

References:

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