PhD Position in Human Geography/Political Ecology

In the context of the research module on “Cultural Negotiations: Asymmetries in the Latin American TransArea” of the ProDoc Programme entitled “The Dynamics of Transcultural Management and Governance in Latin America”, the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Bern is offering a PhD position in Human Geography/Political Ecology on the following topic:

**Origins, perceptions, and asymmetries in transcultural negotiations of “vivir bien/buen vivir” as a new normative concept for linking state-based and ethnodevelopment initiatives in Bolivia and Ecuador**

The recent inclusion of indigenous ideas about “living well/vivir bien/buen vivir” into the new constitutions of Bolivia and Ecuador requires that the two states now operationalise these rather vague culturally shaped principles by means of new laws and regulations, and that they take them into account when planning and evaluating development projects.

In light of these challenges, this PhD study will investigate: 1) the origins and diffusion of the various concepts of “vivir bien/buen vivir” proposed by indigenous groups who are contesting the construction of government projects related to national roads and land reform (in Bolivia) and the new water policy (in Ecuador); 2) the degree to which local perceptions of “vivir bien/buen vivir” can change existing power asymmetries between governmental and community-based actors.

**Profile of applicants:** Priority will be given to qualified human, social, or cultural geographers. Qualified candidates with other disciplinary backgrounds will be considered as well. Having worked on related topics is an asset, but not required in order to enter the evaluation process. Good basic knowledge of Spanish and English is required for this PhD position.

**Supervision:** PD Dr. Stephan Rist of the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern, and Prof. Dr. Marc Hufty of The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva

**Application:** Send CV, list of publications, electronic version of Master thesis, and motivation letter to: Stephan.Rist@cde.unibe.ch

**Closing date:** 28 February 2013.

**Position starts:** 1 April 2013.

**Place of work:** CDE, University of Bern, Switzerland.

**Funding:** 3 years, in accordance with the standards of the Swiss National Science Foundation.