Project title
Responsible investor engagement on extinction prevention

Supervisors
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Research centre
CRAFiC

Project description
Our world is currently experiencing a sixth period of mass species extinction. Current extinction rates are estimated somewhere between a thousand and ten thousand times higher than the ‘natural’ level of extinction. Causes include industrial activity, increasing human population, global warming, climate change, habitat loss, pollution, use of pesticides, mono-agriculture, as well as criminal activities affecting wildlife, such as poaching. Multinational businesses in high environmental impact sectors have been changing the natural landscape for centuries, resulting in the loss of habitats and the collapse of biodiversity. Climate change is affecting migrations, breeding patterns as well as destroying natural communities such as sea life. Business has a responsibility to prevent the ongoing extinction crisis. As well as a moral obligation, there are financial risks associated with extinction. Corporate value, as well as institutional investor returns, are at risk from species extinction for a wide array of reasons. This PhD project aims to research the ways in which responsible investors are engaging with companies on species protection, for example on marine stewardship and pollinator decline. The student will adopt a grounded theory approach to interviewing an extensive sample of responsible investors to explore the current state of species engagement as well as to research ways of improving engagement processes.

PhD candidate profile
The PhD candidate should meet the following requirements:
- Be enthusiastic, well-organised and have good inter-personal skills.
- High motivation and a keen interest in the research area.
- A first degree that is equivalent to a UK classification of upper second class honours or above. In addition, a good masters level qualification of merit or above, with a minimum of 60 per cent in the dissertation, research project element or equivalent experience. We also accept an MBA from an accredited school where the candidate can demonstrate that a significant research element has been undertaken. For further information on entry requirements, please see: [http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/management/study/researchdegrees/howtoapply](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/management/study/researchdegrees/howtoapply)

Duration and start dates
Full or part time study for 3 or 6 years is available, and remote location study is also possible. We have two start dates a year for PhD students. Our preferred start date is 1 October, however we do recognise that not everyone will be able to commence studies at that time, so we also offer a second start date of 1 February. If you are unable to start in October or February, it may be also possible to start your PhD at a different time of the year.

Closing date for applications
Applications will be considered until a suitable candidate has been identified. For the 1 October start date, a full application must have been received by 15 July. For 1 February start date, a full application must have been received by 15 November.
How to apply
See http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/management/study/researchdegrees/howtoapply for full details of how to apply

For an informal discussion about this opportunity, please contact Jill Atkins at j.f.atkins@sheffield.ac.uk.