



MSc Thesis: Early-warning indicators for ecological tipping points in Namibian savannas

Description:

Overgrazing and drought can lead to so-called desertification tipping points in dryland rangelands, where a grass layer dominated by long-lived grasses suddenly ‘tips’ over to a degraded state characterized by short-lived species and bare soil. We still know surprisingly little how ecosystems approaching a tipping point look like, and whether there are early-warning indicators for a tipping point behavior. Within the NamTip project we strive to understand ecological processes around desertification tipping points in Namibia's savanna rangelands. The master's student will focus on plant-based early-warning indicators, such as changes in plant community composition, analyzing data collected along grazing gradients in 2021. The dataset may be complemented by field data from 2022.

Collaboration:

NamTip project,
University of Bonn
(link [here](#))

Requirements:

- Master studies in ecology (MEEC, botany, or similar)
- Interest in botany and dryland ecology
- English proficiency: C1

Tasks:

- Analyse existing dataset
- Calculate biodiversity indices & statistical analysis
- Optional: 6-7 weeks fieldwork (Feb 2022)

We offer:

- Participation in the NamTip project
- Work in an international research group
- Financial support for fieldwork

Interested? Contact:

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