



Blue-Green Biodiversity: a new research initiative of Eawag and WSL

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The ETH Board is strengthening the interdisciplinary biodiversity research of WSL and Eawag in order to find answers to the urgent social challenges of species loss as quickly as possible.

The ETH Board is providing 6.5 million Swiss Francs for the strategic research initiative "Blue-Green Biodiversity" of Eawag and WSL. Between 2020 and 2024, the initiative is intended to strengthen the internationally recognized environmental research of the two federal research institutes Eawag and WSL and align it on a common goal - interdisciplinary research into "blue-green biodiversity", i.e. the biological diversity in water and on land. The aim is to find solutions as quickly as possible to the pressing social challenges posed by the global loss of species.

At Eawag and WSL, there is a spirit of optimism. Eawag-Professor Florian Altermatt, co-leader of the research initiative, is convinced that "the initiative offers us an exciting opportunity to strengthen cooperation between our institutes". Both institutions have researchers with unique expertise and perspectives – in either aquatic or terrestrial biodiversity. There is also a wide variety of theoretical approaches and tools used. "By working together more closely, the research initiative offers us the opportunity to substantially contribute to mitigating the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services", says Florian Altermatt.

Moving forward rapidly together

Time is short. A core group has already started work. "We want to develop initial proposals for solutions quickly, if possible this year," says WSL-Professor Catherine Graham, who leads the research initiative together with Florian Altermatt. The first step is to identify research projects with which the researchers

can get started right away. The initial focus is therefore on existing data sets that can be evaluated or analysed with models. "But we also started to establish an international blue-green research community in order to provide solutions to pressing environmental challenges and to inspire a new generation of researchers well equipped to confront on-going threats to biological diversity", states Catherine Graham.

Related Links

Blue Green Biodiversity Research Initiative

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