

Dear Tropical Montane Cloud Forest Researchers,

As a part of an NSF-funded research coordination network on tropical montane science and ecology ("CloudNet", <http://cloudnet.agsci.colostate.edu>), we are organizing a global multi-site study to assess variation in plant functional traits across different tropical montane forests (TMFs), with an emphasis on including cloud-affected areas or "cloud forest". We are interested in examining trait variation across large geographic scales (i.e. Hawaii versus Peru) as well as within sites along environmental gradients (microclimate, land use, soil fertility etc.).

Such an effort will help evaluate the commonalities and diversity within particular TMFs while also serving to synthesize research across as many TMFs as possible.

Participants at a recent CloudNet meeting in Panama were polled to gauge our collective interest in particular traits. The idea was to choose a few key traits most important in explaining variation in plant ecological strategies across our sites and that are inexpensive and relatively easy to measure. With these objectives in mind, we have chosen to collect data on the following traits:

- 1) Specific Leaf Area
- 2) Leaf Nutrients (N/C/P)
- 3) Stomatal Density
- 4) Wood Density
- 5) Seed Dispersal Mode
- 6) Seed Mass
- 7) Cuticular Conductance

We have a detailed methods protocol for collecting the data for these six traits. If you are interested in joining this collaborative research effort, we ask that you measure at least the first three traits (and more if you can) on the five most dominant canopy tree species along environmental gradients in your study sites. All contributing researchers will be granted authorship on manuscripts that are produced as a result of this work.

We are interested in both collaborating with researchers who can collect data at their cloud forest sites in the next year as well as those who have already collected data on these traits.

We plan to have all data collected by September 1, 2016 and will submit two manuscripts in the Spring of 2017.

*** If you are interested in participating in this global study, please respond to **Sybil Gotsch** (sgotsch@fandm.edu) or **Jürgen Homeier** (jhomeie@gwdg.de)

We welcome all in this effort, so feel free to pass this request along to any researcher who would be interested in participating. Thanks for your time!