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lunz

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Two Ernst-Mach-Grants for WasserCluster researchers

The two hungarian researchers **Csaba Vad** and **Andràs Abonyi** received each an Ernst-Mach-Grant from the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD), which enables them to work five months at WasserCluster. Both scientists pursue the research of phytoplankton. **Csaba Vad** started already in September, **Andràs Abonyi** will work at WasserCluster from October on.



The project of Csaba Vad aims to quantify the effects of chrysophyte algae, a dominant group of the phytoplankton in oligotrophic alpine lakes, on aquatic secondary production. He will therefore study their dietary effects on some common zooplankters of Lake Lunz. During the stay, he will perform laboratory feeding experiments to quantify species-specific responses to chrysophytes and explore underlying mechanisms (e.g. toxicity). Additionally, he aims to determine the lipid composition of chrysophyte species used in the feeding experiments. These data will inform us about the nutritional quality of chrysophytes.

The main objective of Andràs Abonyis project is to consider some general ecological theories in connection with biodiversity and ecosystem functioning of phytoplankton. General ecology states that more diverse communities ensure better functioning (BEF), while for phytoplankton, preliminary analysis suggests that production is maximised under the dominance of few species. The relationship has been stressed only based on species richness, and so it is planned to involve specific approaches in our analysis like functional traits (e.g. size or form of algae) and functional groups (characteristic groups of phytoplankton taxa). The subject concerns timely scientific questions like the role of global climate change, its impact on primary production, diversity of phytoplankton communities, and ecosystem functioning.

