

## Developing a ‘translational palaeoecology’ for practical conservation

### Participant Information Sheet

#### **Introduction**

As part of my PhD, I am conducting a collaborative research study on how palaeoecological research can have greater impact on practical ecosystem conservation and restoration. You are invited to take part in this study which will be conducted as an online workshop held in early 2024. The aim is for the workshop discussion to contribute to a co-authored manuscript. To help you decide, the following text will explain why this research is being done and what your participation will involve.

This workshop aims to develop a **“translational palaeoecology”** that will **support palaeoecological impact on ecosystem conservation**. Translational palaeoecology will aim to be a **collaborative and practice-focused** branch of palaeoecology that **facilitates research impact in supporting ecosystem conservation and restoration**. This research project will aim to define the scope and key concepts of translational palaeoecology.

Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully before deciding whether to take part, and discuss it with others if you wish. If you have any questions or would like more information, please do get in touch using the contact details at the end of the information sheet. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

#### **Who will conduct the research?**

Jessica Gauld: PhD student in the Geography Department, School of Environment, Education and Development, The University of Manchester. Jessica is leading on this research project within the framework of her PhD at The University of Manchester, which is funded by the university’s President’s Doctoral Scholarship Award.

This PhD is supervised by Dr William Fletcher and Dr Emma Shuttleworth.

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

Key points:

- Define “translational palaeoecology”, including scope and key concepts.
- Discuss how “translational palaeoecology” research may be conducted, with a focus on key phases of the research process from research design to result integration.
- Facilitate discussion and new connections between academia and practice and allow sharing of best practice and collaborative experience.

The literature indicates a growing interest in the value and applicability of palaeoecological research in supporting practical ecosystem conservation. However, though a fledgling number of research projects have successfully begun to bridge the widely-acknowledged science-practice gap, it may be argued that palaeoecology is not realising its full potential in supporting practical conservation and management. Now is the right time to define the conceptual framework for a translational branch of

palaeoecology that will connect discovery with utilisation and facilitate palaeoecological research impact on practical environmental management and conservation.

The purpose of this research project is to define the scope and key concepts of translational palaeoecology through a workshop that captures the perspectives of researchers and practitioners. This will be achieved through a structured discussion and transparent dialogue that is guided by key phases of the research process, including research design, data collection, and result integration into practical conservation action. The workshop will bring together researchers and practitioners to facilitate new connections and discussions, and allow participants to share best practice, project successes, and approaches to collaborative working. The intended output of the workshop is a team-authored paper that will introduce and define translational palaeoecology and its key concepts and considerations as will be established in the workshop.

### **Am I suitable to take part?**

A range of participants are being chosen who will be able to contribute different perspectives on palaeoecological research, collaborative and practice-focused research, and/or environmental conservation practice.

### **Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

The findings of the research will be published in a team-authored paper, with participants automatically listed as a co-author unless they specify otherwise. Participants will be asked post-workshop if they wish to opt out of being listed as a co-author. Participants who do consent to being listed as a co-author will have the option to engage in the follow-up writing as a fully contributing co-author, with order of authors determined by level of contribution.

### **What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

Participants will take place in 1 x online workshop hosted on Zoom (approximately 2 hours in duration). Proposed timeframe for all activity is between January – February 2024, dependent on participant availability.

### **Will I be compensated for taking part?**

No compensation will be offered.

### **What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you would like to, get in touch with Jessica using the contact details at the end of this form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. This does not affect your data protection rights. If you decide not to take part you do not need to do anything further.

## **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

### **What information will you collect about me?**

With respect to the online workshop and Zoom recording, no information that can be classed as “personal identifiable information” (i.e., name, address, contact details, date of birth, ethnicity, tissue samples) will be collected during this research project.

### **Under what legal basis are you collecting it?**

We are collecting and storing this personal identifiable information in accordance with data protection law which protects your rights. These state that we must have a legal basis (specific reason) for collecting your data. For this study, the specific reason is that it is ‘a public interest task’ and ‘a process necessary for research purposes’.

### **What are my rights in relation to the information that you will collect about me?**

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings.

If you would like to know more about your different rights or the way we use your personal information to ensure we follow the law, please consult our [Privacy Notice for Research](#).

### **Will my participation in the study be confidential and my personal identifiable information be protected?**

In accordance with data protection law, The University of Manchester is the Data Controller for this project. This means that we are responsible for making sure your personal information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used. All researchers are trained with this in mind, and your data will be looked after in the following way:

The study team will store your identifying information (name and contact details) securely and separately from your study data. Your data will be marked with an ID number and not your name. The key for linking your ID number to your identity will be accessible only to the research team. Once all of the data has been analysed, we will destroy the key, anonymising your data. Your consent form (including your name and signature) will be retained separately for 5 years after the end of the study in a locked filing cabinet on University premises. We will also ask for your permission to keep your contact details on file and contact you about future studies that you might be interested in.

The workshop will be conducted on Zoom and the workshop discussion will be recorded using Zoom recording software and scribes. Participants may also be asked to write collective notes of their discussions. The purpose of this is to ensure that we have an accurate record of the workshop discussion. This may mean that your personal data is transferred to a country outside of the European Economic Area, some of which have not yet been determined by the United Kingdom to have an adequate level of data protection. Appropriate legal mechanisms to ensure these transfers are compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation are in place. The recordings will be removed from the above third party platform and stored on University of Manchester managed file storage as soon as possible following the completion of data collection.

The recording will include both your voice (audio) and your face (video). If you prefer, you can disable your camera so that only your voice is recorded. We will use the recording of our conversation to make a transcript and once we have checked that the transcript is correct, the recording will be deleted. We will remove any information from the transcript that might identify you.

In accordance with the University of Manchester's Research Privacy notice and with your consent, we would like to be able to share your anonymised data with other University of Manchester researchers who are doing studies similar to ours.

At the end of the project we would like to deposit a fully anonymised dataset in an open data repository where it will be permanently stored. We will use Figshare at the University of Manchester Library. Researchers at other institutions and others can access the anonymised data directly from the repository and use it for further research or to check our analysis and results.

Please also note that individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities may need to look at the data collected from this study to make sure the project is being carried out as planned. This may involve looking at identifiable data. All individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant.

### **Will the outcomes be published?**

Findings will be published in a peer-reviewed journal. Additionally, it is likely that findings will also be presented at conferences.

### **What if I have a complaint?**

#### **Contact details for complaints**

If you have a complaint that you wish to direct to members of the research team, please contact:

**Will Fletcher:** [will.fletcher@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:will.fletcher@manchester.ac.uk)

**Emma Shuttleworth:** [emma.shuttleworth@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:emma.shuttleworth@manchester.ac.uk)

**If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact:**

The Research Ethics Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: [research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk) or by telephoning 0161 306 8089.

If you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email [dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk) or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office about complaints relating to your personal identifiable information](#) Tel 0303 123 1113

### **What do I do now?**

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part then please contact the researcher(s):

**Jessica Gauld:** [jessica.gauld@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:jessica.gauld@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)

If you wish to take part, please inform Jessica

