The Environmental Science and Policy Lab at the Appalachian Laboratory of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) is seeking a motivated Ph.D. student interested in investigating nitrogen (N) cycles in coupled human and natural systems and informing N management along the food supply chain. This position is funded by a research project recently awarded by National Science Foundation (NSF), titled “CAREER: Sustainable Nitrogen Management across Spatial and System Scales” (https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=2047165&HistoricalAwards=false). The student will be advised by Professor Xin Zhang, the PI of the project. The student will have the opportunity to 1) quantify key nitrogen flows in the agro-food system at various spatial scales; and/or 2) work with a stakeholder advisory group to co-develop indicators and models to assist decision-making in N management along the food supply chain in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Through this transdisciplinary and transnational project, the student will have ample opportunities to work with a range of stakeholders (e.g., policy makers, NGOs, farmers, agricultural business) and international experts. More information about the lab: https://research.al.umces.edu/xzhang/

Qualifications: Students with strong quantitative backgrounds and interests in stakeholder engagement and policy applications are particularly encouraged to apply. The successful candidate should be proficient in at least one programming language.

Start Date: Flexible. The review of applications will begin March 15, 2021 and continue until a qualified candidate is found.

Location: The UMCES Appalachian Laboratory (AL-UMCES), Frostburg, MD. Frostburg is a small college town with a low cost of living and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities. Nearby amenities include numerous state forests and wildlife areas, scenic Appalachian Mountains, and Frostburg State University.

Description: The assistantship will include tuition coverage, benefits, and a 12-month annual stipend of over $26,000. Three years of support are available through the NSF research assistantship, with additional support available through AL-UMCES institutional funds and fellowships.

Program: The student will matriculate through the Marine, Estuarine, and Environmental Sciences Program (MEES; https://www.mees.umd.edu/admissions#How-to-apply), a University of Maryland multi-campus joint degree program, and will reside at the Appalachian Laboratory in Frostburg for the duration of the project.

In addition to the MEES application, interested candidates should also send an email to Xin Zhang (xin.zhang@umces.edu) containing following documents as a single PDF: (1) a statement of interest, (2) a CV, (3) contact information (names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses) for three references, and (4) copy of academic transcripts (optional). Please indicate in your subject line “[NSF-SUSN position]”. Informal inquiries are also welcome.

Information about AL and UMCES can be found at: http://www.al.umces.edu/. UMCES is an affirmative action, EOE. Individuals with disabilities, veterans, women and minorities are encouraged to apply.