

1999 Hans Sigrist Stipend

In 1999 my project entitled «Influence of Land-Use Changes on the Climate of a Swiss Region» received the support from the Hans Sigrist Foundation. For me this was an exciting opportunity to get a research project started, that was addressing a relevant question in climatology and global change research, that has not been addressed in detail by the main-stream research community in our research field.

My project addressed the influence of local changes in the landscape of the three-lakes region in Switzerland, the so-called «Juragewässerkorrekationen», on local and regional climates. Thanks to the support received by the Hans Sigrist Foundation, my project was later also endorsed by the international LUCC (Land Use and Land Cover Change) project, which in turn allowed me to succeed in getting a Ph.D. student, Nicolas Schneider, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation to carry out the detailed computer modeling work on the Parallel Computing Linux Cluster of the University of Bern.

My project has received a surprisingly wide attention in the Swiss media due to its national context, and Nicolas Schneider's enthusiastic engagement in compu-



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ter modeling and help in making the results understandable to the general public. Since the lay person's daily live is related to the lowest 2 meters of the atmosphere in a surrounding of, say, typically less than 50 km around his living place, my project also provided a link between science and the general public that is otherwise much more difficult to establish.

The support from the Hans Sigrist Foundation has given me excellent opportunities to establish myself as a scientist, and still take my responsibility for my family with two boys, who were 3 and 4 years old when I received my scholarship. The generous offer that allowed me to work 80% and then extend the duration of my scholarship by the remaining 20% was a real privilege that I found essential for my career.

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