



Laudatio for the Award Ceremony of the Prix Schläfli Geosciences 2020 of the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT) for Dr Fabian Rey

The jury of the Prix Schläfli 2020 in Geosciences of the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT), consisting of Dr Charles Fierz (SLF Davos), Dr This Rutishauser (kontextlabor.ch), and Dr Ulrich Krieger (ETH Zürich) has evaluated six high quality applications and proposed to award the prize to Dr Fabian Rey for his publication entitled 'Causes and mechanisms of synchronous succession trajectories in primeval Central European mixed *Fagus sylvatica* forests'. The board of the Platform Geosciences then unanimously endorsed the decision of the jury and awarded the Prix Schläfli 2020 in Geosciences to Dr Fabian Rey.

The study shows how mixed beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) forests may spread driven by a changing climate and also clearly differentiates between anthropogenic and natural effects. While giving answers to present day questions with regards to climate change impact on our current and future environment, the study is based on palaeoecological data series of laminated sediments from two small lowland Swiss lakes dating back 6500 – 4200 years before our time with an unprecedented time resolution of 11 years. The publication is thus an excellent example of how to use and bring a well established method to perfection in order to address topical issues related to the present and future evolution of our environment under a changing climate.

One particular strength of Dr Rey's publication is the well written story that keeps the reader attentive from the introduction to the conclusions. Therefore the main messages of the study get very well across to an audience of non specialists. This is a sign of the awardee's maturity in communicating his results to a wide and interested scientific readership. In short, warmest congratulation from the jury to Dr Fabian Rey for this outstanding contribution to palaeoecology.

Dr Fabian Rey obtained his MSc in climate sciences from the University of Bern and was awarded his PhD degree in palaeoecology by the University of Bern where he was affiliated with the Institute of Plant Sciences (IPS) and the Oeschger Centre for Climate Change Research (OCCR). His thesis advisors were Prof. Dr Willy Tinner, Prof. Dr Albert Hafner, and Dr Adrian Gilli. Dr Fabian Rey is now Laboratory Manager of the Geoecology Research Group, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Basel.

Dr Charles Fierz, president of the jury of the Prix Schläfli 2020.

Award Ceremony, Bern, 6 November 2020