

10th SPRING Competition 6 month Report

The SPRING award has allowed me to radiocarbon date six nascent peatlands in the Rob Roy valley head, South Island, New Zealand. All dates have come back from the laboratory (University of Ottawa) and show that these peatlands have initiated in recent centuries following glacier retreat after the Little Ice Age. The next stages in this research are i) to undertake plant macrofossil analysis on the samples to find out more about the main peat-forming species (this will be completed by Dr Mariusz Galka, University of Lodz, Poland); and ii) to carry out ²¹⁰Pb dating of the samples to refine when the first peat initiation occurred (this will be led by Dr Tom Roland, University of Exeter, UK). Once we have these further data we will be able to understand the processes and patterns of peat formation following glacial retreat in New Zealand.