**Molecular ecology of sand-dwelling dinoflagellates in northwest Ireland**

Applications are invited for **one** Research M.Sc. fellowship in the School of Science, Department of Environmental Science, Institute of Technology Sligo to commence September 2012.

The research will focus on a group of microorganisms (dinoflagellates) which inhabit the sands of beaches and can colonise surfaces of seaweeds and rocks in the intertidal zone of coastlines. Given the current refinement of the methodologies used for studying these organisms, investigation of their suitability as biological indicators of good environmental status is only recent. Further, it has been recognised that a substantial fraction of these organisms produce biotoxins, which can render seafood products unsafe for human consumption and often lead to substantial economic fallout to the aquaculture industry.
This project aims to investigate the diversity and community composition patterns in a range of northwest Irish beaches of different environmental quality status. These aspects will be addressed using a combination of field- and laboratory-based experiments, environmental molecular microbiology techniques and biotoxin analysis via biological, biochemical or analytical techniques.

Funding, available for three years, includes a stipend of €5,500 per annum plus institutional registration fees, with possibility of conversion to Ph.D. after two years. Motivated candidates, with a strong interest in environmental microbiology, must have or be expecting to gain a B.Sc. in Environmental Science or related discipline at either a 1$^{st}$ or 2:1 level. Informal enquiries and full application (*curriculum vitae*, cover letter and contact details of two academic referees) to be sent by 27$^{th}$ July to:

Dr. Nicolas Touzet,
School of Science,
Department of Environmental Science,
Institute of Technology Sligo,
Sligo, Ireland.

E-mail: touzet.nicolas@itsligo.ie