



Costa Rica 2026 - Botanical-Ecological Excursion

8. - 26. February, 2026 (Botanische-ökologische Exkursion, LVNr 831310, 6 ECTS)

Costa Rica is a small tropical country with a high commitment to conservation. Consequently, many ecosystems are well protected, the forest area is expanding, and ecotourism plays a major role in the economy. Located on the land-bridge between North and South America, Costa Rica has exceptional biodiversity and ecosystems from tropical reefs to alpine areas and from tropical rainforests to dry forests.

The **main topics** will be ecology and regeneration of tropical forests, diversity of plants and animals, conservation, and land use. The first part of the excursion will be at the Tropical Field Station La Gamba, located close to a well-conserved tropical rainforest but also close to regenerating forests, agriculture (cattle, crops, oil palms) and a small village. After an introduction to the local forest and land use systems, students will work on individual projects in small groups. The second part of the excursion will lead us through various other ecosystems (alpine zone, mountain cloud forest, tropical dry forest, coastal ecosystem, volcanoes) in Costa Rica.

Costs (incl. local transport, accommodation and most meals but excluding travel to and from San José) is ca. 2460 € Euro (without possible support from BOKU).

For the **preparation** to the excursion, participating in the course 831.132 "Seminar to the botanical-ecological excursion" is required.

The excursion will be announced on boku-online, students interested in participating should also **contact** peter.hietz@boku.ac.at with a short explanation of their motivation. The excursion is limited to 25 participants (students + teachers). If there are too many applications, a final selection will be made by October.

Approximate **schedule**:

08.02.	Arrival in San José
09.02.	Transport across Cerro de La Muerte to La Gamba
10.-11.02.	Introduction to the rainforest ecosystem, plants and animals
12.- 17.2.	Group work
18.02.	Mangroves
19.02.	Hacienda Baru, coastal forest
20.-21.2.	NP Rincon de la Vieja, volcanoes, hot springs
22.-24.2.	Monteverde, cloud forests
25.2.	Return to San José

