

INAUGURAL PROFESSORIAL ADDRESS

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 2020

AUT



**PROFESSOR
SEBASTIAN
LEUZINGER**

The role of plants in a changing environment

**TUESDAY
10 NOVEMBER**

4.30–5.30pm

AUT City Campus
WA Conference Centre
55 Wellesley Street East
Auckland 1010

To register for this event,
please [CLICK HERE](#)

Refreshments will be served
after the address.

Plants don't make a lot of noise, we often take them for granted. But plants are not only at the origin of all higher life on earth, they also fulfill a myriad of other tasks from influencing our climate to stabilising our soils, and making our planet look so wonderfully unique. However, human action has fundamentally changed the conditions under which plants grow—the CO² in the air is soon to be doubled, nitrogen inputs have gone up manifold, temperatures have increased and droughts have become more frequent. And those changes happened well within the lifespan of a single tree. In this Inaugural Professorial address, Sebastian will take us on a tour of the fascinating world of plants, viewed from the perspective of a single stoma (a leaf pore), a tiny organ that is pivotal for the

functioning of our planet, yet few of us will ever have heard of it. He will present examples of his research spanning from the physiology of a single leaf to the global carbon cycle. Sebastian grew up in Switzerland, where his dad, a dedicated ornithologist, introduced him early on to the wonders of nature. He studied biology at the University of Basel and at James Cook University in Townsville, Australia, where his first degree was in coral reef ecology. After working as a science teacher on a superyacht, he eventually returned to Switzerland to take up an MSc in statistics and a PhD in plant ecology under Christian Körner, who remains his mentor and collaborator to this day. Sebastian is on the science steering committee of iLEAPS, a global research project on plant-atmosphere interactions, and an editor of 'Frontiers in Functional Plant Ecology'.

