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*Date of Publication: December 2014*  
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In September 2014 the IAVS held its annual symposium, hosted for the first time in Australia. We met in Perth in the southwestern part of the country offering one of the most species-rich and spectacular floras of the world. With about 275 participants, the meeting was well-attended and the three pre- and post-symposium excursions gave the possibility to explore different regions of the continent. We thank Laco Mucina and his team from the Local Organizing Committee for their excellent work and for giving us the opportunity to visit Australia with its fascinating plant and animal life. A number of photographs in this Bulletin were taken throughout the symposium and excursions and will hopefully give you a good impression of what we had the pleasure to experience!

We are now looking forward to the forthcoming symposia. First, in 2015 we will hold the meeting in Brno, Czech Republic, for which you will find an invitation from the organizers in this issue. The 2016 meeting will take place in Pirenópolis in Brazil, and, looking further into the future, the IAVS Council at the annual meeting in Perth decided to accept the invitation from our Italian colleagues to host the meeting in Palermo for the annual meeting in Perth decided to accept the invitation from our Italian colleagues to host the meeting in Palermo.

One of the absolute highlights of the symposium in Perth was the celebration of the 100th birthday of David Goodall who was one of the participants of the meeting (see photograph)!

A laudatio of David and his remarkable career is found in this Bulletin. With deep regrets we received the message about the death of Mike Dale, and the present issue includes a remembrance of the life and work of this outstanding quantitative vegetation scientist.

With best wishes for a peaceful Christmas time and a happy new year, Martin Diekmann

Participants of the 2014 IAVS symposium in Perth in front of the lecture hall

An Invitation: IAVS 2015

58th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science: Understanding broad-scale vegetation patterns

It is my great honour and pleasure to invite you to the 58th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)!

The Czech Republic, located in the heart of Europe, has a long tradition of vegetation research. Names such as Karel Domin, Karel Klimů, Vitalina Kučerová, Emil Hadáč, Slavomír Hejny, Jaroslav Moravec and Robert Neuhäusl are well known for their landmark contributions to understanding vegetation patterns and processes in Europe and beyond. Czech vegetation scientists have also played an important role in shaping the IAVS as a scientific society and IAVS symposia in particular. From 1953 to 1981, the IAVS Annual Symposia were held in the German cities of Stolzenau and Rinteln, hosted by Professor Reinhold Tüxen. After he passed away in 1980, a new series of symposia began, held at a different venue every year. The first symposium of this new series was held in Prague in 1982, organised by Robert Neuhäusl and his colleagues from the Institute of Botany in Průhonice. The symposium topic was Chorological Phenomena in Plant Communities. The transformation process initiated in Prague resulted in the development of a new face of the IAVS as a truly global community of vegetation scientists focusing on a broad range of topics from community ecology theory to the application of vegetation science in nature management, conservation and restoration. This fundamental change was clearly evident at the second IAVS Symposium hosted in the Czech Republic, which was organised by Jan Leplí and Tomáš Herben at the University of South Bohemia, České Budějovice, in 1997.

Now the main annual event of the IAVS is returning to the Czech Republic for the third time, and I am pleased to host it in Brno, the home town of Johann Gregor Mendel, the founder of genetics, Georg Joseph Camellus, a 17th century botanist who gave his name to Camellia, and Leos Janáček, a famous Czech composer. Today, Brno is the second largest city in the Czech Republic and the administrative, cultural and scientific centre of the South Moravian Region. Masaryk University in Brno, the second largest university in the country, has a strong tradition of teaching and research in natural sciences, including vegetation science as a highly successful field.

The Czech Republic is a small country. In spite of this, or perhaps because of this, many Czech ecologists are interested in broad-scale patterns and processes. Broad-scale phenomena were the focus of the Prague Symposium in 1982, and we are returning to this topic 33 years later to explore how our knowledge has improved over the last third of a century. Nevertheless, we will be looking primarily to the future: the Brno Symposium should provide us with new scientific ideas, opportunities to make new friends and establish exciting new collaboration in vegetation studies.

In addition to scientific sessions, we also want to use the IAVS Symposium to make you familiar with the vegetation, flora, nature and culture of the Czech Republic and Central Europe. We have prepared several excursions in the eastern part of the Czech Republic, a region on the boundary between the biomes of the European temperate deciduous forest and the Eastern European forest-steppe, and a post-symposium excursion to the Western Carpathians in Slovakia, where our Slovak colleagues will guide us across an altitudinal gradient from the Pannonian steppes in the foothills to the mountain summits. I am convinced you will enjoy both the scientific sessions and the field trips we have prepared!

Welcome to the Czech Republic and welcome to Brno, the world capital of vegetation science in 2015.

Milan Chytry


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IAVS Council Meeting
Perth, Australia
Time: Tuesday, September 2, 2014, 17:30-20:20
Location: Botany Building

Participants

Members present: Martin Diekmann (President), Susan Wiser (Secretary), Alicia Acosta (Vice President), Javier Lóridi (Vice President), Robert Peet (Vice President), Valerio Pillar (Vice President), Sándor Bartha, Alessandro Chiarucci, Miriam Chytrý, Guillaume Decocq, Ulrich Deil, Jürgen Dengler, Kazue Fujisawa, Pavel Krestov, Ladislav Mucina, Yukiko Nakamura, Meelis Pärn, Janos Podani, Otto Wildi, J. Bastow Wilson, Martin Zobel = 21 votes

Proxy votes: Michael Barbour (Susan Wiser), Renée Bekker (Martin Diekmann), Erwin Bergmeier (Ulrich Deil), Elgene Boox (Kazue Fujiwara), Helge Brueheide (Martin Diekmann), Sara Cousins (Alicia Acosta), Deborah Goldberg (Martin Zobel), Jessica Gurevitch (Susan Wiser), Tomáš Hermy (Martin Chytrý), Martin Hermy (Guillaume Decocq), Jan Lepš (Milan Chytrý), Michael Palmer (Valerio Pillar), MarcelRejmanek (Robert Peet), John Rodwell (Ulrich Deil), Joop Schaminée (Susan Wiser) Angelika Schwabe-Krautsch (Ulrich Deil), Nina Smits (Martin Diekmann) = 17 votes

Absent: Sandra Diaz, Klaus Dierssen

Guests: John Hay (Proposed IAVS 2016 venue: Brasilia, Brasil), Monika Janišová (EDGG), Alessandra Fidelis (Global Sponsorship Committee), Michael Lee (IAVS Administrators and proposed Young Scientist section), Stefan Bradham (FASB), Peter Minchin (North American Section).

Welcome

President Diekmann brought the meeting to order at 17:33.

1 Announcements of proxy votes (Wiser)

Proxy representation of 17 members was reported and approved (see above). Total voting members represented: 21 + 17 = 38.

2 Bylaws of Working Groups / Regional Sections

(a) Bylaws of the North American Section (Minchin)

The Governing Board submitted a proposal to approve the proposed bylaws of the North American Section (see Attachment 1). Minchin was present to answer questions. No questions were asked. Approved unanimously, 0 abstentions.

Bylaws of the North American Section passed.

(b) Bylaws of the Young Scientist Section (Michael Lee)

Michael Lee provided background on the petition as to why there is interest in having a young scientists section (see Attachment 2). This section will be open to all IAVS members. The goals of the section will be to promote coordination and communication among young scientists, in part in an effort to promote collaboration among more junior vegetation scientists.

The discussion that followed raised the following issues:

- Is this a response to a feeling that IAVS is currently falling short in meeting the needs of younger scientists? (Mucina) [No, this is not the case (Lee)]
- IAVS is already doing a lot to help young scientists so this section is not really needed (Mucina). Lee agreed that IAVS is doing a lot for young scientists while suggesting that in addition in a more formal section may help collaboration and facilitate connection especially with young scientists new to IAVS.
- An upper age limit would violate IAVS bylaws. Also the group may attract both early career scientists who are not ‘young’ and senior scientists who wish to join in a mentorship role. Terms like ‘novel’ and ‘early career’ were discussed, but the group feels the current name is simple; the bylaws make it clear that there is no exclusivity. Similar discussions have gone on in other professional societies that subsequently opted for the term ‘young’ owing to simplicity (Podani, Peet, Lóridi, Chytrý, Lee, Diekmann, Mucina)

Wilson moved that Council vote on the petition. 37 votes in favour, 1 vote against, 0 abstentions.

Michael Lee introduced the bylaws of the section (see Attachment 3).

Peet moved that the bylaws be accepted conditional upon addition of one sentence to clarify that membership is open to promote collaboration among more junior vegetation scientists. The bylaws were then approved unanimously, 0 abstentions.

2.5 Finances

(a) Report for 2013 - review (Diekmann)

Diekmann presented the 2013 IAVS Financial report (see Attachment 4). He then described a series of issues discovered this year through discussions with the Dutch Tax Authority regarding the legal liabilities of IAVS. Because IAVS has accumulated funds in recent years (2010–2013), IAVS did not meet Dutch requirements for being fully tax exempt in those years. The payment of back taxes was made in the 2014 year, so does not affect the 2013 financial statement. In future, the way to avoid having tax liabilities is to have a balance between expenditures and income on an annual basis.

To reduce our tax liability for the 2013 year, in November 2013 the Governing Board approved the administrator salary payment for the period October 2013 through June 2014. Peet asked for clarification: the IAVS statutes (Statute 11) stipulate that IAVS must be non-profit, have we lost our tax-exempt status?

Diekmann said we have not lost our status as tax exempt, but we will have to pay taxes when there is a large imbalance between income and expenses.

Wilson asked for more detailed accounting of Wiley Blackwell income. Peet (Publications Officer) replied that he will distribute this on request. Anyone who receives it must respect that it is a confidential document and that needs to stay within the Association.

Dengler asked what happens when a working group does not spend all the funds allocated to it in a given year. Diekmann replied some expenses are incurred in the year promised, but may not actually be paid until the following year. Peet suggested IAVS needs to improve the bookkeeping so that the IAVS financial report can distinguish ‘promised’ monies from actual expenditure.

(b) Auditing of the financial report for 2013 (Wildi)

Otto Wildi and Ulrich Deil audited the financial report and stated that the bookkeeping is very well done with both bookkeeping and expenditures matching the goals of the society. There was sufficient clarity around the higher expenditure made to meet the tax problem. The auditors felt that these expenditures matched the goals of the society, but that a downside of the current system is that the President is very involved in the process, which is not the best way to have things set up. They also pointed out that they are not professional bookkeepers and do not know if everything being presented matches the expectations of Dutch tax law.

Dengler asked what happens when a working group does not spend all the funds allocated to it in a given year. Diekmann replied some expenses are incurred in the year promised, but may not actually be paid until the following year. Peet suggested IAVS needs to improve the bookkeeping so that the IAVS financial report can distinguish ‘promised’ monies from actual expenditure.

(c) Update of budget for 2014 - discussion and approval (Diekmann)

Diekmann presented the updated 2014 budget (see Attachment 5). He pointed out that there were large departures from the original projection. These included:

- The tax bill of nearly 50,000€ (but note that we will get a tax refund in 2015 as our expenditures will exceed income for 2014).
- Increased allocation to Global Fund to support attendance at the annual symposium and working group activities (30,000€ for travel to Perth, 13,000€ to support EVS and EDGG working group meetings).
- The balance is negative 50,000€, which is primarily a consequence of tax bill.

Wilson asked why IAVS funds are not invested for maximum return.

Diekmann replied that the Governing Board does not feel confident of its ability to make sound investments decisions, but hopes to explore options in the future via consultation with FASB, our new Business Office. One decision that the Governing Board did make was to split our funds between two accounts because of the level of insurance coverage on Dutch banks.

Wildi expressed that because interest rates are currently low, it is better to ensure that IAVS funds are safe than trying to invest. Efforts would be more usefully spent on deciding how we should spend the funds we currently have. Vote to adopt updated budget. Approved unanimously, 0 abstentions.

(d) Appointment of auditors for 2014 (Diekmann)

Diekmann suggested that IAVS reappoint Otto Wildi and Ulrich Deil as our society auditors. Approved unanimously.

(e) Budget projection for 2015

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Peet stated that this is an important step for IAVS as the complexity of managing professional societies is increasing with time and calls for both time commitment and expertise not commonly available from active scientists.

(b) Report from FASEB (Bradham)

Bradham described FASEB and how it originated as an advocacy group for scientific societies and in so doing discovered these societies needed administrative support. He described the types of support that they will provide to IAVS: Management of communication both inside and outside the membership, membership management, marketing support to members, and accounting services. Reporting on these activities will be to the Governing Board. FASEB will help with creation of the IAVS Bulletin. The Governing Board will continue to consider additional services that FASEB might be contracted to perform, but are moving gently, one step at a time. Pärtel asked about similar IAVS to other organizations they interact with. Bradham replied that many are like IAVS in that they are run by volunteers. He can see that the officers want to be more strategic and pass on the administrative load to someone else. Different organizations use different levels of services. Pärtel asked whether these societies publish scholarly journals. Bradham replied that FASEB works with societies publishing with the major publishers (Wiley, Taylor and Francis) and also publishes its own journal. Mucina asked whether any of the societies they support have international membership and run their annual symposia in different countries. Bradham replied that most have international membership, although only one other has ‘international’ in its name. ISAP, for example, holds meetings in different places every year.

FASEB also runs their meetings abroad. Chytrý asked whether they could take over our website. Bradham replied that this is possible, but not happening yet. Peet described how the services around which Wiley administers websites are currently in transition and it is unclear whether IAVS should stay with Wiley for website provision or not. Pärtel asked about the experience of FASEB with social media. Bradham replied that FASEB has experience with LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. The use of these platforms will depend on what IAVS wants.

(c) Transition process (Peet)

Peet described how different GB members and the current administrator (Michael Lee) have had a series of Skype meetings on different topics to facilitate the transition from Michael and Nina to FASEB. We are also developing a manual to describe the administrative procedures. Michael Lee’s role will be complete after the Perth symposium and FASEB will be in the administrative role. The Council thanked Michael Lee for serving so effectively in the role as IAVS Administrator for the last year.

(d) Future symposium organization by FASEB (e.g. website for registration, abstract submission)

Peet introduced some potential options for how FASEB could help with organization of meetings – e.g. a one-time development of website for abstract submission that could apply to future meetings etc. The Governing Board has spoken to John Hay about how FASEB can best support the Brazil meeting and it is anticipated that he will use these services. For the time being, use of FASEB services will be a la carte according to the needs of the symposium organizers. Diekmann described how the Governing Board believes it would be good for some components of the annual symposium organization to be centralized, with the primary goal being to make it easier for local organizers. As such, the Brazil meeting will be test run. For the Brno meeting, if they need help FASEB can be approached.

Chytrý indicated that the Brno meeting may need help with some aspects, such as processing applications for support of the Global Sponsorship Committee. Dengler indicated that working groups might also benefit from having a standard registration template that could be used for their annual meetings (e.g. EVS, EDGG).

5 Future legal incorporation of the IAVS (Peet, Diekmann, Bradham)

Peet described the three options under consideration for the future legal status of IAVS (see Attachment 8) and opened the floor for discussion. These options can be summarized as:

1. Remain in The Netherlands entirely. Register with US as doing business there, as tax exempt. Pros and Cons discussed.

2. Legally organize in US as a corporate entity, and arrange for the entity to be owned by IAVS in The Netherlands. Income in the US might not be taxable by the Dutch parent company. Pros and cons were discussed, as outlined in Attachment 8. This option was recommended by the Governing Board.

3. Create a legal entity in the US. Slowly transfer all operations in The Netherlands to the US.

In the ensuing discussion (Wilson, Mucina) it was expressed that option 3 seems simpler, whereas option 2, gives us more options in the future and that potential members from certain countries will be more comfortable with option 2. Peet moved that Council vote on option 2. Mucina seconded. One against, all the rest in support, no abstentions.

Governing Board will proceed with legal counsel on option 2 and will update Council if things change or new knowledge comes up.

6 Planning for the Council elections in 2015 (Diekmann)

(a) Assembling nominations

Diekmann explained that the four-year term for Council members will be over in mid-2015. As such, we need a Nominations Committee that will receive solicits suggestions for Council members from the membership of the Association and that will organize the election. It would be desirable to have 9-12 nominees on the ballot. The Committee will be comprised of two Governing Board members and two Council members.

(b) Timing of the election and announcements of the results

Diekmann described that the election should take place in January to allow planning for the next Council meeting (Brno, July 2015) and that there needs to be input from both the old and new Council (if we follow tradition, at Brno there will first be a meeting of the old Council, and later a shorter meeting of the new Council at which the new Governing Board will be elected).

Ensuing discussion (Dengler, Mucina, Diekmann) raised points of geographic spread, representation of working groups and regional sections, the need for nominee profiles.
to describe service activity for IAVS (including during time served on Council). When the vote is announced, it could be useful for there to be a cover letter to IAVS members asking them to consider the aspects of the Association (e.g. geographic spread, gender representativeness) described in the IAVS bylaws. The Council has tried many times to increase diversity and geographic scope of the Council, but to date success has been limited.

Mucina suggested that Diekmann form the Nomination Committee. Diekmann agreed to approach two Council members to join the Nomination Committee.

7. Reports on publications
   a. Publications Officer (Peet)
      i. Status of the journals
      Peet described how both journals are doing very well (see Attachments 9 & 10). Both journals are at all-time high in their impact factors. Downloads are increasing, income is increasing and subscriptions are increasing. The article backlog has been cleared and now the time between acceptance and appearance in print is down to 5 months (there is only 45 days between acceptance and publication online).

   ii. Issues raised with respect to the Chief Editors
      Some concerns about quality control in the production phase have been raised and the Chief Editors are working with Wiley to fix this problem.

   iii. Other IAVS-related publications: Bulletin, Book series, Phytocoenologia, Website
      The Book series is on hold and suggestions for a new Chief Editor would be appreciated. Wiley is still interested in publishing such a series.

      The relationship between Phytocoenologia and IAVS has been formalized. In exchange for permission to slate on the cover of the journal “published in collaboration with the International Association for Vegetation Science.” IAVS will approve the appointment of Phytocoenologia editors with the goals of maximizing quality while minimizing competition between IAVS journals and Phytocoenologia. In the ensuing discussion (Mucina, Wilson, Peet, Diekmann) concern that the Governing Board approved this without Council consent or discussion was expressed. This was seen by some as conflicting with current policy because it is the IAVS Council that approves Chief Editors for JVS and AVS, not the Governing Board. Also, although the Publications Committee was consulted about this in the past (2010), the final agreement was not circulated to them. This was acknowledged, although there is ambiguity in that the editors are of Phytocoenologia are not Chief Editors for IAVS-owned journals. It was agreed that in the future the Council would be consulted on such appointments.

   iv. Publications Committee
      The Publications Committee has not met in the last year, partly due to Peet’s extensive involvement in FASEB and Governing Board activities. They will meet later this year (Dec) or early next year (Jan). Mucina has agreed to join the Committee upon Peet’s invitation. Peet described that it is time to review Chief Editors and the journals. This will be undertaken by the Publications Committee with a report to the Governing Board and Council.

   v. Relationship with Wiley: membership and renewal management, contract renewal
      The new contract with Wiley has been reviewed by an outside consultant and the Publications Committee. It is now near ready to be signed, but we should first consult with FASEB regarding services we may transfer to them from Wiley. Wilson raised the issue of the free access to 20% of the journals that has been in the contract. Peet replied that it is very complicated because of changing rules of numerous countries requiring that certain papers be open access versus the need for journals to get subscriptions to remain financially viable. Further discussions with Wiley on this issue are required. The ensuing discussion explored consequences of open access – will IAVS still get some profit share? Will the payment method for publication change (e.g. author charges versus subscriptions)?

      The need for DOIs on other IAVS publications was expressed.

   (b) Chief Editors (Pärtel)
      Pärtel confirmed that the journals are doing well and their profiles are increasing.

5. Reports of Working groups / Regional sections
   (a) European Dry Grassland Group (EDGG) (Janíšová) (see Attachment 11)
   (b) European Vegetation Survey (EVS) (Chytrý) (see Attachment 12)
   (c) Ecoinformatics (Wiser) (see Attachment 13)
   (d) Circumboreal Vegetation Map (Krestov) – will provide a report

   (e) Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature (GPN) (Willner) (see Attachment 14)
   (f) Regional Section of North America (Minchin) (see Attachment 15)

      Working group reports were distributed in advance and questions were solicited. There were none. Peet urged any of these groups to contact FASEB about help in coordinating activities.

      Frustration was expressed about inactive groups/sections continuing to be listed on the website.

9. Reports of Committees
   (a) Awards Committee (Diekmann)
      Diekmann described the issue that the difference between the criteria for awarding the Alexander von Humboldt Medal versus the Honorary Membership Award is not completely clear, despite their descriptions in the bylaws.

      In response the following points were raised (Loidl, Wiser, Wilson, Chytrý): The intent of the Alexander von Humboldt award was to recognize those whose work resulted in a paradigm shift in vegetation science. Nominations should include both a description of the merits of the work as well as metrics such as H indices. The scope of this award is not clear. Does it pertain only to vegetation science in a narrow sense or to all of plant community ecology? Most participants in the discussion felt it applied to all of plant community ecology. The process around awards could be improved by more formal announcement of the awards and the solicitation of nominations through various IAVS communication media. FASEB could assist with these logistics.

      A motion was made for the Awards Committee to develop a white paper on this. Diekmann will communicate this to Schaminée.

   (b) Global Sponsorship Committee (Fidelis) [Attachment 16]
      A series of issues around reimbursement of award recipient travel by GSC were discussed (Mucina, Dengler, Pillar, Chytrý). For some recipients, a reimbursement after the travel has been completed is not a workable solution as these people may not have sufficient funds to pay for the travel at the outset. How can we fund students ahead of time when they cannot afford to front the funds? Could IAVS get a credit card to help with these? Could IAVS give the funds to the local organizers to make the arrangements?

      There was also a discussion about logistics of coordinating awards. It would be useful for the GSC (with input from the symposium organizers) to produce a summary report of what worked and what didn’t with the Perth symposium.

      For the Brno symposium, a partnership with FASEB may help resolve these difficulties.

   (c) Membership Committee (Fidelis)
      There was no report presented.

10. Future meetings
   (a) Brno meeting 2015 - Understanding Broad-scale Vegetation Patterns
      Chytrý described the arrangements with a presentation and handed out information sheets. The structure will be similar to IAVS symposia in the past, with two additions. There will be shorter 1-day field trips before and after the symposium. There will also be three 2-day courses on data analysis offered taught by David Želený, Lubomír Tichý and Viktoria Wagner.

   (b) Brazil meeting 2016 – June 13-17
      Hay provided some preliminary information. They symposium will be held in a town 160 km from Brasilia. There will be excursions into Cerrado, and also into the Amazon! Brazil requires visas and it is a good idea to get a yellow fever vaccine.

   (c) Proposal for the 2017 meeting in Palermo, Sicily (Riccardo Guarino)
      • Pre-Symposium – June 11-18
      • Meeting – June 20-24
      • Post-Symposium – June 25-July 1

      A brief summary of dates and activities was presented. The symposium venue is likely to be in an 18th century botanical garden. Mucina moved approval of the proposal for Sicily. All approved; one abstention.

      A discussion ensued (Wilson, Diekmann, Loidl) about whether it is still necessary that symposia be located in Europe in alternating years (answer is that it is not required). Is there a possibility of holding a symposium soon in China or the US? It would be good to attract more scientists from the China to IAVS. At present the US has the highest number of IAVS members of any country. There is a possibility of a Chinese proposal. IAVS is open to all proposals and considers experience in organizing such symposia when evaluating proposals.

11. Other business

   None

   President Diekmann adjourned the Council meeting at 8:20pm.

Submitted by Susan Wiser, IAVS Secretary
1. Membership Report
As of September 5, 2014 IAVS has 914 members, distributed across 81 countries; details for the top 20 countries are shown below. The United States now has the most members; this is the first time that the top membership has not been in a European country.

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2. Finances
The financial report for 2013 was summarized and these points noted:
- IAVS has stable or even slightly increasing income (mainly through our journals and profit share arrangement with Wiley, the publisher).
- 2013: Total income = 130,940 EURO
  Total expenses = 76,419 EURO
- 2013: Ending cash = ca 380,000 EURO
- Dutch tax authorities have decided that IAVS had been accumulating our revenue that we owed back taxes amounting to approximately 20% of unspent income over the past four years. This means that IAVS must balance expenses with income each year to avoid paying tax.
- In 2014, IAVS will have balanced income / expenses resulting from much higher financial support for people to attend the annual meeting and IAVS Working Group meetings.

The financial report has been audited by 2 Council members: Otto Wildi and Ulrich Deli. The complete financial report is provided with the Minutes from the 2014 Council meeting at Perth.

3. Council business
Council business (including Minutes from 2014 meeting at Perth) will be printed in the IAVS Bulletin 2014/2. Highlights of the year include:
- IAVS now has six Working Groups that have developed Bylaws that have been approved by Council
- The North American section is the first Regional section to adopt Bylaws
- There is a new section: Young scientists. The primary purpose of this new section is to promote the connectivity among early career scientists in IAVS.
- IAVS has contracted with FASEB (Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology) to provide business administration services. FASEB will provide support for society Governance, help with general administration, communication, membership management and accounting.
- IAVS will legally organize in the US as a controlled subsidiary of IAVS in The Netherlands to facilitate administration and financial management. There may be tax advantages as well.

4. Publications (presented by Robert Peet)
The journals are doing well. Roughly 5,600 institutions subscribe with an additional 5,200 free member institutions. Income in the past year was ~130,000 Euro (see above under Finances). Impact factors are better than they have ever been. IAVS now has a more formal relationship with Phytocoenologia. IAVS participates in selection of Phytocoenologia editors. IAVS membership will be solicited for comments on the journals and feedback on editing.

The full report from the Publications Officer is published with the Council Minutes.

5. Meetings reports
5.1. Brno, Czech Republic 2015 (presented by Milan Chytrý)
The 58th IAVS symposium in 2015 will be held in Brno, Czech Republic from 19-24 July and will be hosted by Masaryk University. The theme will be “Understanding broad-scale vegetation patterns and will include the topics:
- Patterns and drivers of alpha and beta diversity
- Plant community assembly
- Plant traits
- Phylogenetic community structure
- Vegetation survey
- Vegetation history over long time scales

5.2. Pirenópois, Brazil 2016 (presented by Alessandra Fidelis)
Pirenópois is located in the central region of Brazil. The dominant vegetation is Cerrado (savanna) with a large variation in physiognomy. The historical city of Pirenópolis is famous as the city where Gregor Mendel, the botanist and “father of genetics”, was active during his lifetime. The venue will be the Orea Hotel. There is alternative budget accommodation within walking distance from the venue.

The post-symposium excursion (6 days) will visit the Western Carpathians from the Pannonian steppes to the Tatras summits. Accommodation will be in the 2nd largest city of the Czech Republic with 384,000 inhabitants and is at the centre of the South Moravia region. Brno is famous as the city where Gregor Mendel, the botanist and “father of genetics”, was active during his lifetime. The venue will be the Orea Hotel. There is alternative budget accommodation within walking distance from the venue.

Fees will be lower in Perth and will be similar to fees in Tartu 2013. There will be reduced fees for students and financial support from the IAVS Global Sponsorship Committee.

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Tentative dates are 13 to 17 June 2016. There are no interfering cultural activities at this time. It is also the end of rainy season but still fairly green with cooler temperatures during the day.

Mid-symposium excursions will be to:

- Serra dos Pireneus – cerrado and high altitude vegetation
- Vaga Fogo Reserve – semideciduous forest
- Cerrado vegetation – gradients from field to woodlands

Possible pre- and post-symposium excursions will be to:

- Jalapão (car; 4-6 days) – cerrado and gallery forests
- Serra do Cipó (plane, car; 5-6 days) – montane rocky fields, cerrado
- Anahé Vilhianas (plane, boat, car; 7-8 days) – Amazonian black water forests, Amazonia terra firme forest, campina and campinarana vegetation
- Catimbau National Park (plane, car; 4-5 days) – caatinga vegetation
- Atlantic forest gradient (plane, car; 4-5 days)
- Pantanal (plane, car; 5-6 days) – freshwater aquatic vegetation, cerrado
- Brasília (car; 2-3 days) – cerrado, fire experiment

5.3. Palermo, Italy 2017 (presented by Javier Loidi)

The symposium will be held June 20-24 (Tuesday-Saturday). The theme will be “Linking the Mediterranean biological and cultural diversity”. The pre-symposium excursion will be from June 11-18 (Sunday-Sunday). The focus will be on coastal landscapes of Sicily: Along the Sicilian coast, from Capo San Vito (NW Sicily) to Capo Passero (SE Sicily), including two days on the Island of Marettimo (max 30 participants). The post-symposium excursion will be from June 25 - July 1 (Sunday-Sunday) and will visit the Sicilian Mountains (for well-trained hikers): Etna, Nebrodi, Madonie (max 30 participants).

The symposium venue will be the Palermo Botanical Garden.

6. IAVS Awards (presented by Susan Wiser)

- IAVS Honorary membership (2014) was awarded to Kazue Fujivara. The ceremony will take place at Brno in 2015.
- Announcement of Student awards for 2013

  **Young scientist Poster Award:**

  **First**
  Guochen Kenny Png (Australia): “Do N-fixing plants show higher root phosphatase activity on P-poor soils?”

  **Honorable mention**
  Talita Zupo (Brazil): “Do different disturbance types affect re-sprouting patterns of shrub species in cerrado?”
  Ilka Strubelt (Germany): “Changes in species composition and richness in an alluvial hardwood forest over 52 years”

  **Young scientist Oral Presentation Award:**

  **First**
  Angela Pannek: “Comparing resource-based and co-occurrence based methods for estimating species niche breadth”

  **Honorable mention**
  Christina Birnbaum: “Do soil microbes drive Acacia species invasion in non-native ranges in Australia?”
  Jessica Parker: “Exploring the spatial and temporal dynamics of the relationship between precipitation and aboveground vegetation biomass”
  Daniel Montesinos: “The puna vegetation of Moquegua, South Peru: Chasmophytic communities and grasslands”

7. IAVS at 60: Treasure the past, Promote the future

This will be a book written by us for us. The goal is to compile contributions of personal importance relating to IAVS activities:

- Involve all “ages”: recent participants, past participants, long-term participants, new ones
- Personal essays, photographs, drawings, poems (funny or serious)
- Influence of IAVS on academic careers and personal lives.

To do this will involve accessing historical documents regarding IAVS history (Hartmut Dierschke, Joop Schaminée). Alexandra Martyanova-Van Kley is starting to collect the “moments of IAVS meetings” and further ideas. Please e-mail her at avankley@sfasu.edu

8. Items raised by the participants

No items were raised

9. Thanks and gifts to the organizers

President Diekmann thanked the keynote speakers and the symposium organizers including Laco Mucina, Dagmar Mucina, Jesse M. Kalwij, Jodi Price and all the others in the LOC who helped to organize the meeting and excursions.

The General Assembly was adjourned by President Diekmann at 16:30.

Submitted by Susan Wiser, IAVS Secretary
Bylaws of the North American Section

Article 1. Name and status
The name of this organization shall be “The North American Section of The International Association for Vegetation Science” (IAVS-NA). It shall function as a Working Group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS).

Article 2. Purposes
As an autonomous regional affiliate of The International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS), IAVS-NA shall share its goals and support its activities. IAVS-NA is subject to the Statutes and Bylaws of the IAVS.

Specifically, the main purposes of IAVS-NA include:
(a) encouraging North American vegetation scientists to collaborate and form new initiatives and partnerships;
(b) encouraging and aiding communication among its members;
(c) fostering communication and collaboration between North American vegetation scientists and those in other parts of the world;
(d) supporting activities such as symposia and field trips of interest to vegetation scientists.

Article 3. Membership
Membership in IAVS-NA is open to all persons free of charge, and membership in IAVS is optional. Membership in IAVS-NA is obtained by:
(a) written application to the IAVS-NA Secretary/Treasurer, or
(b) specification when joining or renewing membership of IAVS.

Membership can be discontinued by a written statement (electronic or hardcopy) sent to the IAVS-NA Secretary/Treasurer stating that the member no longer wishes to be a member of IAVS-NA. It is the responsibility of members to provide the Secretary/Treasurer with a functioning e-mail address. Any one participant may carry up to three proxy votes.

Article 4. Business meeting
A business meeting of IAVS-NA shall be held annually, usually at the annual conference of the Ecological Society of America Vegetation Section. The IAVS-NA members present shall constitute a quorum. All members attending may vote at the business meeting. A member may assign a proxy vote for the business meeting to another member by notifying both the holder of the proxy and the Secretary/Treasurer of IAVS-NA. Any one participant may carry up to three proxy votes.

Bylaws of the Young Scientist Section

Article 1. Name and status
The name of this organization shall be “Young Scientists”. It shall be a Section of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS).

Article 2. Purposes
The main purposes of the Young Scientists include:
(a) Promoting the connectivity between young scientists of the IAVS
(b) Creating a network to improve personal and scientific communication between young scientists and to gain more experience in the current issues of ecology around the world
(c) Encouraging young people to present their own data, exchanging experiences and initiatives
(d) Facilitating international research collaborations between young scientists
(e) Serving as a support network for young scientists in the vegetation science
(f) Provide a more formal way for young scientists to communicate their needs to the Society

This Section loosely defines “Young Scientists” as those persons at an early stage in their career in Vegetation Science, regardless of age or enrollment status at a university. As a Section of IAVS, the Young Scientists share the IAVS goals and support its activities. The Young Scientists is subject to the Statutes and Bylaws of the IAVS.

Article 3. Membership
Membership in the Young Scientists is open to all persons, although we especially encourage membership applications from students, graduates within a few years of graduation, and other early career scientists. The section also welcomes as members those who may not be early career scientists, but who wish to help achieve the purposes listed in Article 2 above, for example in a mentorship role. Membership in the Young Scientists is optional. Membership in the Young Scientists is obtained by:
(a) Written application to the Young Scientists Membership Administrator
(b) Specification when joining or renewing membership in IAVS
(c) Subscribing to the Young Scientists ListServ

Membership is discontinued by a written statement (electronic or hardcopy) sent to the Young Scientists Membership Administrator stating that the member no longer wishes to be a member of the Young Scientists.

It is the responsibility of members to provide the Membership Administrator with a functioning e-mail address. Membership is discontinued when no functioning e-mail address is available to either the Membership Administrator or the IAVS Secretary.

Article 4. Business meeting
A business meeting shall be held annually in conjunction with the annual IAVS Symposium. All members attending may vote in the business meeting. A member may assign a proxy vote for the business meeting to another member by notifying the holder of the proxy and the Membership Administrator. Any one participant may carry up to three proxy votes.

Article 5. Steering Committee
The Section shall have a Steering Committee (SC) with three elected members, a Chair, a Vice-chair, and a Secretary/Treasurer. All SC members shall be members of IAVS. Each SC member shall be elected for a period of four years. Elections shall take place at least two months prior to the annual business meeting at which the regular four-year term of the SC is ending, or following a vacancy. At least one month prior to the start of an election, it shall be announced to the members of IAVS-NA via e-mail by the Secretary/Treasurer, who shall then receive nominations made by any member by e-mail or in person. Elections take place by means of an electronic ballot over a period of one month.

All decisions on behalf of IAVS-NA, except those explicitly assigned otherwise, are made by the SC with a majority vote.

Article 6. Duties of the Steering Committee members
(a) The SC members promote the interests of IAVS-NA, and supervise Section operations and scientific activities;
(b) The SC may call upon members of the Section or appoint committees to assist with the tasks assigned;
(c) The Chair presides at the SC and IAVS-NA business meetings and supplies an annual report to IAVS;
(d) The Secretary/Treasurer keeps records of IAVS-NA and its members, conducts elections and ballots, and distributes the minutes of the annual meeting to all Section members;
(e) The Vice-Chair assists the Chair when needed and stands in for the Chair at meetings that the Chair is unable to attend.

Article 7. Finances
The IAVS-NA financial assets shall be held by and managed through the accounts of IAVS.

Article 8. Amendments
These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the elected members. All SC members shall be members of IAVS. Any one participant may carry up to three proxy votes.
Article 8. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a 3/5 vote of the members participating in the business meeting of the Young Scientists. Proposed amendments must be circulated to the membership by e-mail at least two weeks in advance of the business meeting at which they are voted on.

Changes in the bylaws are contingent on approval by the IAVS Council.

Young Scientist Section

Landscape in the Porongurup National Park

White spider orchid (Caladenia longicauda)

Queen of Sheba orchid (Thelymitra)

Rock formation „Natural bridge“ in Torndirrup National Park close to Albany
## Financial Statements

### Financial Overview (Suggestion for Update)

#### GENERAL FUND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Projection</th>
<th>Financial Overview</th>
<th>Financial Projection</th>
<th>Financial Overview</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>2013 (Audited Financials)</strong></td>
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<td>Travel money administration Governing Board</td>
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<td>Consulting costs</td>
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<td><strong>Ending Cash: 31 December</strong></td>
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<td>346,560.44</td>
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### GLOBAL FUND

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<tr>
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<td><strong>Debits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Debits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Credits</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel grants for students</td>
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<td>14,020.00</td>
<td>15,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards for manuscript editing</td>
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<td>76,419.80</td>
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</table>

### Notes:

1. 90% to general fund, 10% to global fund
2. Some people still pay directly to the IAVS office
3. Wiley-Blackwell income is paid in three parts: two in the same calendar year, and a final part at the beginning of next calendar year
4. Travel honoraria and basic honoraria (chief editors) in 2015
5. Six Governing Board members for Perth
6. Payments include salary for M. Lee for Oct 2013 - June 2014 as well as for June - September 2014
7. Taxes for 2010-2013
8. Fee for 6 months and set-up fee in 2014; Fee for 12 months in 2015
9. Honorary member 2014 will attend the Brno meeting 2015.
10. For travel grants for Perth (30000) and working group meetings (13000); in 2015 for travel grants for Brno and working group meetings; research funds
11. For meeting rooms, Wiley costs, catering, gifts
12. Travel support 4500, special activities 7500, basic support 2500, additional research funds
The New IAVS Business Office

IAVS has recently partnered with the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) to provide a business office in the United States. FASEB has been supporting scientific societies like ours and biomedical research for over a century. Today, they provide scientific nonprofits tailored services that span a wide range of disciplines from day-to-day administration to long-term planning. We have contracted with FASEB for the following services:

Business Management Services

1. Governance Support
   a. Manager will appoint a Business Manager to oversee and administer all support services provided to Association
   b. Liaise with Association Governing Board keeping them apprised of all business activities of the organization
      i. Provide annual reporting of operational activities
      ii. Provide new Governing Board Members with appropriate materials for on boarding
   c. Provide organizational and administrative support at meetings whether face-to-face or via conference calls
      i. Handle logistics for in-person meetings including site selection, facility arrangements, and catering
      ii. Work with Governing Board to create agenda and gather meeting materials
      iii. Draft minutes and provide to Secretary for agenda and gather meeting materials
   d. Maintain rosters of Board, Officers, working groups, and volunteer committees
   e. Facilitate nominations and elections process according to bylaws (every 4 years)
      i. Maintain nomination and election schedule
      ii. Support nomination and candidate information activities
         1) Verify eligibility of selected candidates
         2) Prepare ballot and coordinate election in electronic voting system
            a) Obtain biographies for candidates
            b) Post ballot and voting form on website and alert membership
            c) Collect, tally, and report election results
            d) Committee liaise with all volunteer committees, working groups, and regional sections as needed to strengthen committee structure
            e) Keep chairs advised of critical dates
            f) Gather reports from these groups
         iv. Collect, tally, and report election results
   f. Committee liaise with all volunteer committees, working groups, and regional sections as needed to strengthen committee structure
      i. Provide annual reporting of operational activities
      ii. Provide new Governing Board Members with appropriate materials for on boarding
   g. Collect and forward applications to Global Sponsorship Committee and applications for support from Working Groups and Regional Sections to the Governing Board; correspond with applicants as needed
   h. Work with Association Secretary and Finance Director to prepare the budget, review and approve the monthly financial reports, and provide support to auditors, if requested; third party services provided at cost

2. General Administration
   a. Supervise all supporting services and serve as the liaison between leadership and supporting services departments
   b. Work with a tax attorney and accounting department to determine if Association needs to be established as a 501(c)3 (third party legal and regulatory services provided at cost); if so:
      i. Review mission statement and ensure it meets 501(c)3 guidelines
      ii. Review Board of Directors and Committee structure
      iii. Draft and file articles of incorporation
      iv. Review bylaws; make recommendations if necessary
      v. Apply for nonprofit mailing permit
      vi. File for a Federal Employee Identification Number
      vii. File for state tax exemption, if needed
      viii. File for local tax exemption, if needed
      ix. Fulfill charitable solicitation law requirements
   c. Maintain routine correspondence, files, and day-to-day business in one permanent location readily available to Association
   d. Maintain, update, and distribute organization information on website or hard copy forms, brochures (if needed), etc.
   e. Direct specific inquiries about Association to appropriate individuals
   f. Provide standard business office, equipment, and functions for staff
      i. General administration and clerical support
      ii. Maintain email and office address (dedicated Association phone and fax lines can be provided at cost)
      iii. Operating hours of 8:30 AM – 5:00 EST US (13:30 – 22:00 UTC)
      iv. Organizational email addresses using “name@IAVS.org”
   g. File appropriate business forms and annual reports with appropriate state, national, and international agencies
   h. Contact Dutch Chamber of Commerce as needed
      i. Attend annual symposium to maintain contact with membership and provide assistance to local organizations

3. Marketing Communications
   a. Ensure consistent branding across all mediums
   b. Initiate Google AdWords
      i. Apply for a Google Grant
      ii. Set up Google AdWords account, campaign, ads
   c. Provide timely, personalized responses and information as needed
   d. Maintain a Google AdWords campaign, ads
      i. Review bylaws; make recommendations if necessary
      ii. Review Board of Directors and Committee structure
      iii. Draft and file articles of incorporation
      iv. Review bylaws; make recommendations if necessary
      v. Apply for nonprofit mailing permit
      vi. File for a Federal Employee Identification Number
      vii. File for state tax exemption, if needed
      viii. File for local tax exemption, if needed
      ix. Fulfill charitable solicitation law requirements
   e. Review current marketing collateral and suggest changes to enhance and showcase membership benefits
   f. Contract with graphic designers and production services for materials as needed
   g. Bulletin Management
      i. Work with Association Secretary and President to develop a timeline
   h. Collect information for newsletter from various sources (Association Officers, committee chairs, etc.)
   i. Monitor content on Association website and recommend changes as needed

4. Membership Management
   a. Maintain an Association database and update regularly with Wiley subscriber database
   b. Update database regularly with additional information as needed
   c. Provide timely, personalized responses and customer service to all inquiries
   d. Develop and maintain a member campaign to recruit new members and retain existing members

Accounting and Financial Services

1. Certified Public Accountant
   a. Assign a Certified Public Accountant to manage the professional accounting
   b. Structure staff and supervisory support to provide reasonable internal controls for the financial operations
   c. Maintain financial records in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and applicable tax laws.
   d. Assist Business Manager, and Association President in preparing an annual budget for the organization
   e. Process US 1099 informational returns annually as needed to the US Internal Revenue Service
   f. Provide support to an outside tax accountant for preparation of annual tax filing; third party services provided at cost
   g. Contract with an outside audit firm, schedule audit, and provide support to auditors, if requested; third party services provided at cost
   h. Any reporting needed by the Netherlands will be...
billed separately

2. Accounting Systems

a. Set up accounting system and migrate data from current provider
b. Maintain a computerized accounting system in which to record the financial transactions for Association
c. Maintain a local US dollar denominated bank account in the name of the Association for depositing receipts and check writing
   i. Cash disbursements will be processed after they have been properly coded and approved by persons authorized by Association
   ii. Process wire and check payments; US dollar denominated checks will be deposited via remote desktop deposit system
   iii. Check runs are provided twice monthly
   iv. Monitor revenue to ensure adequate funds are available to pay expenses; request transfer through Association President when necessary
d. Maintain a foreign bank account in the name of the Association for Euro deposits
   i. Association will grant access to Manager as users/signers on the account in order to process transactions
   ii. Process wire and check payments
   iii. Monitor revenue to ensure adequate funds are available to pay expenses; request transfer through Association President when necessary
e. Provide investment account reconciliation and recording if needed

3. Reporting

a. Financial reporting at year end and prior to Association meeting:
   i. Balance Sheets (Statements of Financial Position)
   ii. Income Statement (Statement of Activities)

b. System reports available on a monthly basis upon request, available approximately 45 business days after month end

We look forward to building this relationship with FASEB and trust they will provide you the member service you deserve. If you have any about membership or IAVS in general, please don’t hesitate to reach out to our new business office at admin@iavs.org.

IAVS Governing Board
1. State of the Journals

The IAVS journals are doing very well as judged by nearly any metric. Here I summarize some of the most important of these.

**Availability**

Applied Vegetation Science and Journal of Vegetation Science are available in approximately 4,200 institutions worldwide via Wiley licensed sales. Access to JVS through ESSCO is available to an additional 1,406 institutions and access to AVS to an additional 845, although with a one-year embargo. In 2013 fully 79% of subscriptions were managed through licensed sales, compared with 77% in 2012. Applied Vegetation Science and Journal of Vegetation Science are now available in over 5,200 institutions in the developing world via philanthropic initiatives.

**Online Readability**

Full text downloads for Applied Vegetation Science continued to increase dramatically: 14,345 in 2009; 28,812 in 2010; 44,741 in 2011; 52,738 in 2012; and for 2013 a 19% increase to 62,788.

Full text downloads for Journal of Vegetation Science also continued to increase substantially: 72,516 in 2009; 139,378 in 2010; 187,666 in 2011; 208,338 in 2012, and 227,112.

**Revenue**

Revenue received from IAVS is still the same general range, with a modest increase. A frequent concern is going to be the residual delay between early view and the online issue. This delay is critical to the efficient use of the content. With the January 1 data released by the publishers (see below) suggests a significant backlog in time to print. An extra 300 pages were published in the first 3 issues of JVS in 2014 to reduce the backlog, paid for by an allocation approved by Council in 2013. Although the backlog is now nearly gone, we are working with the publishers to determine whether the residual delay between early view and the online issue could be further reduced.

**Impact factor**

The 2013 impact factors were released in late July. AVS and JVS have remained very good at 40 days from receipt of a final manuscript at the publisher to production time. Editorial Boards are to be congratulated.

**JVS/AVS Journal Rankings**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ecology</th>
<th>Forestry</th>
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<tr>
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2. Issues confronted by the JVS & AVS Chief Editors

**Production workflow and quality control**

Effective October 1, 2012 production of our journals was outsourced and as a consequence moved from the Edinburgh Office of Wiley to SPS (Scientific Publishing Service) in India. Copy editing takes place in yet another location. We had been very happy with the Edinburgh operation and had observed occasional problems with the copy editing. Since the transfer of the production functions the Chief Editors have observed a steady series of problems and errors. We hoped these would go away within a year as the new company learned how to conduct their business, but the problems have shown no sign of abating. SPS claims most of this is not their fault. The problems are costing considerable time on the part of the Chief Editors who need to watch carefully for errors. Our Wiley contact, Neil Henderson, is creating a detailed work-flow schema so that we can identify who does what when and can then work with those parties to correct the recurrent problems. If this is not sufficient to solve the bulk of the problem, we may need to negotiate with SPS to pay an additional person to review all of the articles prior to them being posted online.

**Policy on prior publication**

There has been growing ambition as to what forms of prior publication should preclude publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals. It is becoming common for papers to be distributed prior to peer review via permanent archives such as ArXiv and bioRxiv. Some government agencies request that prepublication manuscripts be deposited in open-access archives. Of course, students would like to publish portions of their theses and dissertations. Some journals permanently post all manuscripts submitted for peer review, regardless of whether they pass the peer-review filter. In the face of this complex landscape, the Chief Editors and I consulted our colleagues with personnel at Wiley and developed a new policy for IAVS journals. "IAVS journals will consider for publication articles permanently posted in preprint archives associated with specific journals."

3. Other IAVS-related Publications

**Bulletin**

Production of the Bulletin has long constituted a drain on the time of the Society officers. Now that IAVS has a business office with FASEB, it is possible to obtain some staff support for production of the Bulletin. President Diekmann will be working with Senator Bratham at FASEB to develop a partnership between FASEB and the Society officers to expedite production of the Bulletin.

**Book Series**

During the IAVS meeting in Lyon in 2011 there were organized discussions about a possible IAVS book series. Several publishers expressed an interest in publishing such a series. Laco Mucina was charged by the Governing Board with exploring options. In December 2011 he submitted a formal proposal, which the Governing Board referred to the Publications Committee. The Committee was enthusiastic and asked to be involved in final negotiations with a publisher. Not much happened after that owing to Laco's many activities, including organization of the 2014 Symposium. However, in July 2014 Mucina reported that he had to resign from this activity owing to multiple other demands on his time. For the present the book series concept is still viewed as attractive, but the project is dormant.

**Phytocoenologia**

Phytocoenologia was founded in December of 1973 by some of the same individuals that were instrumental in founding or guiding the early governance of IAVS. Volume 1 was published with the subtitle 'Journal of the International Society of Plant Geography and Ecology' and subsequently changed to "Journal of the International Association for Vegetation Science'. However, IAVS never approved the use of its name on the cover, and this seemed at odds with the subsequent contracts with first Opulus and then Wiley publishers wherein IAVS declared JVS and AVS to be the official journals of the Society. This topic was discussed several times in Council and the Publications Officer was charged with approaching the publisher of Phytocoenologia to adjust the situation. A Memorandum of Understanding (attached) was developed, approved by Governing Board at its meeting of 22 January 2014, and signed by A. Nägele on behalf of the publisher. Gebrüder Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung on January 28, 2014, and signed by A. Nägele on behalf of the publisher. Gebrüder Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung on January 28, 2014.
Plan for review of the journals and the Chief Editors

The IAVS Publications Committee consists of Robert Peet, Chair (US), Helge Bruehede (DE), Hans Henrik Bruun (DK), Jessica Gurevitch (US), Tomáš Herben (CZ), Michael Manthey (DE), Jürgen Dengler, Monika Janišová, Florian Jánský (CZ), Helge Bruelheide (DE), Hans Henrik Bruun (DK), and Jessica Gurevitch (US). The Committee did not meet. Once the Business Office is stable, the Publications Committee will again meet to discuss a range of topics. The IAVS Publications Committee shall oversee the publications of the Association. The Chair of the Committee shall be the Publications Officer and shall be one of the Vice Presidents. The Chair shall be responsible for interactions with the Chief Editors and with the publisher. The Committee shall review and approve proposals from the Chief Editors for major changes in the structure and content of the journals, and shall be responsible for a recurring 4-year review of the Chief Editors. The Committee shall advise the Council on reappraisal of Chief Editors and evaluate candidates to fill vacancies among the Chief Editors. The Chief Editors shall select from among themselves a representative to serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Committee, except during evaluations of Chief Editors. The review process for the four-year review of the journals and the Chief Editors was discussed in the 2012 meeting of the Publications Committee. As the last review was conducted in 2009, we anticipated that the next review would be undertaken in 2014. We now anticipate that the review will be conducted in 2015 with the results reported at the Annual Symposium in July.

5. Relationship with Wiley

Membership & Renewal Management

Since taking over JVS and AJS, Wiley has maintained a membership list for IAVS and has solicited renewals. In the absence of staff, this was by far the best solution available. However, the Wiley list often had serious problems such as multiple records for a single person, inconsistent formatting, and virtually no ability to handle historical information such as past members and their past roles. As a consequence IAVS officers have had to spend large amounts of time maintaining a separate membership database. Part of the difficulty is that the IAVS records are fed from a central Wiley database that cannot be modified for a single Association.

Our new business office at FASEB has the ability to maintain our membership records in a society-oriented database, handle all membership renewal activities, and simply inform Wiley periodically of who to send subscriptions to. There is a cost, but we could also change the Wiley contract to recover some or all of that cost. Given the dramatic changes going on with the transition to FASEB, it seems likely that we might best delay a transition of the membership directory function, but the Governing Board will look at this and might ask for a vote of the members at January or February. This would then be incorporated into the new contract with Wiley currently under negotiation (see below).

Renewal of the IAVS contract with Wiley

The initial IAVS contract with Blackwell (now Wiley) was for 2009-2013, after which there is automatic renewal unless one party asks for renegotiation at least 1 year in advance. The Committee felt that both the Committee and the Governing Board should review the currently contract during 2012 and 13 and decide whether or not there are any important changes we would like to have in place by January 2014. The Publications Officer brought this matter up with our representatives at Wiley and they proposed a new contract for our consideration. The Chief Editors and the Publications Committee reviewed the contract during January and February 2013. However, the discussions within the Governing Board with respect to establishment of an IAVS Business Office led to a delay in the final discussions of the contract revision as decisions with respect to the business office could have significant implications for the details of the publication contract. We anticipate signing a new contract by July 2015.

6. Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding is between the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS; c/o Robert K. Peet, Vice President and Publications Officer, Department of Biology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3280 USA) and Gebr. Borntraeger Science Publishers (Johannesstrasse 3A, 70176 Stuttgart Germany).

This memorandum is intended to clarify the relationship between the scholarly journal Phytoecologica (published by Borntraeger) and IAVS. The subtitle ‘Journal of the International Association for Vegetation Science’ has raised questions and concerns among IAVS members owing to the lack of a formally documented relationship.

History: IAVS was established in 1939 with the initial name of ‘International Physosociological Society with headquarters in Montpellier, and was reestablished more formally in 1954 as the International Vereinigung für Vegetationskunde. The current name was adopted in 1981. Phytoecologica was founded in December of 1973 by some of the same individuals that were instrumental in founding IAVS or in its early governance (e.g., H. Ellenberg, U. Eskuche, J.-M. Gehu, A. Miyawaki, D. Mueller-Dombois, R. Neuhäusl, S. Rivas Martinez, R. Tüxen). Volume 1 was published with the subtitle ‘Journal of the International Society of Plant Geography and Ecology’ and subsequently changed to ‘Journal of the International Association for Vegetation Science’.

From the initial founding of Phytoecologica, there has been a close association between Phytoecologica’s Editors and Board and IAVS. In particular, many of the Editors and Board Members of Phytoecologica were or are IAVS members.

The parties wish to document the following:

1. Borntraeger has and will continue to provide a substantially reduced digital subscription rate to IAVS members.
2. Borntraeger will substantially reduce color page charges for IAVS members.
3. The hitherto close association of Phytoecologica and IAVS will be made jointly by the IAVS Governing Board and Borntraeger.
4. IAVS and the Editors of Phytoecologica intend to publish, among other content, the findings of the IAVS Governing Board, and Borntraeger.
5. IAVS and Borntraeger agree that although Borntraeger owns and is ultimately responsible for the content of the Phytoecologica, all decisions with respect to the future orientation, policies and content of the journal will be made jointly by the editors, the IAVS Governing Board, and Borntraeger.

Bob Peet, August 5, 2014
European Dry Grassland Group

Report for the period from 15 July 2013 to 25 July 2014

Members and organization of the EDGG

Early in 2014, EDGG surpassed the threshold of 1000 members. As of 19 July 2014, EDGG had 1,023 members from 61 countries. As of 19 July 2014, EDGG had 1,023 members from 61 countries. Whistler organization is on Palaeoarctic dry grasslands, clearly our membership extends beyond the geo-political borders of Europe. Membership in EDGG is free of charge and can be obtained by sending an e-mail to Jürgen Dengler (juergen.dengler@uni-bayreuth.de).

European Dry Grassland Meeting and other events

Since the last report, the EDGG has organized several activities. The most important of these was the annual (11th) European Dry Grassland Meeting, held in the District of Tula (Russia) at 5–15 June 2014. The meeting was organized by a team led by Elena Volkova (The State Museum-Preserve “Kulikovo Pole”, Tula region, Russia) and it was attended by 55 participants from 10 countries. The aims of the meeting were to acquaint participants with the diversity of steppe and dry grassland vegetation in different ecological situations, to discuss the influence of intensive anthropogenic impacts on steppe and dry grasslands and the means of restoration. The meeting consisted of two parts, a conference (oral and poster presentations, excursions to protected areas of Tula region) and a post-conference tour (excursion sites in the Kursk and Rostov regions). In total, 29 talks and 18 posters were presented during the sessions.

In addition to its own annual meeting, the EDGG co-organized two other conferences, the workshop “Concepts for modern management of xeric grasslands between nature conservation and agriculture”, Crewe Castle, Schwadl (Oder), Germany on 26–27 September 2013; and the Open Landscapes 2013 Conference in Hildesheim, Germany, from 29 September to 3 October 2013.

The 12th European Dry Grassland Meeting will be organized in Mainz, Germany on 23–27 May 2015 and is currently in preparation (first call published on 24 July).

The 6th EDGG Research Expedition took place in the Kuznetsky Alatau Mts, part of the Altai-Sayan mountain region (Republic of Khakassia, Russia) from 21 July to 1 August 2013. It was organized by Nikolai Ermakov and Mariya Polyakova (Russian Academy of Sciences, Novosibirsk). Seventeen scientists from 7 countries studied the variety of Central Asian (Cleistogenetea squarrosoe) and European-Siberian (Festuco-Brometea) steppe vegetation using standardized sampling procedures including nested-plot studies and phytosociological relevés. The collected data can be used for defining the European-Siberian and Central Asian dry grassland classes and for comparison with central European steppe remnants at the western range margin of this vegetation type.

The 7th EDGG Field Workshop took place in Navarre (Spain) from 15 June to 24 June 2014. It was organized by Idolá Biurrun and Iztia García-Mijanos (University of the Basque Country) together with Asun Berastege (Gestión Ambiental de Navarra, S.A). Sixteen participants from 10 countries studied dry grassland vegetation of three biogeographic regions of Navarre: Alpine, Atlantic and Mediterranean regions. The collected data will be added to the database from the EDGG Expeditions/Field Workshops and will subsequently be available for joint publications by the participants. During the workshop, four keynote lectures by the organizers and six presentations by participants were presented.

The EDGG Field Workshops will be continued on an annual basis with hosting offers presently available from Norway, Poland, France, Italy, Turkey and Kazakhstan. The venue for 2015 will be announced and the call will be published in autumn 2014.

General Assembly and financial issues

The General Assembly of the EDGG was held in conjunction with the 11th EDGM, Kulikovo Pole, Russia on 7 June 2014. It was attended by 34 EDGG members from 10 countries. The IAVS provided baseline support of 500 € for 2013 and 2014 (which was so far only partly spent) and for 2013 an honorarium of 1000 € to one EDGG representative to attend the annual IAVS Symposium and give a report on EDGG activities in the Council meeting. Further, the EDGG was successful with project proposals to IAVS. For 2013 EDGG received 800 € for linguistic editing of the Special Issue in Hacquetia 2014 and 1500 € for renovating the EDGG home-page. The venue for 2013 will be announced and the call will be published in autumn 2014.

The EDGG has continued its long-standing tradition of Special Issues/Features in international journals over the past year. The Special Issue in Biodiversity and Conservation on grassland diversity was the first EDGG Special Feature with a balanced proportion of zoological and botanical contributions. It was published in autumn 2013 containing 18 including the editorial and the concluding remarks and recommendations. The Special Issue in Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment was published in February 2014 and contained 14 articles and an introductory review, which provides a synthesis of the current knowledge on the biodiversity of Palearctic grasslands. Two new papers were published in a Virtual Special Feature in Applied Vegetation Science jointly with the EWS working group. The Special Issue in Hacquetia 2014 has been published in June 2014 containing 8 articles on “Dry grasslands of Southern Europe: syntaxonomy, management and conservation” plus an editorial. The Special Feature in Tuexenia 2014 containing 5 articles is presently in press and will be available in print and open access online in August 2014. The second EDGG-edited Special Issue of Hacquetia will be devoted to biodiversity and conservation of Europe’s semi-natural open habitats. A total of 21 new papers have been invited by the team of Special Issue Editors and publication is expected for March 2015. Calls for four new EDGG-edited Special Issues/Features in international journals have been launched in July 2014.

Along with the mentioned Special Issues, EDGG has published four issues of its own electronic journal, the Bulletin of the European Dry Grassland Group (ISSN: 1865-2456; freely available from http://www.edgg.org/publications.html) during the reported period.

Star of Bethlehem, Blue Tinsel Lily (Calectasia grandiflora, Dasyypogonaceae)

Monika Janišová (on behalf of the Executive Committee of the EDGG)
The 23rd annual meeting of European Vegetation Survey (EVS) took place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 8–12 May 2014. The meeting was organized by Andraž Čarni from the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, assisted by Nina Ivan, Daniela Ribeiro, Urban Silc, Renata Custeresvka and Mirjana Krsitjojnović, and excursion guides Tomaz Hartman, Milja Kaligarić, Sonja Škornik and Igor Želnik. The main topics of the scientific sessions were: (1) Biogeographical patterns and processes in plant communities; (2) Balkan vegetation. During the mid-conference excursions on 9 May and one-day post-conference excursions on 12 May we visited examples of deciduous forests and wet, mesic and dry grasslands in Slovenia. The meeting was attended by 201 regular participants and 14 accompanying persons from 29 countries, which made it one of the largest EVS meetings ever. The participants presented 66 oral presentations and 105 posters. Travel expenses of 15 participants from eastern Europe were partly covered by the IAVS Global Fund. Numerous side meetings took place, such as the Habitat Red List project meeting, European Vegetation Archive + the Braun-Blanquet project meeting, and meeting of the IAVS Working Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature. Following the amendment of the EVS By-laws approved in 2013, by-election of a new EVS member representing southern Europe took place during the EVS Business Meeting held in Ljubljana on 10 May 2014. As there was a tie on the first position, two new members of the EVS Steering Committee were elected: Rosario Gavilán and Francesco Spada.

1. The European Vegetation Checklist of phytosociological classes, orders and alliances was extensively revised and resubmitted for publication in June 2014. This standard reference work on syntaxonomy of European vegetation was prepared by a team of 33 vegetation scientists from 16 countries.

2. Technical infrastructure for the European Vegetation Archive, a single data repository of the vegetation-plot observations (relevés) from Europe and adjacent areas, was completed, based on the TURBOVEG 3 software developed by Stephan Hennekens. Several national and regional data bases joined EVA. By the time of Ljubljana meeting in May 2014 already 31 databases from 37 countries, containing a total of 553 228 relevés, joined EVA. Of these, 87% contained geographical coordinates; 7% were in the free access regime, 85% in semi-restricted access and 8% in restricted access regime.

3. An EVS team led by Joop Schaminée, working under contract from the European Environment Agency (EEA), prepared a review of European forest habitat classification. As baseline data for this review, a database of 670 000 European vegetation plots was compiled and used to generate synoptic tables of species composition for 117 phytosociological alliances of forest vegetation. In parallel, synoptic tables were computed for the forest habitat types of EUNIS classification.

4. A team led by John Janssen succeeded in an EU tender for a contract to establish a European Red List of Habitats. This project, started in December 2013, includes many EVS members and uses phytosociological knowledge to develop scientifically sound and consistent assessment of threats to European natural and semi-natural habitats.

5. Several international projects of vegetation survey continued, including The Braun-Blanquet project (Botija Jiménez-Alfaro, Milan Chytrý, Stephan Hennekens et al.), WetVegEurope (Flavia Landucci, Kateřina Šumberová et al.), and new projects started, many of them supported by the relevé data from EVA, e.g. projects focusing on the coastal dune vegetation (Corrado Marcone et al.), Alnus and Salix woodlands (Jan Douda et al.), sclero-phyllous oak woodlands (Emiliano Agrillo et al.), or fen and bog vegetation (Tomáš Peterka, Martin Jiroušek, Michal Hájek et al.).

6. Preparation of the Virtual Special Feature “Towards consistent classification of European grasslands” in the journal Applied Vegetation Science continued as a joint initiative of EVS and the IAVS European Dry Grassland Group, with Jürgen Dennger as the senior guest editor. Four papers, all based on international collaboration, have already been published.

The goals of the Ecoinformatics Working group are to facilitate communication among scientists studying community ecology through exploration and synthesis of large databases comprising vegetation-plot and related ecological data; facilitate access to these data; establish standards for exchange of these data to facilitate data sharing and to provide tools for identifying, access, integration, storage, and analysis of these data. To meet the requirements to be a recognized IAVS Working Group and be eligible for IAVS funding, a set of Bylaws were drafted in February 2013, based on those of the European Vegetation Survey Working Group, were approved by members of the working group in March 2013 and approved by the IAVS Council at the Tartu symposium in June 2014.

A subset of the working group members met at the Tartu symposium and discussed future goals for the working group. An immediate need was to decide on a process to follow to elect a new steering committee that would set the overall directions for the group. We also discussed submitting a proposal to support some web developments around the Global Index of Vegetation-Plot Databases (GIVD) to the IAVS, proposing to Laco Mucina that we hold a special session on Ecoinformatics at the Perth symposium and some methodological advances that would be desirable (i.e. developing methods to increase computation speed with large plot x species matrices and developing information systems to allow synthetic projects to incorporate changes in taxonomic concepts). Sebastian Schmidtlein administered the Steering Group nomination and election process. Stephan Hennekens, Susan Wiser, Miquel de Cáceres, Florian Jansen and Peter Minchin were elected to form the Steering Group; Stephan Hennekens was elected chair. In May 2014 Stephan Hennekens submitted a proposal from the steering committee to the IAVS governing board to improve the website structure of GIVD (http://www.givd.info). GIVD is an index of digital plot databases and currently contains meta-data for 204 databases containing more than 3 million plots. The upgrade will include a) integrating, within GIVD, the Document Object Identifiers (DOI) of the database publications with the persistent links to the electronic manuscript version and try to make the GIVD articles in Biodiversity & Ecology readable for automatic reference recognition tools; b) improve the content of database entries to allow searches by formation and region, e.g. “all databases containing terrestrial forest from Europe”. In June 2014, the IAVS Governing Board approved a grant (special project support category) to the working group of 3000€ to undertake these activities.

The working group has been very successful in having fourteen oral presentations included in Ecoinformatics sessions at the IAVS symposium in Perth. These will be presented in three sessions and span topics from major vegetation plot databasing efforts, to the evolving data sharing landscape, to advances in numerical methods to large-scale vegetation mapping and modelling efforts. A lunch meeting for the working group is also planned.

The Steering Group also considers updating the Ecoinformatics website as a high priority. Currently the website is hosted at the University of North Carolina and any updates can only be done by a person associated with the University. The Steering Group has decided to transfer the website to be hosted at Alftra, for practical reasons. Stephan will then set up a frame work for new web site. The domain name will be http://www.vegetationinformatics.org/, which we have reserved.

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After having been accepted as an IAVS Working Group at the 56th IAVS symposium in Tartu in June 2013, GPN proceeded with the election of its first Steering Committee (SC) at mid December 2013. The seven elected members for the period 2014-2017 are Jean-Paul Theurillat (chair; CH), Daniela Gigante (secretary; IT), Andraž Čarni (SL), Jürgen Dengler (DE), Federico Fernández-González (ES), Laco Mucina (AU) and Wolfgang Willner (AT). The SC met at the occasion of the first business meeting of GPN that was held in Ljubljana together with the 23rd EVS (8-12.5.2014).

According to the bylaws, the three permanent topic committees were established, namely the Committee for Changes and Conservation of Names (CCCN; chair Wolfgang Willner), the Committee for the Registration and Typification of Names (CRTN; chair Jean-Paul Theurillat) and the Committee for Website and Online Database (CWDB; chair Daniela Gigante).

By the end of July 2014, GPN counts 68 members, with more than 70% of them being from Europe.

As its first activity, GPN started immediately to plan for the development of an online database for the registration of phytosociological names of plant communities, on the basis of an already existing MS Access database (J.-P. Theurillat and M. Ottone, Geneva). The online database is presently in development at the University of Vienna under the supervision of Wolfgang Willner. It will be developed as an ORDBMS with SQL format and with django as web front end. At the moment, the new structure is established (tables, fields) and a first prototype is expected to be ready by September. The work is supported financially by IAVS as a special activity with 3000 euro for 2013. The online database is a fundamental tool that will be at the core of the activities of GPN. It has been requested independently several times by GPN members and was fully supported by the members present at the business meeting in Ljubljana. With it there will be the possibility to register and store:

1. all the phytosociological names of plant communities
2. all the decisions about the changes and conservation of phytosociological names

At term, the database is intended to be the equivalent of the International Plant Names Index (IPNI) for phytosociological names.

The second activity that will start by the end of 2014 is the preparation of the fourth edition of the International Code of Phytosociological Nomenclature.
sPlot: Vegetation-plot Database

sPlot: the first global vegetation-plot database and opportunities to contribute

Jürgen Dengler & the sPlot Core Team

Background

Vegetation-plot data become increasingly available in regional and national vegetation-plot databases, particularly in Europe (Schaminée et al. 2009), but also on all other continents (Dengler et al. 2011). Access to such data has been facilitated through the global metadatabase GIVD (www.givd.info), set up in collaboration with the IAVS Working Group on Ecoinformatics, but until recently analyses of plot data across several continents were impeded by the fact that it is tedious and time-consuming to retrieve plot data from various different databases and to prepare them for common analyses, which requires standardisation of database format and structure, header data and species taxonomies.

To fill this gap, the European Vegetation Survey (EVS), a working group of IAVS, has initiated the first comprehensive continental plot database for Europe, called European Vegetation Arch (EVA), in 2012, which became live in spring 2014 (http://euroveg.org/eva-database; see Jiménez-Alfaro et al. 2013). Parallel to this European effort and in close collaboration with the European partners, an initiative for a global plot database, called “sPlot”, was initiated by an international Working Group at the Synthesis Centre (sDiv) of the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) in Halle-Jena-Leipzig (www.idiv.de) with the first sPlot Workshop in Leipzig in March 2013. Since then, the sPlot Team and Consortium, including many well-known IAVS members, was working on making this idea come true. Finally, in April 2014, a prototype of sPlot could be created by joining major parts of EVA (those whose owners had agreed to make their data available in both supra-national databases) with the first extra-European consortium and (b) data in sPlot are not public but restricted to use by sPlot Consortium members. Whenever a Consortium member has proposed a paper using the sPlot data, all Consortium members will be informed and can declare their interest of becoming co-authors (opt-in papers). Further, sPlot will ensure proper attribution and citation whenever data from a contributing database are used and explicitly excludes any analyses below continental level. Thus no data contributor needs to be concerned that data retrieved from sPlot could be used for national or regional analyses that might interfere with publications projects have planned themselves with their single database. Finally, contributed data to sPlot remain the property of the data contributor and can be withdrawn at any time.

Content of sPlot 1.0

sPlot 1.0 contains 52 databases and 659,000 plots from 62 countries:

- Europe (including Turkey), contributed via EVA: 40 databases, 611,397 plots
- Africa, Asia, Australasia: 10 databases, 46,865 plots
- Americas: 1 database, 427 plots

For certain analyses, we can additionally rely on cooperation with the French SOPHY database (209,000 plots), which is not part of sPlot, so that in total there are presently c. 840,000 plots worldwide, of which c. 700,000 are georeferenced (see Figs. 1 and 2).

Fig. 1: Geographic distribution of vegetation plots in sPlot 1.0.

Fig. 2: Density of vegetation plots (number per 100 km²) per country as contained in sPlot 1.0 (note the log-scale; some countries in the lightest green have only 0.002 plots per 100 km², namely the USA and China).
Table 1: Distribution of vegetation plots in sPlot 1.0 across the nine ecozones (note that densities are multiplied by 10,000 compared to Fig. 2).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ecozone (according to Schultz)</th>
<th>Number of plots</th>
<th>Plots per 1,000,000 km²</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – Tropics with year-round rain</td>
<td>1,358</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – Tropics with summer rain</td>
<td>5,394</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – Dry tropics and subtropics</td>
<td>9,998</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – Subtropics with summer rain</td>
<td>78,185</td>
<td>29,274</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – Subtropics with year-round rain</td>
<td>12,179</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – Temperate midlatitudes</td>
<td>586,419</td>
<td>40.581</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – Dry midlatitudes</td>
<td>5,644</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 – Boreal zone</td>
<td>8,133</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – Polar and subpolar zone</td>
<td>1,378</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sPlot meanwhile all nine ecozones (zonobiomes) were represented so that we could reasonably conduct comparisons of trait-environment relationships across these. However, the coverage of six of the nine ecozones calls for improvement (Table 1).

Call to contribute data until 31 January 2015

Based on the imbalanced coverage between ecozones and regions, the sPlot Working Group decided in Leipzig to call for additional datasets to be delivered to until the deadline of 31 January 2015. The data available by that deadline will be used to prepare version 2.0 of sPlot to be released approx. February 2015. sPlot 2.0 is expected to be used for the sPlot publications scheduled for the first half of 2015. While sPlot plans to grow continuously also after this release, another major new version is not expected before end of 2015/early 2016. Therefore it is highly attractive to join sPlot with relevant datasets already in January 2015

For that purpose, we invite you to contribute data for the following reasons:

- To balance the coverage between the ecozones (Table 1).
- To prepare the most comprehensive and balanced vegetation-plot database in the world.
- To provide a basis for characterizing species along the major environmental gradients in vegetation science.

Therefore it is highly attractive to join sPlot with relevant datasets already in January 2015 because this will safeguard that you automatically become co-author for the planned paper describing the sPlot datasets.

Thus we ask now for contribution of additional medium to big vegetation-plot databases to reduce our geographical imbalance and to achieve a better coverage of all nine ecozones (zonobiomes; see Figs. 1-2 and Table 1). This means that we are particularly looking for data from South America, North America, South Asia, Oceania and tropical and subtropical Africa. In terms of ecozones, most urgently needed (in this sequence) are plots from the (a) Tropics with year-round rain, (b) Tropics with summer rain, (c) Polar and subpolar zone, (d) Dry tropics and subtropics, (e) Dry midlatitudes and (f) Boreal zone. For particularly underrepresented regions/biomes, joining will be possible even with small datasets (of a few hundred plots).

Of course, we also accept data from the three already reasonably well-covered ecozones (Subtropics with winter rain = Mediterranean; Subtropics with year-round rain and Temperate midlatitudes) if they come from outside Europe (for data from European regions, please contribute them via EVA, see http://euroveg.org/eva-database).

Normally we require georeferenced plots with full species composition and percentage cover (or a comparable performance measure, such as Braun-Blanquet cover/abundance or basal area per hectare) of all species. However, in very underrepresented regions, we exceptionally also take plots where only presence/absence was recorded or only the woody species were sampled. If you have suitable plot data and wish to join the sPlot Consortium with them, please contact the sPlot Coordinator Jürgen Dengler (juergen.dengler@uni-bayreuth.de) as soon as possible to discuss details based on which sPlot will decide whether they invite you. To facilitate the process it would be good if you could already in your first e-mail indicate how many plots you could contribute in total, from which geographic area and which vegetation types, whether they have coordinates, full species lists and a relative performance measure per species (such as % cover).

THANK YOU for considering joining this global initiative of vegetation scientists and for forwarding this call to colleagues who might have suitable data!

References

Remembering Mike Dale

I first met Mike Dale at the University of Sheffield in the U.K. — less than a year short of a half century ago. He was a fresh Ph.D. mentored by Bill Williams in Southampton. I had just completed my Ph.D. with Vladimir Krajina at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. I remember well my first impressions of Mike: well-learnt, sagely presence in conversation, eyes sparkling with irrepressible self-confidence.

My career in science crossed paths with his many times, at many far points of the Globe, and in a multitude of ventures. If I think of it, each could be a story to be told, but I want to recount the early experiences in some detail, which began for me on a bright, spring-day on May 1 in 1964. It was on that day when Márta and I rolled-in onboard of our Volkswagen beetle into the biology parking lot at the University College of North Wales in Bangor. We were on a NATO Science Fellowship from Canada for my postdoctoral training in Peter Greig-Smith’s lab.

The ecological excellence of the College lured us to Bangor. Peter and his group were doing cutting edge research in quantitative ecology, and next door John Harper and his team were inventing a new version of experimental plant ecology. The forestry school too, at the next door, had many things going which interested Márta and me. We were by our undergraduate degrees forest engineers.

Little did we know on arrival to Bangor the fantastic experiences that were in store for us for the next 12 months. Computers, which processed complex code automatically, had just started to be available at universities. Automation of data analysis began in earnest at the leading schools, which in turn brought torrents of new results. They were changing ecological perceptions of the plant community.

Problem areas emerged that were impossible to handle by the old tools. Typical among these one were A.S. Watt’s intrinsically-driven pattern dynamics, P. Greig-Smith’s multi-scale species pattern, W.T. Williams’ site classification based on binary species data, D.W. Goodall’s ordination considering the “trends.”

I was working on multi-scale trajectory analysis in Valério’s lab at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. The Pennines. For me the symposium brought back memories of the Sheffield symposium with Mike Dale, Derek Anderson, Mac MacIntosh, and Mike Austin. I was elated to see in Mike the old himself: sagely presence in conversations and eyes still sparkling with an irrepressible self-confidence. But these were coming with an aging constitution, weakened by illness. Márta joins me not in grieving Mike’s and Pali’s passing, but in celebration of their lives.

Just that much more to you, Mike and Pali. Rest in peace! Your science is still going strong.

László Ortóci
On the Life of David Goodall

David Goodall listening to a lecture at the IAVS Perth symposium in 2014

Some thoughts about David Goodall’s work

I am honored to have been invited by my friend Laco Mucina to write this laudatio on the occasion of the hundredth birth- day of our friend and great mentor David Goodall. It certainly is not an easy task because I am not sure if I will find the right perspective and the right words to make a laudatio that is worthy of a person, a scientist of such remarkable versatility. Brief accounts on the life of David Goodall can be found in the Encyclopaedia of Australian Science and in Wikipedia, so I will not repeat all of what is written there; I will just mention something that had a great influence on my life and in many respects on my way of thinking about ecology and vegetation science.

I started working with David Goodall many years ago (1986), for me he was already back then a legend, as he was one of the first to introduce multivariate analysis in ecology and wrote programs for computer methods that I began to study at the University of Trieste (my university) awarded him in 1990 by the title of Doctor honoris causa in Natural Sciences, 

On the occasion I read his curriculum vitae for the first time. During the periods he spent in Trieste, giving me and Paola Gianis the pleasure of working with him, David Goodall behaved as would be the most diligent of young researchers of the Department. He was always punctual at half past eight in the morning at the Computing Centre of the University and, after a short break for lunch at twelve, resumed work until another short break for the classic English afternoon tea taken around 5 pm as of course any English gentleman would do. After working until about 7 pm we usually had our dinner and then he would be retiring to his room. The times he spent with my family were very enjoyable for all of us. My daughter Lucia, who at that time was a kid, adored him and was amused when he showed to compete with her for the fries. He was a great entertainer by using his experience as a theater actor in his free time. His life style for us, Italians, was an example of clarity, coherence and organization. When he was in Trieste, his activities were oriented to the development of new applications of statistical techniques or to his ideas on probabilistic methods in scientific classifications, but he also took part in field excursions to the islands of Dalmatia, where he offered seminars and lectures in courses co-organized by the Department of Biology at Ustica (Sicily), in a course organized by ICS-UNIDIO (International Centre for Science and Technology of United Industrial Development Organization) at the Academia Sinica in Beijing (China), on the interactions between climate and vegetation and in the International Workshops on Mathematical Ecology organized by the International Centre of Theoretical and Applied Ecology (CETA) in collaboration with the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) and much more. He brought a fundamental contribution to the birth of the journal Coenoses dedicated to community research. No wonder that the launch article of the journal, “The Ecologist’s ‘Ordination’: Their nature and role in taxonomy and community studies”, was written by David. Coenoses merged with Abstracta Botanica in 2000 to become Community Ecology, today co-edited by Jaques Pons and Roberto Hortal.


I am aware that this laudatio is a little bit biased by my scientific preference for a particular topic of his work, namely the probabilistic similarity indices. Nevertheless I cannot avoid recalling the paramount importance of the concept of similarity in all the aspects of scientific activities and the contribution of David Goodall to the development of such a concept. The ontology of the concept includes its “measures” and/or its metrics, and therefore it is impossible to ignore the first historical attempt to associate probability value to similarity between two objects or better to measure similarity by probability of similarity, as it was done successfully by David. I think the importance of the concept is not well understood and many techniques of data analysis that look very “advanced” are still running around such a concept without getting the point. The trivial cause of escaping from the concept of similarity, he proposed to measure similarity directly by the probability of similarity, was the sensitive testing, and finally he discussed the impressive work of David in other fields beyond his probabilistic approach in vegetation science and in plant identification.

After having made outstanding contribution in the field of applied science related to physiology of tomato, apples, cacao and lettuce in the first phases of his scientific career (1936-1960) and having applied his indices and statistical skills to different areas of biology (microbiology, animal and human biology) between 1960-1970, he started working intensive-ly on modelling of different ecosystem processes publishing several papers between 1967 to 1989, when this series of papers seems to end with the paper “Simulation modelling for ecological application” published in Coenoses. In that paper he clearly offered his vision on modelling, a vision that can clarify what modelling is for all those who are not famil- iar with the topic. He describes the objectives of modelling, explaining what the objective functions are, and what are the phases of model construction by explaining well the differ- ence between the stochastic models and the treatment of uncertainty, what is the sensitive testing, and finally he dis- cusses what validation means in the context of ecological research. He makes clear in his paper that modelling is a tool that has to be seen as an important component of the paraphermilia of mathematical and statistical instruments an ecologist has available.

During his ‘modelling period’ David also commenced his great journey to be the editor in chief of the famous series Ecosystems of the World with Elsevier (Amsterdam), 36 volumes in the series were published since 1974! He also co-edited two of the volumes: Mediterranean-type Shrublands (1981) and Hot Deserts and Arid Shrublands (1986). The Ecosystems of the World is a monumental piece of scientif- ically researching – a source of knowledge and inspiration for many generations to come.

In the nineties it looked like his research activity was again more concentrated on data analysis, the main theme of his scientific life, as also witnessed by the “Distinguished Sta- tistical Ecologist Award” he received at the VI International
Congress of Ecology (1994). In these last years he has been again working on his probabilistic methods for classification and identification, but also got busy organizing his philosophical thoughts on human evolution. I conclude this laudatio by mentioning his 2008 paper entitled "Human evolution – Where from here? Without any specific comment, I just invite you to read it as it is written in a very “David Goodall’s perspective”. I report here just some thoughts out of that paper that may give you an idea about how much David has integrated in his mind biology, human biology and the cultural evolution of Man: “Before the development of language, mental activity in different individuals remained largely independent. But language provided a mechanism by which different individuals could influence one another’s thought processes. This integration of thought processes among individuals who remained physically separate was perhaps a critical event in the development of Homo sapiens. It was based on the physical apparatus which biological evolution had bequeathed to the species, but its development proceeded quite independently of whatever biological changes may have been going on concurrently. The capacity of the individual brain had already been increased considerably through the normal evolutionary processes. But the evolution of language made it possible to go far beyond this: the brains of different individuals united by language could be harnessed together in ways which were not possible without language, thus largely obviating the need for further evolution in the individual brain. Though their brains were physically separate, their mental processes were linked, and the whole group of individuals thus could start to behave and react as a single entity.” I chose this text because I think it could be crucial in stimulating thinking about the importance of language and culture may have had in human history and may have in the Man’s future.

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Heathland in Cape Le Grand National Park

Kangaroos in a farmland area

Diuris sp. - Submitted by Kelli McCreery via IAVS Facebook Album

Forthcoming Meetings

2015

8-12 January: International Biogeographical Society Conference, Bayreuth, Germany (http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/ibs2015/)

4-6 March: 14th meeting of the German Working Group on Vegetation Databases: Vegetation databases and inference of ecological processes, Oldenburg, Germany (http://vegetationdatabases2015.namupro.de/)


22-27 May: 12th European Dry Grassland Meeting, Mainz, Germany (http://www.edgg.org/pdf/EDGM2015_1st%20call-flyer.pdf)

19-24 July: 58th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science, Brno, Czech Republic (www.iavs2015.cz)


9-14 August: 100th Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America, Baltimore, Maryland, USA (http://esa.org/baltimore/)

13-16 December: Annual Meeting of the British Ecological Society, Edinburgh, UK (http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/events/current_future_meetings/2015-annual-meeting/)

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