

Annual Report
IAVS Working Group for Ecoinformatics
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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 identification, 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.

Due to a very heavy work load Miquel de Cáceres resigned from the Steering Committee in 2016. We are grateful to him for his commitment to the Steering Committee. Without no doubt Miquel will remain active in Ecoinformatics working group.

The Steering Committee is still considering updating the Ecoinformatics website as a priority. Parts of the former website (hosted at the University of North Carolina) have been moved to the IAVS website, but there is much more information that can be provided to the Ecoinformatics community. A proposal for the update was submitted by the Steering Committee last year, but rejected by the IAVS Governing Board, because it was not specific enough in what actually would need to be changed or added to the site. Updating the proposal was unfortunately delayed because Florian Jansen, who is the lead person on the proposal, got a professorship in Rostock (Germany) and has been unable to revise the proposal yet. As such, the Steering Committee decided to discuss the proposal in Palermo, since every member will there be present. Resubmission will be done shortly after the symposium.

Even though the Steering Committee hasn't been very active last year as such, in the field of Ecoinformatics, important contributions have made to the community. A milestone was achieved by the publication of the [Vegetation of Europe](#) by Laco Mucina and many other vegetation scientist. Due to financial support by the IAVS Governing Board the index of European syntaxa can now also be queried on the [web](#), with the option to submit proposals for changes.

Lastly we would like to mention some relevant presentations in the field of ecoinformatics and posters scheduled for the Palermo symposium:

Oral presentations

- Hamed Asadi: The assignment of relevés to pre-existing vegetation units: A comparison of approaches using species fidelity.
- Andrew Gillison: A worldwide key to plant functional types.

- Peter Minchin: Non-metric Multidimensional Scaling of Vegetation Data: Insights and Innovations.
- Sebastian Schmidlein: An Android app to do relevés.
- Lubomír Tichý: A complex expert system language for vegetation classification and semi-automated optimization of diagnostic species groups.
- Otto Wildi: An ordination of ordinations: comparing the predictive power of ordinations to evaluate methodological decisions.

Poster presentations

- Borja Jiménez-Alfaro An invitation to join sPlot, the global vegetation database sPlot team.
- Gholizadeh Hamid Constructing uniform vegetation database of the relict Hyrcanian forests; Determination of the most environmental factors affecting floristic composition and indicator species.