



Eurasian Dry Grassland Group (EDGG)

Report for the period from 15th June 2016 to 15th June 2017

Members and organisation of the EDGG

Since the last report in 2016, the number of EDGG members slightly increased and reached 1184 members from 67 countries as of 30th April 2017. Membership in EDGG is still free of charge and can be activated by sending an e-mail to our membership administrator Idoia Biurrun (idoia.biurrun@ehu.es). So far the membership administration has been maintained separately from IAVS, creating double work and inconsistencies, but following a recent offer, first steps of integration of our membership database into the framework of the IAVS membership administration have been taken.

EDGG events

The **13th Eurasian Grassland Conference (EGC)** was taken place in Sigishoara, Romania on 20–24 September 2016 (<https://egc2016.namupro.de/>). The main topic of the conference was the *Management and Conservation of Semi-Natural Grasslands: from Theory to Practice*. The conference was co-organized by Fundatia ADEPT (<http://www.fundatia-adept.org/>) and Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of Biology and Geology, Cluj-Napoca (<http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/despre/>). For the first time, EDGG conducted a series of technical workshops during the days of the EGC. The conference was attended by 85 participants from 25 countries.

The 14th Eurasian Grassland Conference will be held at 4-11 July 2017 in Latvia and Lithuania, hosted by Solvita Rušina (Latvia) and Valerijus Rašomavičius (Lithuania) and colleagues. Further information can be found at the conference homepage at: <https://egc2017.namupro.de/>.

The **9th EDGG Field Workshop** was in Serbia during 2–9 July 2016. This event was devoted to collaborative sampling of high-quality biodiversity data in Palaeartic grasslands, and organised by Zora Dajić Stevanović, Ivan Šoštarić, Svetlana Ačić (University of Belgrade, Faculty of Agriculture) and Mirjana Krstivojević Ćuk (University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Biology and Ecology Department) in cooperation with Jürgen Dengler (EDGG Executive Committee, University of Bayreuth & German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research) and Idoia Biurrun (EDGG Executive Committee, University of the Basque Country). The demand for participation was particularly high, with 22 participants from 10 countries. The full report of the field workshop was published in the Bulletin of the EDGG 34 (Ačić et al., DOI: 10.21570/EDGG.Bull.34.19-31). The results of previous EDGG research expeditions were published for example in *Tuexenia* (Pedaschenko et al. 2013), in *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* (Turtureanu et al.

2014) and in *Biodiversity & Conservation* (Kuzemko et al. 2016, Polyakova et al. 2016).

The 10th EDGG Field Workshop was held in the Central Apennine Mountains (Italy), from 3 to 11 June 2017 hosted by Goffredo Filibeck and colleagues (University of Tuscia, Viterbo). For more information see in the EDGG Bulletin 33, pp. 3-12. The detailed report on the field workshop is planned in one of the forthcoming issues of the Bulletin of the EDGG.

Publication activities of the EDGG

EDGG has published three issues of its own electronic journal, the *Bulletin of the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group* within the reported period (Issues 32-34, all issues are freely available from <http://www.edgg.org/publications.htm>). Further, EDGG continued its long-standing tradition of Special Issues/Features in international journals over the past year. Currently, the following Special Issues/Features were published by the coordination of EDGG:

- The second Special Issue organised by EDGG in the journal *Biodiversity and Conservation* (eds. J. Dengler, D. Ambarli, J. Kamp, P. Török & K. Wesche). It is exclusively devoted to the natural steppes of the Palearctic biogeographic realm. With about 19 articles on about 400 pages it provides many new insights into what is globally one of the most threatened biomes.
<https://link.springer.com/journal/10531/25/12/page/1>
- A Special Issue in *Phytocoenologia* (eds. M. Janišová, J. Dengler & W. Willner) is devoted to Classification of Palearctic grasslands. With five papers including an editorial can be found on the homepage of the journal.
<https://www.schweizerbart.de/papers/phyto/list/46#issue3>
- The 11th Special Issue edited by EDGG in the journal *Tuexenia* appeared in July 2016 (eds. T. Becker, A. Csecserits, B. Deák, Monika Janišová, L.E. Sutcliffe & V. Wagner). It compiles six papers about a broad range of grassland types ranging from serpentine grasslands to alpine grasslands and dealing with questions of syntaxonomy, plant functional traits, experimental recruitment, disturbance, and vegetation dynamics of European grasslands
[http:// www.tuexenia.de/index.php?id=14](http://www.tuexenia.de/index.php?id=14)
- The third Special Issue edited by EDGG in the journal *Hacquetia* (eds. O. Valkó, S. Venn, I. Biurrun, R. Labadessa, J. Loos & M. Zmihorski) compiles eight papers dealing with vegetation ecology, syntaxonomy and zoology of a wide range of grassland and steppe habitats from East Europe to central Asia. It also includes a report of the EDGG activities from 2015 to 2016.
<https://www.degruyter.com/view/j/hacq.2016.15.issue-2/issue-files/hacq.2016.15.issue-2.xml>

Furthermore, EDGG co-organised the Palearctic chapters in a currently emerging global book on grassland conservation and management (CRC press). Most of the chapters are already submitted and were subjected to editorial revision. The book is expected to be published in 2018.

Financial issues

Main financial support of EDGG occurs via IAVS. In 2017, IAVS provides an annual

baseline support (500€), will provide travel grants for the EDGG Field Workshop in Italy (2385 € for three participants) and the Eurasian Grassland Conference in Riga (2615 €; grantees not yet selected). The detailed reports will be submitted to GSC shortly after the respective events and will be reported in details next reporting period. Also a honorarium (1000 €) to one EDGG representative to attend the annual IAVS Symposium in Palermo, Sicily. The support is greatly acknowledged by the EDGG.

We used granted 3000 € project funding for 2016 as follows. In 2016 the IAVS jointly granted to EDGG and EVS a project money in the worth of 1500 € (750+750 €) for the development of 'collaborative vegetation-plot databases in SE Europe II'. The money is used to cover travel expenses of Kiril Vassilev, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences to advance three collaborative vegetation plot databases in SE Europe, who partner with the European Vegetation Archive (EVA) and the global plot database sPlot: Balkan Vegetation Database, Balkan Dry Grassland Vegetation Database and Romanian Grassland Database. With this money thousands of additional relevés from this underrepresented region of Europe could be mobilized for these public databases. We received also a project funding in a worth of 2250 € for Eurasian Grassland Conference participation of EDGG Executive Committee members in 2016. This allowed the EDGG to ensure the participation three of its EC members at the General Assembly of the EDGG in Sighisoara, Romania.

We submitted the proposal in frame of project funding (for obtaining 3000 € for 2017) for supporting homepage development to the Governing Board of the IAVS. The IAVS GB requested additional information before the decision. We currently collecting the requested information and will submit a revised proposal for 2017 in the forthcoming.

We covered costs of linguistic editing in 2016 (792.1 €) of non-native authors in the EDGG special features in *Biodiversity & Conservation* and *Haquetia*. To these we used our baseline founding 2016 and also the EDGG savings from Special Issue *Haquetia* received in 2015 from University of Hildesheim.

Other EDGG media

The EDGG homepage (www.edgg.org) during the report period was maintained at a basic level. The IAVS provided us by the FASEB to accommodate our homepage at the IAVS server within the provided framework of the IAVS main page. Now that IAVS has offered this option we are currently clarifying whether this meets our needs or not, but we have also started to seek alternatives to it.

In order to enhance the rapid dissemination of information to our members about EDGG activities, as well as in order to attract new members, a discussion on various topics related to grasslands research and conservation has been established in the EDGG Facebook group. It can be visited at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/938367279561202/?ref=bookmarks>. Facebook page editors: Anna Kuzemko (anya_meadow@i.ua) and Stephen Venn (stephen.venn@helsinki.fi).

We cordially invite you to join EDGG, its events and activities!

Péter Török (on behalf of the Executive Committee of the EDGG)