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Message from the President

When I went to work with my bicycle this morning, it was quite warm, and I just had to wear a light sweater and a wind-resistant jacket. On my way back in the afternoon it will probably be possible to lay off the jacket and perhaps even the sweater. Why might this be an interesting observation? Because it is the 9th of November, and because my working place is the University of Bremen, which is located in the north of Germany and supposed to be cold at this time of the year. A few days ago the temperature on the Brocken, the top of the Harz Mountains at 1142 m a.s.l., reached 19.8 °C, which is an all-time high since the beginning of the weather records. Globally, it is likely that the year 2015 will be the warmest year ever.

Observations like these remind me that vegetation science is not only a scientific discipline that, like other disciplines, should develop and advance its field through research in various sub-disciplines. It should also, as the statutes of the IAVS formulate it (Article 2, f), “promote appropriate application of vegetation science for the good of society, particularly in environmental management and public decision making”. This means that we as vegetation ecologists and members of the IAVS should seek to disseminate our findings to the public and to our politicians. For example, long-term studies in plant communities allow us to disentangle the effects of various environmental drivers on vegetation changes in the past, but they can and should also be used to forecast future changes in plant communities under different scenarios of environmental change.

Or species distribution models: they help us to understand ecological concepts such as adaptation or niche differentiation, but they are at least as relevant for forecasting the future responses of species to climate change or eutrophication. As long as our predictions are based on sound science, we should take the risk that these predictions turn out to be wrong. With so many variables (related to e.g. climate, soil, atmospheric deposition, management) affecting plant communities, forecasting is a difficult task, but this is equally true for other fields of science (but this doesn’t stop economists from forecasting).

Turning back to the Brocken mountain: it is the location of an endemic pasqueflower, *Pulsatilla alpina* subsp. *alba*. How will climate change affect the growth of the plants and the competitive interactions with other species? Will the survival of the populations depend on management actions, and can our scientific knowledge be the basis for clear recommendations to nature conservation authorities? Answers to these questions are often given in papers published in the journals of our Association - notably *Applied Vegetation Science*, but also *Journal of Vegetation Science*, and they might be highly relevant for appropriate policies of the countries in which we live. We also need to communicate such findings to our students: showing *Pulsatilla* in its natural growing sites and discussing ecology in the field - as we did with a student class during an excursion to the Harz in summer - may sensitize students to the threats for this and other species, perhaps more than any scientific article can ever do.

Martin Diekmann
IAVS President

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*Pulsatilla alpina* subsp. *alba*, an endemic plant taxon growing on the Brocken, Harz Mountains, Germany. June 2015
A Message from the Editor

The Bulletin of the IAVS belongs to periodicals with a long tradition. It started as a Circular distributed to the IAVS members by ordinary post. From 1997 through 2012, it has been published as an occasional electronic newsletter, usually once a year (in the winter). Since 2012, the IAVS Bulletin has been published in a digital format twice a year and distributed to members by e-mail. This issue is the second for the year 2015 and the first one prepared by the newly elected Governing Board.

With the recent issue of the IAVS Bulletin we introduce some changes. First of all, we would like to produce the Bulletin more regularly and more frequently than it was in the past. A transition to a quarterly periodical could help to keep you informed about the main activities, actual plans, and important news. We also would like to change the content, making the contributions more readable and useful for the IAVS members. And most importantly, we would like to engage you, our members, in formation of the content and shape of the next Bulletin issues.

What would we like to publish?

The regular contributions with annual periodicity will include reports from the past annual symposia, calls for the forthcoming symposia, General Assembly reports, and an introduction to winners of major awards and young scientist prizes. Also, during an election period, we will publish announcement of election results and introductions to the newly-elected IAVS Officers. The regular sections with less predictable frequency will include the news from the IAVS working groups, regional sections and committees, reports from the editors of the journals related to our Association, and book/meeting reviews.

Periodically, we also plan to introduce the IAVS history, remember important moments in the IAVS developments, introduce particular vegetation scientists, including historical as well as recent personalities. Besides these types of contributions, we are open to forum and opinion papers, longer commentaries or brief essays, letters and other items related to the vegetation science and life of our Association. In addition, we plan to publish feature articles to inform and entertain our readers. You are welcome to send us contributions and present your ideas and needs. We welcome any news or articles that will be of interest to the community, including suggestions for new topics members would like to see covered.

As we are privileged to study beautiful creatures (plants and interacting organisms) and fascinating living systems (vegetation and ecosystems), we are prepared to devote a lot of Bulletin space to present our study objects. The photographs showing aspects of plant life, Earth’ vegetation, ecological processes and ecological research are especially welcome. We would also like to keep contact with other IAVS media, Facebook groups of the IAVS, and its working groups (EDGG and EVS) and publish (after the approval of the authors) the most interesting contributions and most beautiful photos in the IAVS Bulletin.

Our vision for the future is to build a well established periodical, which not only serves the membership in the moment of publication, but which also is worth being opened repeatedly in order to find entertainment and useful information.

Monika Janišová
Governing Board Member
Introduction of IAVS Officers

In July 2015, a new Governing Board has been elected during the Council Meeting in Brno, Czech Republic. The members of the new Governing Board, who should serve IAVS in the period between 2015 and 2019, are shortly introduced by themselves in the following contribution.

President of the IAVS

Martin Diekmann
Bremen, Germany

I obtained my PhD at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, and since 2001 have been a professor at the University of Bremen, Germany. I have been a member of IAVS already for 25 years, and after having served as Publications Officer of the association I was elected as President of IAVS in 2011. My main interests in vegetation science include vegetation-environment relationships, time-series analysis and conservation biology, with a particular focus on forest and grassland ecosystems. I like field work and being out also in my spare time, for example when mountain walking. A main goal of my work with IAVS is to contribute to make the association more attractive for young scientists.

Secretary of the IAVS

Susan Wiser
Lincoln, New Zealand

I am a Senior Research Scientist at Landcare Research, New Zealand. My current research interests include ecoinformatics, the ecology of naturally rare ecosystems and classification of NZ vegetation. I have been a member of IAVS since 1994, served on the JVS editorial board (2000-2003), was an Associate Editor (2003-2007), served on the IAVS Awards Committee (2009-2011), served on the steering committee of IAVS Working Group on Ecoinformatics (2013-), and have been on the IAVS Council and served as the IAVS Secretary since 2011. Over the last term the IAVS Governing Board has made a major effort to streamline the administration of the society, as this consumed a lot of our time. One of my goals for IAVS in future is to use this freed time to put more effort into encouraging involvement and an increased profile of women and early-career scientists in IAVS.

Vice Presidents of the IAVS (in alphabetic order)

Alessandra Fidelis
São Paulo, Brazil

I obtained my Bachelor Degree at the Universidade de São Paulo (Brazil) and my Master’s and PhD at the Technische Universität München (Germany). Since 2011 I have been an Assistant Professor at the Departamento de Botânica, at the Universidade Estadual Paulista (Brazil). My research is focus on tropical savanna and grasslands, including seed and fire ecology, as well as biological invasions. I have been a member of IAVS since 2010, but I have been attending IAVS symposia since I was a graduate student. I am also the chair of the Global Sponsorship Committee since 2014.

Monika Janišová
Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

I am a researcher at Institute of Botany of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, focusing mainly on grasslands (classification, diversity, management) and population biology of grassland species. I have been a member of IAVS since 1993, however, I started to attend its symposia just in 2007. Since 2008, I have served as one of the chairs of the European Dry Grassland Group (EDGG), which later became one of the IAVS working groups. My main task has been the preparation and design of the Bulletin of the EDGG. I co-organized the European Dry Grassland Meeting in 2010 (Smolenice, Slovakia) and the IAVS Post-symposium Excursion in 2015 (Carpathian Mountains, Slovakia). I am constantly impressed by the Earth’ vegetation and I feel very well in the company of vegetation scientists. That’s why I agreed to serve as one of the IAVS officers dealing mainly with preparation of IAVS Bulletin.
Vice Presidents of the IAVS
(continued in alphabetic order)

Pavel Krestov
Vladivostok, Russia

I love Asia and live in the Asian Russian city of Vladivostok currently working for the Botanical Garden-Institute of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. My research focuses on the vegetation within the temperate, boreal and arctic zones of North Hemisphere, including vegetation classification and history, biogeography and bioclimatology. My 10 years of service for IAVS strengthen my believe how it can be important to bring together local, but no less important vegetation studies on the international level. During the last term I served in the Vegetation Classification and Global sponsorship committees of IAVS. My major dream is the organization of active working group for East Asian vegetation and make one of the future IAVS meetings here, in Vladivostok.

Javier Loidi
Bilbao, Spain

I obtained my PhD at the Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) in 1981 where I worked until 1988. That year I moved to the University of the Basque Country in Bilbao, where I teach so far as Professor. My membership in IAVS started in 1976, when I spent a period in Germany with R. Tüxen as student, and I belong to the Council since the early nineties. My interest in vegetation sciences focuses in forest ecology, vegetation classification, influence of the climatic changes and biodiversity patterns in some particular environments as mountain ecosystems. My intention as regards the IAVS is to increase the attractiveness of our association to scientists, particularly to the younger ones and those original from underrepresented territories. I believe that IAVS should aspire to host all vegetation scientists of the world and to facilitate contacts and scientific relationships among them.
On behalf of the Local Organizing Committee, I would like to invite all vegetation scientists, new and old, to attend the 59th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS) that is returning to Brazil after 14 years, but this time in a completely different community type – the savannas of central Brazil.

The Cerrado, the name used for the savannas of central Brazil, is home to an extensive flora, with over 12000 species in its extension of over 2 million km². The plant communities vary in physiognomy from extensive grassy fields through savanna to forests, both riverine and on uplands, and higher altitude rocky fields. Fire is an important factor in the molding of these communities. Although the plants may not be as well collected as in other parts of the world, the Herbarium of the University of Brasilia has an outstanding collection with emphasis on the flora of the Cerrado.

For the first time in the history of the IAVS, the meeting in 2016 will be within the tropics, but that is not to say that we will be in a hot and humid climate. The Cerrado has a distinct wet season, during our summer, and dry season, during our winter. The meeting will be at the end of our fall season, remember that we will be in the southern hemisphere again, and this is the beginning of the dry season in the region, so we should have warm days and cooler evenings and nights.

The local where the meeting will be held, Pirenópolis, is a small historical city in Brazil. Pirenópolis is located in central Brazil approximately 150 km west of Brasilia, our capital, where most of you will arrive. Hopefully everyone will have some time to spend in Brasília also to see why it has been included in UNESCO’s World Heritage sites.

The specific theme of IAVS will be “Conservation of Plant Communities: From Environmental Drivers to Ecosystem Services”, although talks on all aspects of research related to the study of vegetation science will be welcome. There will be specific sessions on Classification of plant communities, Conservation of plant communities, Fire and grazing in the management of non-forest vegetation and Restoration of plant communities, among other topics.

We are confident that all participants in this meeting will be satisfied with the scientific program, field excursions and social events that are being planned. We also hope that all participants will return to their institutes or places of origin with new ideas and new contacts, both national and international.

We hope to see you in Pirenópolis.

John Du Vall Hay
Chair, Local Organizing Committee

P.S. Check out the pictures on the following pages to see what awaits you in Brazil! And, visit the symposium website for the most up-to-date information:

www.iavs2016.org
Serra dos Pireneus Park (above) and Hotel Pousada dos Pireneus (below)
Corumbá Waterfall and Cerrado near Pirenópolis (above) and gallery forest in the Reserva Vaga Fogo (below)
Panorama of “campo sujo” near Caldas Novas (above)

*Caryocar brasiliense* - a symbol of the cerrado (above) and cerrado near Caldas Novas (below)
Look Back:

58th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science

The 58th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science was held in Brno, Czech Republic, on 19–24 July 2015. The venue was Hotel Voroněž located near the city centre, just a few hundred metres from the Augustinian monastery in which Gregor Mendel made his famous hybridization experiments.

The general topic of the symposium was Understanding broad-scale vegetation patterns, which provided a framework for presenting and discussing vegetation research at broad spatial and long temporal scales, meeting other fields such as macroecology, biogeography, historical ecology, palaeoecology, landscape ecology, global change biology and invasion biology. This also included more applied research such as vegetation survey and nature conservation, management and restoration.

Besides the scientific sessions the symposium comprised pre- and mid-symposium excursions in the eastern part of the Czech Republic, a post-symposium excursion in the Western Carpathians of Slovakia, and pre- and post-symposium courses of vegetation data analysis.

The symposium was organized by vegetation scientists from Masaryk University, supported by colleagues from other institutions from the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Participants

The symposium was attended by 491 participants from 41 countries, which made it the largest symposium in the history of IAVS. Twenty-seven participants were supported by travel grants from the IAVS Global Sponsorship Committee. The numbers of participants by countries were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Switzerland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>Armenia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>Namibia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scientific Programme and Presentations

The programme of the symposium included plenary talks, contributed talks running in four parallel sessions, and poster sessions. A new feature introduced at the IAVS symposia were plenary lightning talks, in which the participants could present the topic and content of their posters within one minute, and invite the others to visit them during the poster sessions.

The invited plenary speakers included Sandra Díaz, Michael Huston, Marcel Rejmánek, David Storch, Eddy van der Maarel, Kathy Willis and Susan Wiser, who presented well-received keynotes on the main topics of the symposium. The highlights of the plenary sessions were the lectures by two awardees: Kazue Fujiwara (Honorary Membership lecture, with laudatio by Elgene Box) and Sandra Lavorel (Alexander von Humboldt Medal lecture, with laudatio by Sandra Díaz). In addition, plenary talks included a remembrance of Bastow Wilson by Gillian Rapson and an introduction to the vegetation of the host country by Milan Chytrý.

The contributed talks and posters were presented in standard sessions and special sessions. Measured by the number of contributed presentations, the most attractive standard oral sessions were those on plant traits and community assembly, reflecting current research trends in vegetation science. The most attractive standard poster sessions were those on application of vegetation science in nature conservation, on patterns of vegetation change across landscapes, and on vegetation survey, reflecting considerable interest of contemporary vegetation scientists in applied issues.
The special sessions were proposed and convened by the symposium participants to map the current state of research on selected topics or in selected sub-disciplines of vegetation science. There was a great interest in the special sessions, reflected in the fact that approximately half of the session talks were presented in special sessions. There were nine special sessions:

- **Ecoinformatics**: demonstrations of new software developments and analytical methods (convened by Stephan Hennekens & Susan Wiser; only oral presentations)
- **Global change and vegetation dynamics**: the use of historical data sets (convened by Radim Hédl, John-Arvid Grytnes, Gerald Jurasinski & Markus Bernhardt-Römermann)
- **Long-term perspectives on vegetation change** (convened by Petr Kuneš & Thomas Giesecke)
- **Old wine in new bottles**: trait-based understanding of plant responses to disturbance (convened by Jitka Kliměšová & Tomáš Herben)
- **Remote sensing for vegetation science** (convened by Hannes Feilhauer, Duccio Rocchini & Sebastian Schmidtlein)
- **Species and plant community responses along soil gradients** (convened by Martin Diekmann, Jörg Ewald & Cord Peppler-Lisbach)
- **The relevance of ‘dark diversity’ for theoretical and applied ecology** (convened by Francesco de Bello, Rob Lewis & Meelis Pärtel; only oral presentations)
- **Urban vegetation** (convened by Sonja Knapp & Zdeňka Lososová)
- **Vegetation patterns, processes and dynamics of timberlines** (convened by Hongyan Liu, Zehao Shen, Lynn Resler & Eryuan Liang; only poster presentations)

The most attended special session was that on Global change and vegetation dynamics. Given the large number of high-quality talks and posters presented in this session, the session conveners were invited by the Chief Editors of *Applied Vegetation Science* to edit a Special Feature of this journal based on the materials presented during the symposium.

At each of its annual symposia IAVS recognizes the young scientists who have presented the most outstanding oral presentation and poster. This year the awards went to Inga Hiiesalu for the oral presentation “Belowground vs aboveground plant richness in a long-term grassland management experiment” and Sonya Geange for the poster “Plasticity in water use traits in Australian alpine plants”.

**Excursions**

There were 15 excursions with a total of 515 participants (including some people participating in more than one excursion). The pre- and mid-symposium excursion visited various field sites in Moravia, the eastern part of the Czech Republic, especially in the southern part of this region, which is situated at the transition between the deciduous forest biome of the Central European Floristic Region and the forest-steppe biome of the Pontic-South Siberian Floristic Region. A novel feature at the IAVS symposia was an offer of the pre-symposium excursions of various lengths to meet the requirements of participants with different time constraints. The post-symposium excursion visited various sites in the Western Carpathians in Slovakia, starting in the forest-steppe landscapes on the foothills and ending in the summit area of the Tatra Mountains. Here is the overview of the excursions:

- **Four-day pre-symposium excursion “The vegetation diversity of South Moravia”** (Žďár Hills including the Louky u Černého lesa Nature Monument and Dáňko National Nature Reserve, Mohelno Serpentinite Steppe, Podyjí National Park including the Šobes meander, Havraníky-Znojmo heathlands, city of Znojmo and a wine cellar in Hnanice, Svatý kopeček

A lightning-talk session with its two chair persons, David Zelený and Ching-Feng Li.

The overall statistics of the symposium presentations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Presentation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Award talks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invited keynote talks</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks in standard sessions</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks in special sessions</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total talks</strong></td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters in standard sessions with lightning talks</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters in standard sessions without lightning talks</td>
<td>129</td>
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<tr>
<td>Posters in special sessions with lightning talks</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Posters in special sessions without lightning talks</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total posters</strong></td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nature Reserve in the Pavlov Hills and the town of Mikulov, Dyje floodplain near Lednice and the Lednice Chateau Park, Hodonínská Dúbrava Wood and the White Carpathians including the Čertoryje meadows and Zahrady pod Hájem meadows), 16–19 July, guided by Milan Chytrý, Jiří Daniehelka & Eva Hettenbergerová, with additional guides joining for individual sites: Pavlína Bukáčková, Jan W. Jongepier, Ivana Jongepierová, Kamila Juřičková, Zdeňka Lososová & Tomáš Peterka – 32 participants

• One-day pre-symposium excursion White Carpathians (Čertoryje meadows and Zahrady pod Hájem meadows), 18 July, guided by Jan W. Jongepier, Ivana Jongepierová & Zuzana Plesková – 13 participants

• One-day pre-symposium excursion Podyjí National Park (Šobes meander, Havraníky–Znojmo heathlands and the city of Znojmo), 19 July, guided by Zdeňka Lososová, Lubomír Tichý & David Zelený – 33 participants


• Mid–symposium excursion 2 – Mohelno Serpentinite Steppe, Krumlov-Rokytá Conglomerates and Krumlov Wood, 22 July, guided by Pavel Daněk, Pavel Novák & David Zelený – 36 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 3 – Moravian Karst – North (Josefov Valley, Macocha abyss and the nearby karst valleys), 22 July, guided by Zdeňka Lososová – 42 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 4 – Moravian Karst – South (Hády Hill, Říčka Valley and Josefov Valley), 22 July, guided by Lubomír Tichý – 41 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 5 – Podyjí National Park (Šobes meander, Havraníky-Znojmo heathlands and the city of Znojmo), 22 July, guided by Milan Chytrý – 42 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 6 – Pavlov Hills (Děvín Hill and the town of Mikulov) and Pouzdřany Steppe, 22 July, guided by Radim Hédl – 41 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 7 – Lednice–Valtice Cultural Landscape (Dyje floodplain near Lednice and the Lednice Chateau Park) and Milovická stráň Nature Reserve, 22 July, guided by Jiří Daniehelka – 36 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 8 – Hodonínská Dúbrava Wood and Špidláky Nature Reserve, 22 July, guided by Jan Roleček – 25 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 9 – White Carpathians (Čertoryje meadows and Zahrady pod Hájem meadows), 22 July, guided by Jan W. Jongepier & Ivana Jongepierová – 38 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 10 – Hrubý Jeseník (Ovčárna chalet, Sedlové peatbog, Mount Petrovy kameny and Velká kotlina cirque), 22 July, guided by Kateřina Kočí, Martin Kočí & Jindřich Chlapek – 42 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 11 – Brno sightseeing (Botanical Garden of the Faculty of Science of Masaryk University, Mendel Museum of Masaryk University, historical city centre), 22 July, guided by Magdaléna Chytrá & Eva Vonková – 15 participants

• Mid–symposium excursion 12 – Brno sightseeing tour with a visit to Villa Tugendhat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for accompanying persons took place on 23 July.

In addition, Brno sightseeing tour with a visit to Villa Tugendhat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for accompanying persons took place on 23 July.

Local excursion guides prepared two printed guide books with explanatory texts, maps and photographs of excursion sites, extensive plant list and bibliographic references, one for the Moravian excursions and one for the excursion in the Slovak Carpathians:


Excursion to the Velká kotlina glacial cirque in the Hrubý Jeseník Mountains

• Mid–symposium excursion 11 – Brno sightseeing (Botanical Garden of the Faculty of Science of Masaryk University, Mendel Museum of Masaryk University, historical city centre), 22 July, guided by Magdaléna Chytrá & Eva Vonková – 15 participants


© V. Kalníková

In addition, Brno sightseeing tour with a visit to Villa Tugendhat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for accompanying persons took place on 23 July.
Two memorable social events of the symposium were the IAVS Music Jam Session in the Železná růže pub on 22 July, organized by Francesco de Bello, Lars Götzenberger and Jan Lepš, and the Symposium Dinner at Palace Hlinky and its gardens on 23 July accompanied by jazz music that was fitting well to this historical venue. Another outstanding music performance that will certainly be remembered by the symposium participants was the piano concert by Eddy van der Maarel, the founder of the IAVS journals and a special guest of the symposium, who played several compositions by the Brno composer Leoš Janáček and by Johann Sebastian Bach before the closing ceremony of the symposium.

The symposium participants were invited to sign a memorial book established by Josef Podpěra, the first Professor of Botany at Masaryk University, which included, among others, the signatures of participants of the Fifth International Phytogeographical Excursion in 1928, including the leading vegetation scientists of that time such as H.A. Gleason, E. Rübel and A.G. Tansley. We vegetation scientists from Masaryk University are proud that the signatures of the leaders of vegetation science of today were added to our guest book.

The photographic chronicle of the 58th IAVS Symposium is available at http://www.iavs2015.cz/en_symposium_photos.html. Modern vegetation scientists use up-to-date technology not only in their research, but also to organize their meetings. Drones are increasingly used to study vegetation patterns and therefore it was quite natural that Lubomír Tichý took the symposium photo by his drone. You are welcome to download the aerial photos from this website and analyze spatial patterns within a population of vegetation scientists.

Acknowledgements
I would like to thank so much to all the people who worked hard for the success of the 58th IAVS Symposium, especially to local organizers, most notably Eva Hettenbergerová, Soňa Hroudová, Ching-Feng Li, Zdeňka Lososová, Dana Michalcová, Lubomír Tichý and David Zelený, but also to many other great colleagues and students from Masaryk University and other Czech institutions, to excursion guides and assistants, course teachers and assistants, IAVS Advisory Committee members, conveners of the special sessions, session chairs, IAVS Governing Board members, IAVS Global Sponsorship Committee members, Ta-Service conference agency, governance of Masaryk University and its Faculty of Science, the staff of Voroněž Hotel and many others.

Milan Chytrý
Department of Botany and Zoology, Masaryk University, Kotlářská 2, CZ-611 37 Brno, Czech Republic, chytry@sci.muni.cz.
Opening of the 58th IAVS Symposium by the IAVS President Martin Diekmann, Milan Chytrý and Jaromír Leichmann, the Dean of the Masaryk University’s Faculty of Science (left). Congress audience with Anselm Kratochwil, Richard Pott and Javier Loidi (right).

Jill Rapson remembers Bastow Wilson (left). Congress hall with Valério Pillar and Sandra Díaz in front (right).

Kathy Willis gave a plenary keynote talk on Palaeoecological insights on biodiversity as prerequisites for planning a “Green Economy” (left). Eddy van der Maarel presented a keynote talk with a personal retrospect on species diversity research (right).
Poster sessions.

The founding meeting of the IAVS Vegetation Classification Working Group, chaired by Miquel De Cáceres (left). Participants of the post-symposium IAVS excursion to Slovakia (right).

Excursion to the species-rich grasslands in the White Carpathians, guided by Ivana Jongepierová and Jan W. Jongepier (left). Lubomír Tichý and David Zelený are introducing thermophilous oak forests in the Podyjí National Park at a one-day pre-symposium excursion (right).
Zdeňka Lososová and David Zelený showing the Map of Potential Natural Vegetation of the Czech Republic (left). Excursion to the Hrubý Jeseník Mountains (right).

Excursion to a floodplain hardwood forest in the Dyje River floodplain (left). Excursion to dry heathlands in the Podyjí National Park (right).

Jiří Danihelka demonstrating grasses in the floodplain wetlands along the Dyje River (left). Tomáš Herben examining Sisymbrium altissimum, one of the dry-grassland tumbleweeds in the Špidláky Nature Reserve (right).
Comments from the Meeting Committee

This symposium has been one of the best organized in the history of IAVS symposia. Everything has functioned as a precision machine with the ingredient of the kindness and solicitude of our Czech and Slovakian colleagues. From the organization point of view it has been an “almost perfect” symposium. In the scientific field, the expectations have been fulfilled as it has been reached the high level set by the previous symposia and participants have had the opportunity to know the last advances in the different areas of the Vegetation Science. The part of the excursions has been also extraordinarily performed, either the long ones (pre- and post-symposium) as the mid-symposium one-day excursions. All of them have been conveniently guided by persons well acquainted with the flora and the vegetation of the visited areas and participants were provided with explanatory written guides. Explanations have been satisfactory and logistics convenient. The best of the Czech and Slovakian ecosystems has been shown in them, offering an unrepeatable opportunity to have a contact with them.

We have to give our grateful thanks to all the people have been participating in these events organization, which under the chair of Milan Chytrý, have given their best.

Javier Loidi
On behalf of the IAVS Meeting Committee
General Assembly Report

Minutes
IAVS General Assembly, Brno, Czech Republic
Time: Friday, July 24 16:15–17:15
Location: Congress Hall A&B, Hotel Voroněž

The General Assembly was opened by President Martin Diekmann, who presented the following:

1. Membership Report
The number of IAVS members is stable to increasing; details for the top 20 countries are shown below. Germany currently has the most members, with the United States being second highest.

2. Council Business
Council business (including Minutes from 2015 meetings of the outgoing and newly elected councils at Brno) will be printed in the IAVS Bulletin 2015/2. Highlights of the year include:

- There has been a change in the bylaws of the European Dry Grassland group to expand the geographic scope. Accordingly the name has been changed to the Eurasian Dry Grassland Group
- The income for IAVS has increased slightly, primarily through our journals and profit share arrangement with the publisher (Wiley).
- The IAVS Business Office (FASEB) will develop a symposium website to be in place for the Brazil meeting in 2016
- Reports were submitted from the IAVS working groups and regional sections

3. New Governing Board
A new Governing Board was elected at the meeting of the new Council:

- Martin Diekmann was re-elected to serve as President
- Susan Wiser was re-elected to serve as Secretary
- Javier Loidi was re-elected to serve as a Vice President
- Alessandra Fidelis, Peter Minchin, Pavel Krestov and Monika Janišová were newly elected to serve as Vice Presidents

4. Publications (presented by Robert Peet)
The journals are doing well. The 2014 impact factors were released in June. AVS increased a bit from a ranking of 2.416 to 2.548, while JVS increased substantially from 3.372 to 3.709. AVS and JVS are now at all-time highs in the rankings of Ecology journals, Forestry journals and Plant Sciences journals (see table below). Our past and present Chief Editors and their Associate Editors and Editorial Boards are to be congratulated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ecology JVS</th>
<th>AVS</th>
<th>Forestry JVS</th>
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<th>Plant Sciences JVS</th>
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<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

5. Meetings Reports
5.1. Pirenópolis, Brazil, 2016 (presented by John Hay)
The 59th IAVS symposium will be held in Pirenópolis, Brazil from 12–17 June and will be hosted by Masaryk University. The theme will be “Conservation of Plant Communities: from Environmental Drivers to Ecosystem Services”

Important dates are:
15 September 2015
Website and online registration opens
18 December 2015
Deadline for special session proposals
25 February 2016
Deadline for abstract submission
15 April 2016
Deadline for early registration
10 May 2016
Deadline for registration

Please visit the www.iavs2016.org for the most up-to-date information; dates may have changed.
1–2 day pre-symposium excursions will start in Brasília and end in Pirenópolis. They will include:

• Chapada dos Veadeiros (600 km)
• Parque Estadual da Serra de Caldas Novas (550 km)
• Environs of Brasília (100 km)
• Architecture of Brasilia (100 km)

Longer pre-symposium excursions will include:

• Atlantic Forest and Cerrado (São Paulo) (4–5 days)
• National Park of Catimbau (5–6 days)

Mid-symposium excursions will include:

• Parque Estadual dos Pirenéus
• Reserva Vaga Fogo
• Waterfalls
• Local cultural sites

Post-symposium excursions will include:

• National Park of Chapada dos Veadeiros and environs (5–6 days)
• Amazon near Manaus (6–8 days)

Pirenópolis 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 approximately 190 km west of Brasília (2 h 30 min travel). The conference venue will be the Congress Hotel Pousada dos Pirenéus, which has capacity for hosting congress of up to 1000 participants and a recent history of hosting several national and international events. Brasilia is serviced by many airlines. Bus transport will be available to and from the Brasilia International airport to and from the congress. All major car rental companies have stands at the Brasilia airport.

5.2. Palermo, Italy, 2017 (presented by Riccardo Guarino)
The symposium will be held June 20–24 (Tuesday–Saturday). The theme will be “Vegetation patterns in natural and cultural landscapes”. 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.

5.3. Bozeman, Montana, USA, 2018 (presented by Peter Minchin and Dave Roberts)
The symposium will be held 22–27 July, 2018. It will be held in a convention center with capacity for 500+ people. The venue can be readily reached by connections to Bozeman-Yellowstone international airport. There are plenty of hotel rooms as well as student dormitories for budget accommodation. Mid-symposium excursion ideas include the Gallatin Mountains, Yellowstone National Park, Three Forks and Beartrap Canyon, Fairy Lake and Bridger Mountains and Custer National Forest and Beartooth Pass. The pre-symposium excursion will be 3–4 days and will go to Beartooth Pass, Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park. The post-symposium excursion will be 4–5 days and will go to Flathead Lake, Crown of the Continent and Glacier National Park.

6. IAVS Awards, presented by Susan Wiser
Announcement of Student awards for 2015

Young scientist Oral Presentation Award:

First Prize
Inga Hiiesalu (Estonia): “Belowground vs aboveground plant richness in a long-term grassland management experiment”

Honorable Mention
Jana Eichel (Germany): “Lining plant traits to a geomorphic disturbance gradient: the biogeomorphic window concept for lateral moraines”

Stefanie Stenzel (Germany): “Support monitoring of habitat types with remote sensing — ‘Yes we can!’ or ‘See the limits!’”

Mária Májeková (Czech Republic): “Evaluating functional diversity: missing trait data and the importance of species abundance structure and data transformation”

Young scientist Poster Award:

First Prize
Sonya Geange (Australia): “Plasticity in water use traits in Australian alpine plants”
**Honorable Mention**

Gianmaria Bonari (Italy): “Management effect on diversity of plants and insects in semi-natural grasslands: conflicts or reconciliation?”

Barbora Lepková (Czech Republic): “Seed dispersal by free-ranging herbivores and its impact on vegetation”

Emma Shidola (Namibia): “Assessment of vegetation diversity, structure, cover and the influence of fire in Alex Muranda research centre and Mutombo, Namibia using long-term data”

**7. Items Raised by the Participants**

No items were raised

**8. Thanks and Gifts to the Organizers**

President Diekmann thanked the keynote speakers and the symposium organisers including Milan Chytrý, the Vegetation Science Group and Mire Ecology Group of the Department of Botany and Zoology from Masaryk University, Ta-Service and the others of the Local Organizing Committee who helped to organise the meeting and excursions.

The General Assembly was adjourned by President Diekmann at 17:15.

**Council Minutes**

Council minutes were emailed to all 2015 members in November 2015. Additionally, the minutes are posted on the IAVS website:

- Minutes of the Old Council
- Minutes of the New Council
News from the Working Groups

This is a new regular section devoted to the activities and news from the IAVS working groups, regional sections and committees. If you have information, which could be interesting or relevant not only to the members of your working group/regional section/committee but also for the other IAVS members, you are welcome to share it in our IAVS Bulletin. All types of information (such as reports and photos from the meetings, announcements of meetings, book or meeting reviews, etc.) are welcome. Please, send your contributions to Monika Janišová (monika.janisova@gmail.com).

Eurasian Dry Grassland Group

Updates from the Working Group

Invitation to the 13th Eurasian Dry Grassland Conference (EDGC) in Sighisoara, Romania, (20-24 September 2016)

The 13th EDGC is planned to be held in the historic town of Sighişoara in central Romania, in early autumn 2016. The EDGC is organized by the ADEPT Fundatia (an active foundation in supporting and preserving of the High Nature Value landscapes of Romania, www.fundatia-adept.org) and the Babes-Bolyai University (the oldest, largest and one of the most prestigious university in Romania, http://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/despre/). Like all previous conferences (meetings) of the EDGG the conference of Sighişoara aims to promote exchange and collaboration between those interested in all aspects of grassland research and conservation across Eurasia. The major theme of the EDGC is to link theory and practice in all aspects of management and conservation of semi-natural Palaearctic grasslands. Attendants will have the opportunity to meet and explore the High Nature Value grasslands in the hilly Târnava Mare landscape near Sighişoara, and mountain hay meadows in the Miercurea Ciuc (Csíkszere) area.

There are some “innovative” points that make us believe the EDGC in Sighişoara will write its own great history and be exceptional and memorable. For the first time, two optional pre-conference workshops will be offered; one on scientific writing and another on science/policy interfaces concerning semi-natural grasslands. We believe that a workshop on writing scientifically and reporting field data in a productive way will be beneficial for our members. Also, we believe it is worthy to attend a workshop on how grassland ecology is reflected on policy. Moreover, the local organizing committee like to offer the opportunity to attendants to know by first hand several aspects of local rural life connected with grassland management; grassland-related activities such as meadow scything will be optionally offer to attendants and a grassland party is planned to take place in the village of Viscri.


Mike Vrahnakis & Didem Ambarli
On behalf of the EDGG
Annual Report of the Working Group

Members and Organisation of the EDGG
Since the last report in 2014, the number of EDGG members slightly increased and reached 1048 members from 63 countries as of 24th May 2015.

European Dry Grassland Meeting and Other Events
Since the last report, the EDGG has organised several activities.

The annual European Dry Grassland Meeting was held in Mainz, Germany on 23rd–27th May 2015. It was organized by Ute Becker (Green School in the Botanic Garden of the Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz) and Thomas Becker (Regional and Environmental Sciences, University of Trier, Trier) and it was attended by 50 participants from 15 countries (Algeria 4, Belgium 1, Germany 21, Hungary 8, Iran 3, Israel 1, Italy 3, Netherlands 1, Poland 1, Romania 1, Russia 1, Slovakia 1, Slovenia 1, Tunisia 1, and Ukraine 2). The meeting was focused on connection between population biology and community ecology for all dry grassland biota (invertebrates, vertebrates, non-vascular plants, vascular plants, fungi and cryptogams). The meeting consisted of two parts, a conference (oral and poster presentations) and the excursions. In total, 23 talks and 20 posters were presented during the sessions. Besides a guided tour to the Botanic Garden, three excursions were lead into the Mainz Sand area at the city margin of Mainz, to Rhine-Hesse volcanic region and to the Middle Rhine Valley.

The 8th EDGG Field Workshop took place in Poland during 13th-23rd June 2015. It was organized by Zygmunt Kaccki (Department of Biology, Institute of Environmental Biology, University of Wroclaw) and Iwona Dembicz (Department of Plant Ecology and Environmental Conservation, Institute of Botany, University of Warsaw) in collaboration with other Polish botanists: Grzegorz Swacha, Marta Czarniec-Kuzemko, Anna Cwener, Piotr Chmielewski, Łukasz Kozub and Piotr Zaniewski. The group of 18 participants from 5 countries (Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Ukraine) consisted of experienced senior scientists, young postdocs and PhD students. In total, 6 oral presentations on various topics related to the grassland research were given by the participants. During the workshop, 117 relevés (including 31 nested-plot series) were recorded. The biomass of vascular plants, cryptogams and litter was collected at each of the plots.

Change of the Bylaws
To ensure the election of a full operating, geographically and gender balanced steering committee during the EDGG election, the executive committee accepted important bylaw modifications in the bylaw article 2f. Those seven candidates with the highest number of votes are elected. In the case of a tie on the seventh position, all candidates with the same number of votes are elected. To improve geographic representativeness, the one member based in Europe (in a physical-geographical sense) and the one based outside Europe with the highest number of votes shall be elected even if they are not among the seven with the overall highest number of votes.

EDGG Elections
Elections of the EDGG Executive Committee started on 10th April and went until 8th May. A total of 130 valid votes were registered. The new executive committee of the EDGG was elected on 10th April and went until 8th May. A total of 130 valid votes were registered. The new executive committee of the EDGG for the period between May 2015 and May 2017 consists of eight members (in alphabetical order): Didem Ambarli (TR), Idoia Biurrun (ES), Jürgen Dengler (D), Monika Janišová (SK), Anna Kuzemko (UA), Péter Török (HU), Steve Venn (Fi) and Mike Vrahnakis (GR).

General Assembly and Financial Issues
The General Assembly of the EDGG was held in conjunction with the 12th EDGM, in Mainz, Germany on 24 May 2015. It was attended by 33 EDGG members from 14 countries.

The IAVS provided baseline support to complement the travel grants for the European Dry Grassland Meeting in Mainz (2222.23 €), the Field Workshop in Poland (2969 €), and a honorarium (1500 €) to one EDGG representative to attend the annual IAVS Symposium in Perth. Further, EDGG was successful with one project proposal to IAVS. The fellowship stay in Slovak Academy of Sciences (Bratislava and Banská Bystrica) of two Ukrainian researchers (Anna Kuzemko and Lubov Borsukiewicz) was supported by 1127 €. The Floristisch-Soziologische Arbeitsgemeinschaft covered the costs of server space and the linguistic editing of articles in the Special Feature in Tuexenia 2015.

Publication Activities of the EDGG
The EDGG has continued its long-standing tradition of Special Issues/Features in international journals over the past year. Along with the mentioned Special Issues, EDGG has published three issues of its own electronic journal, the Bulletin of the European Dry Grassland Group (freely available from http://www.edgg.org/publications.htm) during the reported period.

The Executive Committee of the EDGG
Participants of the 8th Field Workshop in Poland (above). Participants of the Middle Rhine Valley Excursion within the 12th European Dry Grassland Meeting in Mainz, Germany (below).
Dear colleagues and friends!

Herewith we would like to invite you to the 25th meeting of the European Vegetation Survey that will be held in Rome, Italy, from 6th to 9th April 2016. We propose three topics which are of great interest for our scientific community. Following the tradition of the EVS meetings, we would like to create a warm atmosphere where the participants will have the possibility to get acquainted with new scientific development in this field, and present and discuss the results of their researches, and strengthen old and build new contacts while enjoying during the excursion and social events. We wish to see many of you in Roma!

Fabio Attorre
On behalf of the Organising Scientific Committees

Conference webpage:
http://www.evsmeeting2016.it/

Annual Report of the Working Group

The 24th annual meeting of the European Vegetation Survey (EVS) took place in Rennes, France, on 4–8 May 2015. The meeting was organized by colleagues from Rennes 1 University, Rennes 2 University and the French Society of Phytosociology, in particular by Anne Bonis and Sebastien Rapinel, assisted by Frédéric Bioret, Jan-Bernard Bouzillé, Bernard Clement, Cloé Levointurier-Vajda and others. The meeting focused on two broad themes, “Typology and process as two complementary facets of vegetation survey and mapping” and “Vegetation in coastal and inland dunes and cliffs”, but presentations on other topics of interest to the European Vegetation Survey were also accepted. There were 41 oral presentations and 51 posters.

The meeting was attended by 141 participants and 11 accompanying persons from 29 countries. The most well-represented countries were France, Russia, Italy, the Czech Republic and Germany. In addition to European countries, vegetation scientists from Algeria, India, Iran, Japan, Turkey and the USA also participated in the meeting. Eleven participants from eastern Europe were provided with travel grants from the IAVS via the IAVS Global Sponsorship Committee to a total amount of 5000 EUR.

The mid-conference excursions on 5 May were guided to the coastal ecosystems of northern Brittany, including cliffs, dunes, heathlands and saltmarshes at Cap d’Erquy, Cap Fréhel, Pointe du Grouin, Cancale and in Bay Mont-Saint-Michel. The wonderful excursion day under sunny yet windy weather was completed by a visit to the famous Mont-Saint-Michel and social dinner in a restaurant with a magnificent view of this medieval monastery on a tidal island surrounded by extensive saltmarshes. The post-conference excursion visited forests and mires in Broceliande Wood in inland Brittany.

There were various activities of the European Vegetation Survey between the annual meetings in Ljubljana (May 2014) and Rennes (May 2015):

• The European Vegetation Checklist of phytosociological classes, orders and alliances (EuroVeg-Checklist) was further revised after the second review.

• The European Vegetation Archive (EVA) has made considerable progress. By the time of the Rennes meeting, it comprised 57 databases with a total of 998 265 vegetation plots, 82% of them georeferenced. A data request system has been working since May 2014 and EVA already provided data for 14 international projects focused on vegetation survey or broad-scale ecology.

• An EVS team led by Joop Schaminée, working under contract from the European Environment Agency (EEA), prepared a review of European shrubland, heath and tundra habitat classification and provided species constancy tables for these habitats extracted from vegetation-plot databases. Work on European forest habitats started in 2013 also continued by developing formal definitions of the EUNIS forest habitats based on their species composition, compiling distribution maps based on vegetation plots and preparing habitat suitability maps resulting from community distribution modelling.

• A three-year project A Red List of European Habitats, funded by the European Commission DG Environment, is running successfully under the leadership of John Janssen and John Rodwell and with participation of many EVS members. A classification of European habitats, based on a modified EUNIS classification, was proposed and standard Habitat Definitions were prepared by experts with a crosswalk to the EuroVegChecklist. National assessments of changes in habitat extent and quality were completed and habitat expert groups have started to work on synthetic European Red List assessments.

• 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 Dengler, Erwin
Bergmeier, Wolfgang Willner and Milan Chytrý as guest editors. Five papers have been published so far and work on some others has progressed considerably.

Ecoinformatics

Annual Report of the Working Group

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.

In June 2014 a proposal from Florian Jansen to improve the website structure of GIVD (http://www.givd.info) was granted by the IAVS governing board. The GIVD is an index of digital plot databases and currently contains metadata for 237 databases comprising more than 3.5 million plots. The work on the website has been carried out in 2014 and early 2015. It includes a) an integrating of 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) an improvement of the content of database entries to allow searches by formation and region.

To formalize the cooperation between GIVD and the IAVS ecoinformatics working group the GIVD steering committee has set up a memorandum of understanding (Appendix A). All members of the IAVS Ecoinformatics working group have agreed with this cooperation.

The Steering Group still 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 the University of Greifswald. The domain name will be http://www.vegetationinformatics.org/, which has already been reserved.

• John Rodwell established contacts between the European Vegetation Survey and the European Grassland Federation.

Milan Chytrý

In Perth (2014) the working group has been very successful in having no less than fourteen oral presentations included in Ecoinformatics sessions. These spanned topics from major vegetation plot database efforts, to the evolving data sharing landscape, to advances in numerical methods to large-scale vegetation mapping and modelling efforts. Hereafter a full list of the presentation:

• Milan Chytrý: European Vegetation Archive (EVA): a new integrated source of European vegetation-plot data.
• Jürgen Dengler: sPlot – the new global vegetation-plot database for addressing trait-environment relationships across the world’s biomes.
• Flavia Landucci: WetVegEurope – a formalized classification of aquatic and marsh vegetation at the continental scale: approach and first results.
• Robert Peet: Big Data meets Darwin’s “entangled bank”: The macroecology of botanical diversity.
• David Turner: ÆKOS: A new paradigm enabling reuse of complex ecological data.
• Susan Wiser: How should data access policies reflect the changing data-sharing landscape: a case study with New Zealand’s National Vegetation Survey Databank.
• Mitch Lyons: Model-based approaches to vegetation community classification.
• Peter Minchin: Guidelines for the evaluation of ordination techniques.
• Janos Podani: Jaccard index revisited - a new method for evaluating structure in ecological data matrices.
• Otto Wildi: Indicator values of functional traits.
• Valério Pillar: Probability of similarity and fuzzy sets: should we move to the Jaccard’s diversity metrics?
• Borja Jiménez-Alfaro: Broad-scale distribution modelling of community types: an example using European vegetation-plot databases and MaxEnt.
• Helga Bültmann: The Arctic Vegetation Map, Biodiversity Assessment and Vegetation Archive and the evaluation of changes in arctic flora and vegetation.
• Panayotis Dimopoulos: Conservation status assessment for habitat types in Greece.

Also for the upcoming IAVS symposium in July in Brno the working group has put together an interesting program which fully focuses on software demonstrations showing the latest developments on some of the aspects of ecoinformatics. The session comprises the following presentations:

• Stephan Hennekens: Turboveg v.3 – A gateway to EVA and other databases.
• Michael Lee: VegBank: A Permanent, OpenAccess Archive for Vegetation Plot Data.
• Florian Jansen: New ideas for international vegetation plot databases.
• Viktoria Wagner: Taxonomic proofreading: How useful are software applications for cleaning vegetation data?
• Lubomír Tichý: The JUICE program for vegetation classification and brief information about its less known functions.
• Petr Šmilauer: New statistical techniques supported by Canoco 5 software.

Prior to the ecoinformatics session Susan Wiser will give a keynote with the title ‘How can we meet “big data” aspirations in vegetation informatics?’.

Miquel de Cáceres, Stephan Hennekens (chair), Florian Jansen, Peter Minchin & Susan Wiser

Appendix A: Memorandum of understanding between GIVD and WG for Ecoinformatics

Memorandum of understanding

This memorandum is between the Global Index of Vegetation-Plot Databases (GIVD; c/o Florian Jansen, Chair of the Steering Committee, Soldmannstr. 15, 17489 Greifswald, Germany) and the Ecoinformatics working group of IAVS (c/o Stephan Hennekens, Chair of the Steering Committee, Droevendaalsesteeg 3, 6708PB Wageningen)

This memorandum is intended to attest the cooperation between the two partners.

The Global Index of Vegetation-Plot Databases (GIVD; www.givd.info) was established in 2010. Since then it became a very successful and widely used tool in vegetation science and ecoinformatics. In 2015 Bylaws have been developed to make GIVD a community-based initiative that is self-governed by the representatives of the databases that use GIVD as repository for their metadata. A particular element within the GIVD Bylaws is the intention to establish collaborations with other organizations or initiatives with shared interests.

The parties wish to document the following.

1. The two parties will mention each other as cooperation partner on their homepages, together with the respective logo and a link to the homepage of the cooperating partner.
2. The Working group for Ecoinformatics will support funding proposals of GIVD to IAVS under the name of the IAVS Ecoinformatics Group if no own demands stand against it.
3. The Working group for Ecoinformatics can nominate candidates for the GIVD Steering Committee elections, which should have relations to GIVD, but do not need to be custodian of any included database. The next election is expected to be in 2018.
4. This Memorandum is effective until it is cancelled by any of the partners. The memorandum can be cancelled at any time.

Wageningen, Greifswald,
On behalf of the On behalf of the
WG for Ecoinformatics of IAVS Global Index of Plot-based
Vegetation Databases
Group for Phytosociological Nomenclature

Annual Report of the Working Group

Since September 2014, GPN activities have been concentrated mainly on the preparation of the 4th edition of the International Code of Nomenclature (ICPN), and on the development of the phytosociological database PhytoS. In addition, the Committee for Change and Conservation of Names (CCCN) is now operative.

International Code of Phytosociological Nomenclature

The preparation of the 4th edition of ICPN started with the production of a document collecting potential amendments to ICPN, new examples, and reflections on some critical points. This document was sent to the SC members and to Prof. Heinrich Weber, the lead author of 3rd edition of the ICPN. A three-day meeting was held in Rome (18-20 February 2015) hosted by the Botanical Garden of the University “La Sapienza”, kindly supported by the Director of the Garden - Prof. Carlo Blasi. The meeting was supported financially (3000 Euro) by IAVS as a special activity for 2014. All the SC members attended the meeting. Many important points were discussed in depth, with the aim to produce a more user-friendly new edition. A second meeting is being planned for November 2015.

PhytoS Database

The development of the online database PhytoS serving the registration of phytosociological names of plant communities proceeded at the University of Vienna under the supervision of Wolfgang Willner. All database modules have been implemented and the first phase of testing, on a restricted basis, is scheduled to start in the autumn 2015.

IAVS North American Section

Annual Report of the Working Group

Peter Minchin, Chair
Mark Fulton, Vice-chair
James Moore, Secretary/Treasurer

New by-laws for the North America Section were approved by IAVS Council at the annual symposium in Perth on 2 September, 2014. We have been sending out e-mails periodically to our members informing them of upcoming IAVS activities and encouraging greater participation. The 2015 annual meeting of the section took place at the Ecological Society of America 100th annual conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in conjunction with the ESA Vegetation Section. In the coming year, we plan to develop new section web pages. The major activity for the section over the past six months has been to prepare a proposal to host the 2018 IAVS symposium in Bozeman, Montana, USA. The proposal was accepted by the IAVS Governing Board in July 2015. We have now started to organize the symposium, which will include field trips to some of the most spectacular and botanically interesting regions of the Rocky Mountains (e.g., Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and Glacier National Parks).

Peter Minchin
Chair
Annual Report of the Working Group

Steering Committee: Michael Lee, Alessandra Fidelis, Kyle Palmquist, Angela Pannek, Thomas Starnes

The IAVS Young Scientists Section petitioned the IAVS Governing Board for official IAVS status in April 2014. The petition was delivered by 22 young scientists from 5 continents. The petition process was led by Katarzyna Szrama, Angela Pannek, Kertu Lõhmus, and Michael Lee. In July 2014, bylaws were drafted and sent to the governing board. In September 2014, the IAVS Council accepted the petition and bylaws with the one precondition that membership was open to all persons regardless of age. This was completed and accepted by the IAVS governing board in October 2014.

In October 2014, we also created the section listserv, which can be joined here: http://lists.unc.edu/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=iavs-ys

From December 2014 to January 2015, an election of the section steering committee was conducted with FASEB (the IAVS business office) assisting by implementing Survey Monkey voting software, which ensured that each member could vote once and only once. The election resulted in the steering committee named at the top after 29 of the 44 section members voted.

The new Steering Committee met via online video conference and then created a website (iavsyouscientists.wordpress.com) and a facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/353191064892110). Some in the membership expressed concern about relying on facebook as its privacy safeguards do not meet all the legal requirements in all countries of membership. The Steering Committee also proposes to next find ways to collaborate on specific topics via video conference, with time zones and software of different countries and locations being the specific hurdles, as well as the general lack of time availability from many people.
At the annual IAVS meeting in Perth, Kazue Fujiwara has become an IAVS Honorary Member, for all the work she has performed for our organisation for so many years. This year (2015), for the third time, the Alexander Von Humboldt Award will be awarded to an outstanding scientist in the field of vegetation research. After awarding Professor Philip Grime in 2011 and David Tilman in 2013, Sandra Lavorel will receive this award at the IAVS meeting in Brno. At this meeting, both prize-winners will be honoured by a laudatio speech, given by Elgene Box (Kazue Fujiwara) and Sandra Diaz (Sandra Lavorel). They both also will receive an original watercolour painting, especially made for this occasion by the Dutch artist Ed Hazebroek, depicting *Wisteria floribunda* flowers for Kazue Fujiwara (her family name is related to this plant) and a subalpine meadow landscape with flowering *Allium victorialis* for Sandra Lavorel. The members of the Governing Board are invited to nominate candidates for the next Honorary membership in 2016, before 31-12-2015.

At the meeting in Perth, also the young scientists competitions took place, for best poster and best oral presentation. The winners were announced at the General Assembly and their names are mentioned on our website www.iavs.org (see under Awards).

**Poster Competition**
First prize: Guochen Kenny Png. Do N-fixing plants show higher root phosphatase activity on P-poor soils? (Co-authors: Etienne Laliberté, Patrick E. Hayes, Benjamin L. Turner and Hans Lambers);

Honorable Mention: Talita Zupo. Do different disturbance types affect resprouting patterns of shrub species in cerrado? (Co-authors: Elizabeth Gorgone-Barbosa, Mariana N. Rissi and Alessandra Fidelis);

Honorable Mention: Ilka Strubelt. Changes in species composition and richness in an alluvial hardwood forest over 52 years (Co-authors: Martin R. Diekmann and Dietmar Zacharias).

**Oral Presentation Competition**
First prize: Angela Pannek. Comparing resource-based and co-occurrence based methods for estimating species niche breadth (Co-authors: Michael Manthey and Martin R. Diekmann);

Honorable mention: Christina Birnbaum. Do soil microbes drive Acacia species invasion in non-native ranges in Australia? (Co-authors: Michelle R. Leishman);

Honorable mention: Jessica Parker. Exploring the spatial and temporal dynamics of the relationship between precipitation and aboveground vegetation biomass (Co-authors: Charles G. Curtin and Craig F. Conley);

Honorable mention: Daniel Montesinos. The puna vegetation of Moquegua, South Peru: Chasmophytic communities and grasslands (Co-authors: Antoine M. Cleef and Karlè V. Sýkora).

Joop Schaminée
Chair
Global Sponsorship Committee

Annual Report of the Committee

The Global Sponsorship Committee is composed by: Alessandra Fidelis (Brazil), Jürgen Dengler (Germany), Kersti Püssa (Estonia), Martin Zobel (Estonia), Pavel Krestov (Russia), Emin Ugurlu (Turkey), Alireza Naqinezhad (Iran), Brian Isabirye (Uganda), and Ndafuda Shiponeni (Namibia).

Since September 2014, we received 4 applications for free IAVS membership from which only one was not approved by the GSC. 32 applications fell into category 1 or 2 and thus, they did not need the GSC approval.

During this period, we discussed and approved the decision of travel grant allocation made by the European Dry Grassland Executive Committee for the meeting in Mainz and the EDGG Field Workshop in Poland. They evaluated 9 applications for the meeting and 7 for the field workshop. The total sum allocated was 6,030 euros, from which 1,030 was covered by the EDGG. Grants varied from 180–570 euros. The European Vegetation Survey Executive Committee approved 11 applications for the meeting in Rennes, with grants varying from 338–488 euros (4,998 euros).

For the 58th Annual Symposium of the International Association for Vegetation Science, the 59 applications, from which 55 were eligible. Applications came from 25 different countries, mostly from Brazil (12 applications), Poland (4 applications), and Austria (4 applications). This year, we also received a larger amount of women young scientists and students.

The criteria used by the GSC were: abstract (2/5), motivation letter (2/5) and age (the younger the better; 1/5). We believed that merit was one of the most important for the evaluation of the applications. Note that as last year, applications from both students and researchers were accepted, but age was taken into account in the evaluation. Applicants that received the grant in former years were eligible, but they received a lower amount of money.

The GSC granted 28 applicants from Brazil (9), Austria (3), Estonia (2), Germany (2), Hungary (2), Italy (2), Poland (2), Kazakhstan (1), Armenia (1), Australia (1), France (1), Ghana (1), and Ukraine (1). Most of the awardees are women and PhD students. Grants varied from 200–1600 euros.

Last year in Perth, four of the poster and oral presentation awards went to students and young scientists who received the financial support to participate on the symposium: Angela Pannek (first prize oral presentation), Jessika Parker (honorable mention, oral presentation), Talita Zupo (honorable mention, poster), and Ilka Strubelt (honorable mention, poster).

Alessandra Fidelis
Chair

Meetings Committee

Annual Report of the Committee

The Meetings Committee deals with the Symposia of the Association, and the associated excursions.

In this way, we receive the proposals for new symposia and in agreement with the general objectives of the Association (Art. 2 of the Statutes and 9 of the Bylaws), make an initial evaluation of the proposals according to the following criteria:

Concerning the organizing group:

• Feasibility and potential to host a successful symposium, i.e. financial resources, structure (buildings, halls, etc.)

• Scientific background of the organizing group, i.e. involvement in Vegetation Science, participation in the regular activities of the Association, relevance within the framework of the respective national science system, with expectations of an important participation of local colleagues and their potential involvement in the future IAVS activities.

Concerning the geographic location of the symposia and excursions:

• Dispersion, in order to ensure maximum occurrence of the association from all over the world. It is recommended that the symposium rotates through the continents

• Potential interest of visited regions in regards to excursions

Once a symposium venue is selected, the Meetings Committee advises the local organizing committee, and works to ensure the established guidelines of the Association are followed, and to ensure the required quality standards, and encourages participation of scientists from all over the world without restrictions.

If you have questions about the process or would like to submit a proposal to organize an IAVS Symposium, please contact Javier Loidi, Meetings Committee Chair, at javier.loidi@ehu.es.

Javier Loidi
Chair
2015 IAVS Symposium Attendees

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Bulletin Article Submission
Have an idea for an IAVS Bulletin article? Or, would like your picture featured in the next issue? Please email the Editor at: monika.janisova@gmail.com.

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