

Annual Report
IAVS Working Group for Ecoinformatics
July 2007

The IAVS Ecoinformatics Working Group sponsored a symposium at the 2006 annual meeting held in Palmerston North in February 2007. This symposium was organized for the Working Group by Susan Wiser of LandCare.

Robert Peet represented IAVS at two NSF-sponsored workshops about data archives and data sharing held for representatives of professional societies and organized by the Ecological Society of America. The first was held in December 2006 at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis in Santa Barbara California, and the second was held in May 2007 at the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center in Durham North Carolina. A resultant manuscript has been submitted to PLoS.

Susan Wiser, Nick Spenser, and Bob Peet organized a meeting held 24-27 April, 2007 at the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center in Durham, NC. The objective of the meeting was to initiate work toward drafting an international exchange standard for vegetation plot data. A broadly international team of approximately 14 persons was invited. The IAVS Working Group was represented by Robert Peet, Susan Wiser, Stephan Hennekens, and Martin Kleikamp. Jerry Cooper intends to present this project to TDWG (the Biodiversity Information Standards organization) at its meeting in Bratislava in September 2007. The intent will be to make this activity an official TDWG Interest Group so that the standards developed will have more broad-based international acceptance. More details on the workshop results and future plans will be distributed by Susan Wiser in the near future, and will be distributed to the Working Group membership for comment.

North American plant ecology has been lagging significantly behind European plant ecology in the compilation of plant traits. Last year Robert Peet endorsed on behalf of the Ecoinformatics Working group a research coordination network proposal to the US NSF specifically to develop a trait database for North American plant taxa. The proposal has been funded and the first formal meeting will be held at Columbia University in New York in December 2007. IAVS members participating in TraitNet include Scott Collins, Sandra Diaz, Ingolf Kuehn, and Robert Peet.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert K. Peet