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(Article begins on next page)



European Vegetation Survey

23rd International Workshop of the European Vegetation Survey

Ljubljana 8–12 May 2014

Book of Abstracts



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National vegetation databases: the case of VegItaly

Venanzoni R.¹, Assini S.², Buffa G.³, Casavecchia S.⁴, Farris E.⁵, Gigante D.¹, Giusso Del Galdo G.⁶, Guarino R.⁷, Landucci F.⁸, Maneli F.¹, Panfli E.⁹, Prisco I.¹⁰, Properzi A.¹, Tomaselli V.¹¹, Viciani D.¹²

¹ Dept. of Chemistry, Biology and Biotechnology, University of Perugia, I-06121 Perugia, Italy

² Dept. of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Pavia, I-27100 Pavia, Italy

³ Dept. of Environmental Sciences, Informatics and Statistics, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, I-30123 Venezia, Italy

⁴ Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (D3A), Marche Polytechnic University, I-60131 Ancona, Italy

⁵ Dept. of Science for Nature and Environmental Resources, University of Sassari, I-07100 Sassari, Italy

⁶ Dept. of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences, University of Catania, I-95125 Catania, Italy

⁷ Dept. STEBICEF, Botanical Unit, University of Palermo, I-90123 Palermo, Italy

⁸ Dept. of Botany and Zoology, Masaryk University, 62500 Brno, Czech Republic

⁹ spix Consultancy Company, I-06023 Gualdo Tadino, Italy

¹⁰ Dept. of Science, University of Rome Tre, I-00145 Rome, Italy

¹¹ National Research Council-Institute of Biosciences and BioResources (CNR-IBBR), I-70126 Bari, Italy

¹² Dept. of Biology, University of Firenze, I-50121 Firenze, Italy

Corresponding author: daniela.gigante@unipg.it

In the last decade, vegetation scientists were increasingly attracted by the use of huge data sets, in order to address emerging issues such as the severe risk of species, habitats and biodiversity loss. Indeed, large databases became crucial for any nature conservation programme. VegItaly (<http://www.vegitaly.it>; GIVD ID EU-IT-001) is a web geo-database built on opensource software, designed to archive, retrieve and analyze vegetation data as well as to publish them on the web. It was born under the aegis of the Italian Society for Vegetation Science (SISV) as a collaborative project, thanks to the cooperation of a large group of scientists (currently more than 20 Italian Universities and Research Institutions are involved). At present, more than 30,000 published or unpublished, public or private vegetation plots are stored in VegItaly, still far from being an exhaustive sample of the whole Italian biodiversity: some vegetation types are better represented than others (i.e. forests 34.68%, shrublands 5.68%, herbaceous vegetation 55.99%, unclassified 3.57%) and furthermore they are not homogeneously distributed across the national territory. However, the number of vegetation plots is rapidly increasing. As concerns taxonomic aspects, VegItaly is based on an Archive taxonomic Checklist, an on-line synonymized list of botanical species names, developed to support the botanical data banking and vegetation analysis, currently including 23,463 valid names and synonyms. Bibliographic sources are linked to LISY, the national bibliographic archive online developed in the 1990s, storing the syntaxonomic units

of the Italian vegetation and the related published sources (currently including almost 3400 bibliographic entries and more than 33,200 *syntaxa*, including synonyms). Some user-friendly tools have been developed to facilitate data upload (*archiver*, *VegImport* and *TabImport*). Designed for floristic and phytosociological data, VegItaly's main aim is to contribute to data archiving and sharing, offering the possibility to manage large data sets for statistical analysis on a wide geographic scale. Currently, it represents a milestone in Italy in the field of vegetation science and stands as a standard management system for botanical data at the national level.