


Supplement to the Governance and Data Property Rules of the sPlot Working Group:

Agreement with the European Vegetation Archive (EVA) for using sPlot data in European studies



a project of  iDiv

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Approved: Steering Committee of sPlot after consultation with the EVA Governing Board

1. Motivation

The sPlot Steering Committee has noticed the willingness of sPlot members to develop research projects at the European scale using data from the members associated to the European Vegetation Archive (EVA), making also use of sPlot data facilities. A similar situation arises for EVA projects interested in using data products elaborated by sPlot but not owned by EVA (e.g. taxonomical backbone, trait data aggregated at the community level, phylogenetic information). Although the sPlot rules generally allow developing projects at the continental scale, the agreement when EVA data were contributed to sPlot was that analyses of only European data will be redirected to EVA. Thus an agreement is needed for cases when non-plot data created by sPlot are used in combination with European vegetation plots. For the sake of transparency and for facilitating the scientific development of both sPlot and EVA, this Supplement describes the guidelines agreed by the two consortia to get access to these data in a proper way.

2. Guidelines for sPlot projects using European data only

(a) sPlot project proposals interested in data contributed by EVA only (i.e. all data from Europe, and some data from nearby regions) must make a double application to sPlot and EVA. These applications are independent and subjected to their own regulations.

(b) The applications to sPlot should mention that the proposal has been also submitted to EVA. If the sPlot Steering Committee considers the proposal eligible according to the sPlot rules, the final approval will require a previous consent of EVA.

(c) If the applicants to EVA want to use plant-trait information that is integrated in sPlot by a previous agreement with the TRY database only for supra-continental studies, previous consent from TRY is needed. The EVA Coordinating Board will ask TRY for a general consent for all EVA projects, which will involve a list of TRY collaborators that are potentially interested in European projects involving plant traits measured on plant species in Europe, and of sPlot collaborators who made considerable contributions to integration of sPlot and TRY data. These collaborators, whose list will be provided to the project leader by the EVA Coordinating Board after preliminary agreement with TRY and sPlot, must be invited as potential co-authors by the project leader, although their final involvement in the author team is assumed to depend on their intellectual input beyond the data provision.

(d) If the applicants to EVA want to use phylogenetic information that is integrated in sPlot, they have to invite as potential co-authors those sPlot collaborators who made considerable contributions to integration of this information with vegetation plots. The final involvement of these collaborators in the author team will however depend on their intellectual input beyond the data provision.

(e) In all circumstances, projects approved by sPlot and EVA (and TRY, if applicable) will follow the regulations of both consortia for data usage, intellectual properties, co-authorships, etc., i.e. the more inclusive version regarding co-authorship will be applied.

sPlot – The Global Vegetation Database

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