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# sPlot Letter No. 7

June 2017



Visit our webpage: <http://www.idiv.de/splot>

**Dear members of the sPlot Consortium,  
Dear custodians and deputy custodians of sPlot member databases,  
Dear coauthors of sPlot manuscripts,**

The sPlot coordinator (**Borja Jiménez-Alfaro**) and the sPlot Steering Committee (**Helge Bruelheide, Milan Chytrý, Jürgen Dengler, Valério De Pillar and Florian Jansen**) is glad to announce the last news of the sPlot Consortium:

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## New sPlot projects

In the last months, five new projects were approved by the Steering Committee:

#11 – Probabilistic species pools at the plot level (lead author: Helge Bruelheide, iDiv - Martin Luther University, DE)

#12 – Temperate deciduous forests of the northern hemisphere (lead author: Robert K Peet, University of North Carolina, USA)

#13 – Global patterns of aquatic macrophyte diversity – environment relationships with focus on native vs invasive species (lead author: Franziska Schrodt, University of Nottingham, UK)

#14 – Functional convergence of terrestrial ecosystems in world biomes (lead author: Borja Jiménez-Alfaro, iDiv - Martin Luther University, DE)

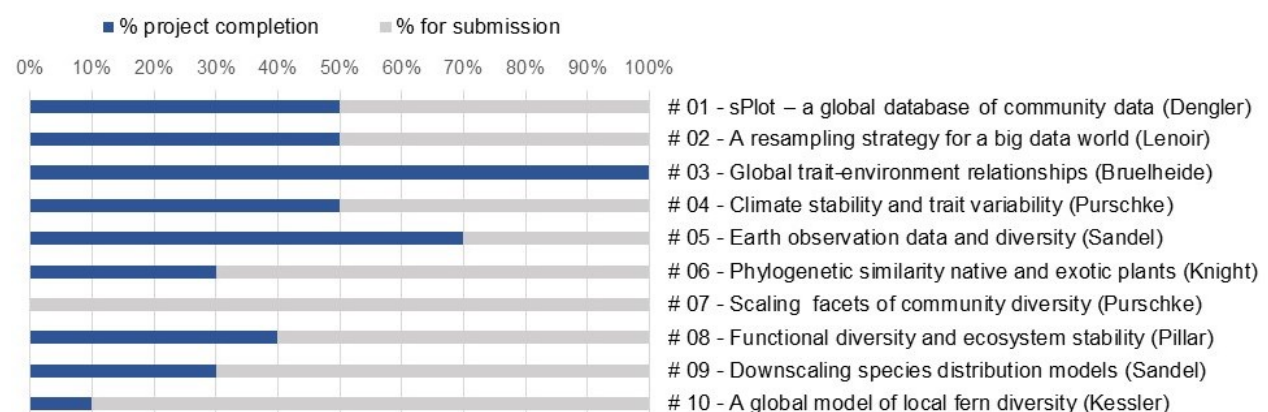
#15 – Cross-scale transferability of species niche breadth estimates (lead authors: Stephan Kambach & Helge Bruelheide, Institute of Biology / Geobotany and Botanical Garden, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU) and Department of Community Ecology, Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research Leipzig (UFZ), DE).

We remind that all members of the sPlot Consortium can **opt-in to become contributors** of these projects and the forthcoming publications. For doing that, you should reply to the e-mail that has been sent separately to all sPlot members, and then follow the instructions of the lead author/s about deadlines and co-authorship rules. The complete list of sPlot approved project proposals is available [here](#).

According to the sPlot Rules, every member of the sPlot Consortium **can propose own paper projects** based on the last version of the database, provided the analyses are at global or at least continental scale and the applicant agrees with the sPlot regulations for data use. Applications for data use can be submitted to the Chair of the sPlot Steering Committee (Helge Bruelheide ([helge.bruehheide@botanik.uni-halle.de](mailto:helge.bruehheide@botanik.uni-halle.de))) at any time.

## Progress of sPlot first papers

The chart below shows the current status of the first ten sPlot research projects, as provided by the lead authors. We hope the first sPlot manuscripts will be submitted soon.



## sPlot open meeting in Palermo (IAVS 2017)

We invite current and potential sPlot members attending the [IAVS 2017 Conference in Palermo](#) to join the sPlot meeting, for which we reserved a room on **Wednesday June 21 at 18:00h** at the Conference venue. The main objectives of this meeting are (i) to check the quality of the data stored in sPlot V2.1 and (ii) to delineate a roadmap for the next version sPlot 3.0. Before the meeting, we also will present a poster in the session starting at 17:15h, under the title "An invitation to join sPlot, the Global Vegetation Database".

The main points to address in the meeting are the following:

1. A quick overview of the sPlot consortium and data sharing policy.
2. How to improve spatial (Fig. 1) and temporal (Fig. 2) sampling in sPlot 2.1.
3. Major requirements for improving the data: revisiting plot size, geographical precision, local environment and assignment to formations and/or vegetation types (eventually, between 19:00 and 20:00 we can join the parallel workshop about world biomes to agree a practical classification of world vegetation types).
4. Towards sPlot 3.0: how to cover geographic (and temporal) gaps, suggestions for the addition of new data sets (within the network or from outside). Brief description of the contacts made so far for collecting new data on Tropical Alpine regions, Amazonian forests, Cuban vegetation and temporal surveys of Australia.
5. Proposal for the selection of a resampled subset of sPlot to provide as open access data to the scientific community.

In addition, Borja Jiménez-Alfaro will give an oral presentation about sPlot project #14, entitled "Testing vegetation convergence across continents in world biomes" (Wednesday June 21, session Rethinking biomes – towards a consistent high-level classification of global vegetation).

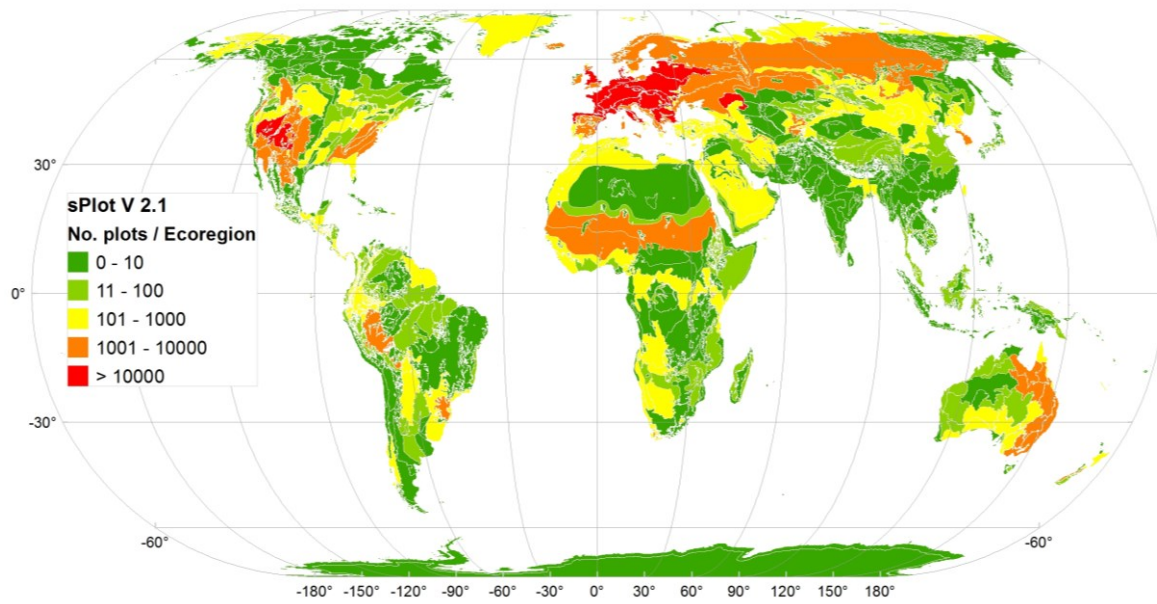
## sPlot collaborative network

We maintain regular contacts with other research platforms and working groups to stimulate collaborative research, with the aim of developing new project proposals that will become sPlot publications in the near future. In the last months we have explored collaborations with the following groups/initiatives at iDiv:

**sFDvent** – we received an invitation to participate in the working group [sFDvent](#) – "A functional trait perspective on the global biodiversity of hydrothermal vent communities" and explored the viability of a cross-taxa study for testing the relationships between taxonomical and functional rarity in animals and plants. We are in touch with Amanda Bates (PI of sFDvent) to delineate a project proposal using sPlot data.

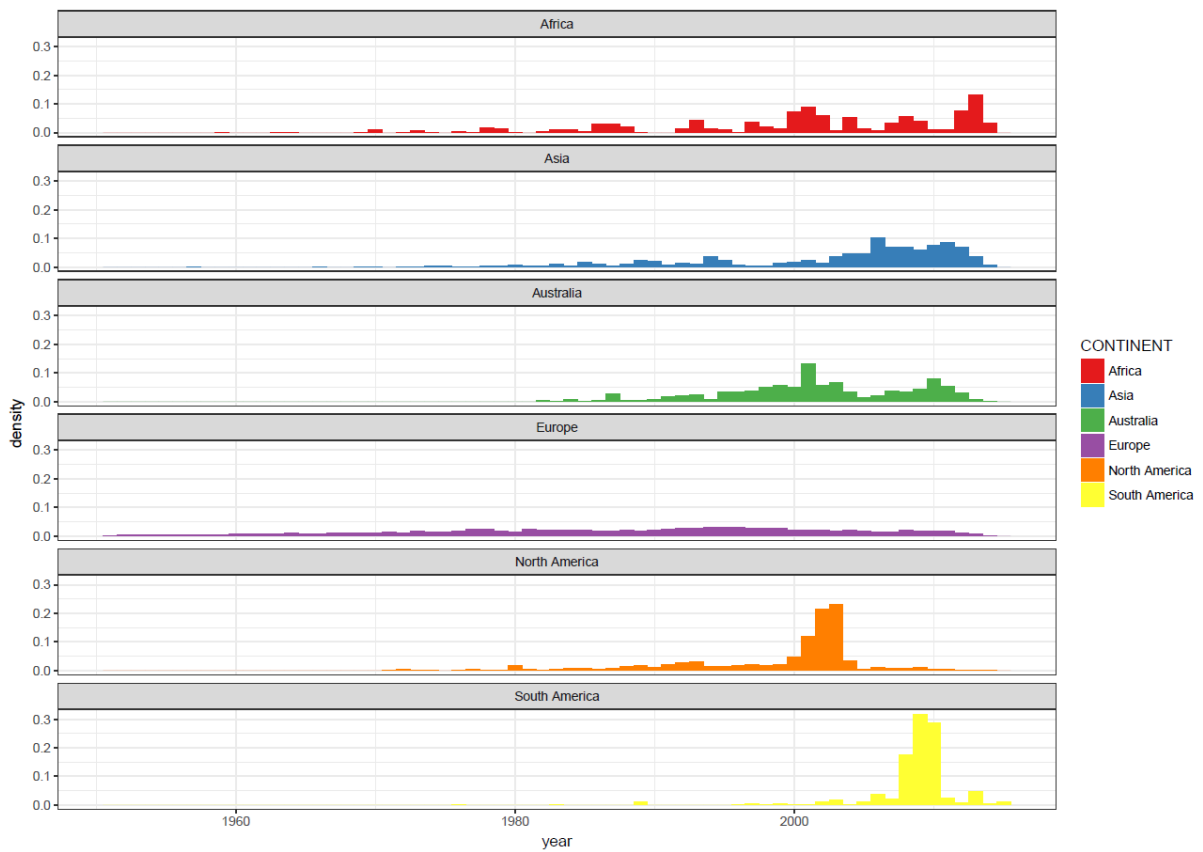
**sAPROPOS** – we are also in contact with Roberto Salguero-Gómez, the PI of the [sAPROPOS](#) working group (Analysis of PROjections of POPulationS) to link the [COMPADRE](#) database with the characteristics of communities related to species demographic data. The sPlot coordinator and the head of the SC will join next meetings of sAPROPOS working group.

**Symposium on the Mobilization of Structured Biodiversity Data** – During the 28 to 30 June, sPlot will join this symposium co-hosted by [iDiv](#), [GEO BON](#) and [GBIF](#) in Leipzig. The symposium is focused on the mobilization and sharing of biodiversity data, including legal aspects, journal editors' perspectives and ecoinformatics.



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**Fig. 1:** Spatial sampling effort by WWF Ecoregion in sPlot 2.1



**Fig. 2:** Temporal sampling effort by continents in sPlot 2.1

Greetings from the sPlot team.

We are looking forward to see you in Palermo!

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