

sDiv working group meeting summary

"sBIOMAPS"

Summary

This workshop was the first meeting of sBIOMAPS that aims to better understand the ecological and evolutionary patterns and drivers of organismal stoichiometry. sDIV provided a motivating and inspiring environment for productive discussions and the development of ideas and collaborative work.

Brief summary of presentations

Marten Winter opened the working group, welcoming participants and introducing iDiv/sDiv.

Participants introduced themselves to the rest of the group.

Angélica González introduced the main goals for our meeting and suggested a working agenda.

Olivier Dézerald introduced our database highlighting its characteristics, strengths and limitations.

Focal areas of discussion

For our first meeting we decided to prioritize our discussions around the gaps in macroecological approaches to stoichiometry, and how to fill these gaps by analyzing large scale ecological and evolutionary patterns and potential mechanisms by using our database on animal and plant stoichiometry.

We focused our discussion on the main products/papers that we could produce based on our original ideas and characteristics of our database. We spent a large portion of time familiarizing the rest of the group with the database, as they were introduced to it for the first time during the meeting. This introduction to the database included understanding of its structure, strengths and limitations. We also dedicated a lot of time to continue gathering data, exploring, and cleaning the database. This took (and still does) a lot of our time working on small groups. Parallel discussion groups focused on clearly defining specific goals for those papers with higher priority, and on writing sections of the manuscript. We think that the combined approach of break out groups with specific tasks followed by full group convergence discussions was efficient and appreciated by the whole group. Every day, we organized wrap up summaries about progresses at the end and beginning of each day. We think this was helpful to keep everybody in the work in the same page. The face to face discussions that we had in our first meeting, fostered valuable collaborations and the sharing of ideas among the members of the team.

Proposed outputs and workplan

The group is currently working on a paper that address one of the core questions of our group: the occurrence and shape of the latitudinal patterns on animals and plant stoichiometry. A draft was expected by the end of February, but due to Covid19 we have had some delays and the first draft has been rescheduled. We are working on finishing our database and running the statistical analyses.

During our meeting we also discussed the number and types of papers we would like to write as a team. We created a spreadsheet listing all the papers

we think we can publish. This spreadsheet includes the list of leading people and core team helping move the paper forward, timelines, and potential journals. Those papers were sorted according to a decreasing level of priority (e.g., matching the goals of the working group, availability of the leader). We didn't discuss any conference attendance, but we will include a discussion about it during our next meeting.

Working balance

Brainstorming in small groups: 60%; brainstorming in large groups: 30%; Presentations: 10%. The balance between large and small group brainstorming was good. We were a large group (~18 people), and breaking into smaller groups with specific but complementary tasks was a good dynamic. We did not have any presentations, except when small groups reconvened into the large groups and these provided updates of their progress. We focused our time in concrete activities toward our aims, which in our first meeting was working on our database, coding, and solidifying our ideas, goals, and hypotheses.

Inspiration for own work and/or further cooperation

The working group meeting was a unique opportunity in terms of creating collaborative work among such a diverse group of people. Brainstorming during the working group led to improving our database, deciding on the best the type of statistical analyses to answer our questions based on the structure of our data, and to propose new ideas for papers derived from the database or as opinion papers.

General working atmosphere and feedback on sDiv-support

The working atmosphere at iDiv is ideal. Our meeting success was in big part to the support provided by sDiv. We acknowledge the great and smooth organization by the sDiv team before, during and after the meeting. The facilities at iDiv are great, and the hotel was outstanding; the team really liked the location. Overall, we think that this working group occurred in a productive work environment and a friendly atmosphere.

Participants:

Angelica Gonzalez (Rutgers University)
Olivier Dézerald (UMR ESE, Ecology and Ecosystem Health, INRAE),
Karl Andraczek (Leipzig University),
Ulrich Brose (iDiv/FSU)
Michał Filipiak (Jagiellonian University)
Stan Harpole (iDiv/UFZ)
Helmut Hillebrand (Carl-von-Ossietzky University Oldenburg)
Michelle Jackson (University of Oxford)
Malte Jochum (iDiv/Leipzig University)
Shawn Leroux (Memorial University of Newfoundland)
Renske Onstein (iDiv/Leipzig University)
Rachel Paseka (University of Minnesota)
George Perry (University of Auckland)
Amanda Rugenski (University of Georgia)
Judith Sitters (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
Erik Sperfeld (University of Greifswald)
Maren Striebel (Carl-von-Ossietzky University Oldenburg)
Eugenia Zandonà (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro)