Nationwide Vegetation Plot Database – Sapienza University of Rome: state of the art, basic figures and future perspectives

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Abstract

In recent years, interest in availability of georeferenced vegetation plots has stimulated or reinvigorated national initiatives to compile these data. In Italy, eleven vegetation databases are currently registered in the Global Index of Vegetation-Plot Databases (GIVD). In this paper we describe the Vegetation Plot Database - Sapienza University of Rome (VPD-Sapienza; GIVD code EU-IT-011), which started in 2012 and rapidly became one of the most prominent ones with a total of 21,917 georeferenced vegetation plots spanning across the country. These plots include 286,650 vascular plant species occurrences. Most of the plots belong to temperate deciduous forests (Querco robur-Fagetea sylvaticae) and broadleaved evergreen forests (Quercetea ilicis), which together account for about 40% of the database. The need for the establishment of a national federated database integrating other national, regional, local and thematic databases is discussed in order to avoid setbacks such as duplication of data, taxonomic and syntaxonomic inconsistencies, and reduced efficiencies in collaborative projects, both at national and international levels.

Keywords: European Vegetation Archive (EVA); floristic record; Global Index of Vegetation-Plot Databases (GIVD); Italy; national vegetation archive; TURBOVEG; vegetation survey.

Abbreviations: GIVD = Global Index of Vegetation-Plot Databases; VPD-Sapienza = Vegetation Plot Database – Sapienza University of Rome.

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