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Comments and review

SEVENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL BIOGEOGRAPHY SOCIETY

*Nina Ćurčić**¹

* Geographical Institute "Jovan Cvijić" SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

The International Biogeography Society held its 7th biennial conference in Bayreuth in Northern Bavaria, Germany. The meeting was hosted by the University of Bayreuth from 8-12 January, 2015, and over 600 scientists from more than 50 countries took part in it.

The conference program included four plenary symposia (Figure 1), keynote lectures by the awardees of the Alfred Russel Wallace Award and the MacArthur & Wilson Award, contributed paper sessions, and interactive poster sessions (Figure 2) with lightning talks.



Figure 1. Introductory lecture given by Helmut Schwarz, President of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

The presentations were divided into 18 sessions: Adaptation, migration, persistence, extinction: New insights from past climate changes; Tracking changes from space: Advances of remote sensing in biogeography;

¹ Correspondence to: n.curcic@gi.sanu.ac.rs

Paleobiogeography: The importance of fossil data to species biogeography past, present, and future; Global functional diversity in a data-rich era; Island biogeography; Climate-change biogeography; Gradients, range limits, and beta diversity; Historical and paleo-biogeography; Conservation biogeography; Modeling species and ecosystems; Phylogeography; Quaternary and cultural legacies; The grand subject; Invasions; Latitudinal biodiversity gradients; Biodiversity hotspots; Marine biogeography; and Natural-disturbance biogeography.



Figure 2. Poster session: Biodiversity hotspots.

Several workshops were held before and after the conference with the following subjects: “Towards the ‘next generation’ of species distribution modeling: emerging themes and methods”; “Free your mind: Model comparison and model testing in historical biogeography with the R package ‘BioGeoBEARS’”; “EU-fundraising in the field of biogeography”; and “Integrative analysis of spatial biodiversity data and Map of Life”. Also, organizers offered to participants pre- and post-conference field trips and guided tours, such as to the cities of Bayreuth and Bamberg, tour to biodiversity and beerdiversity in the Franconian Switzerland, Paleobotanical Rossman Collection, etc.

Social events were great opportunity to improve communication between biogeographers. Welcome reception with registration was organized in the Green Houses of the Ecological-Botanical gardens with many Bavarian specialties. Also, informal “brown bag discussions” were held on 10th and 11th January during lunchtime. The aim of discussions was to advance the activities of the society and to exchange the ideas and opinions on any other biogeography topics. Participants were also enjoying the conference banquet in the German Museum of steam engines, situated 20 km north of Bayreuth. During conference

live and silent auction was organized with the purpose of raising money for future student travel awards and other IBS projects.

Award ceremony was held at the end of conference. Two awards were given. Alfred Russel Wallace Award recognizes a lifetime of outstanding contributions in any subdiscipline of biogeography and it was given to Daniel Simberloff. MacArthur & Wilson Award recognizes an individual for a notable contribution to biogeography and it was given to Daniel L. Rabosky. Among 202 posters competing, this one was selected for the best early career poster award: “Community level models outperform traditional species distribution models in no-analog climatic and ecological regimes” by Kaitlin Clare Maguire et al. The book of abstracts is available on the following page: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/5kk8703h>.

On International Biogeography Society

International Biogeography Society (IBS) was founded in 2001 with following mission: “(i) Foster communication and collaboration between biogeographers in disparate academic fields – scientists who would otherwise have little opportunity for substantive interaction and collaboration; (ii) Increase both the awareness and interests of the scientific community and the lay public in the contributions of biogeographers; and (iii) Promote the training and education of biogeographers so that they may develop sound strategies for studying and conserving the world’s biota” (www.biogeography.org).

The International Biogeography Society organizes biennial meetings from 2003 and until now it was held seven meetings, one special meeting and two early career conferences. IBS established two awards: the Alfred Russel Wallace Award and the MacArthur & Wilson Award which are awarded at biennial meetings. Society has active publishing sector. It has published two books. The first one “Foundation of Biogeography” edited by Mark V. Lomolino, Dov F. Sax, and James H. Brown is an outstanding publication with the foundational publications from 1700s to 1975. The second one “Frontiers of Biogeography” represents a new series of integrative and interdisciplinary volumes published and developed in association with the IBS. Also, there is a periodical “Frontiers of Biogeography”, the scientific magazine of the International Biogeography Society with four issues per year.

Reference

www.biogeography.org