



## European Vegetation Archive (EVA): a new integrated source of European vegetation-plot data

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**Background:** European Vegetation Archive (EVA) has been developed by the IAVS Working Group European Vegetation Survey as a centralized database of European vegetation plots.

**Current status:** EVA stores copies of national or regional vegetation-plot databases on a single software platform and links them via a reference database of plant taxa. Data storing in EVA does not affect the ongoing independent development of the source databases. EVA Data Property and Governance Rules ([www.euroveg.org/eva-database](http://www.euroveg.org/eva-database)) approved in 2012 guarantee that data property rights of the original contributors are respected. A prototype of the database management software Turboveg 3 was developed for joint management of multiple databases which use different species lists. This software also includes procedures for handling data requests, selections and provisions according to the approved Rules. A specific challenge for EVA is combining multiple species lists based on different taxonomies used in national and regional databases. This is managed using the SynBioSys Taxon Database, which was initially established for the purposes of the SynBioSys Europe project and is now further developed and extended within the framework of EVA. It is a system of taxon names and concepts used in the individual databases and their matches to a unified list of European flora.

By May 2014, 38 databases from all European regions, including the largest ones, agreed to join EVA, and 31 of them already contributed vegetation-plot data, in total 553 228 vegetation plots from 37 countries, 87% of them with geographical coordinates.

**Outlook:** EVA provides a basis for large-scale analyses of European vegetation diversity for both fundamental research in vegetation science, biodiversity science and macroecology, and applications for nature conservation including revisions of habitat classification systems, vegetation monitoring and providing indicators for ecosystem assessment.

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