

Online presentation of vegetation monitoring data from BIOTA Biodiversity Observatories



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Introduction

Since the start of the BIOTA AFRICA initiative nine years ago, a huge amount of vegetation data has been collected from standardised biodiversity observatories. Time series of vegetation data are available which have been collected in plots of different sizes as well as in nested locations. Presenting such data on a webpage is however a challenge. Therefore, we developed a solution that allows free and continuous access to vegetation monitoring data. At the moment, the data of two Biodiversity Observatories of BIOTA Maroc, Taoujgalt (TAO) and EI Miyit (EMY), can be visited online.

Data access

1) From the BIOTA AFRICA homepage, the visitor can easily reach the fact sheets of the biodiversity observatories. These fact sheets provide baseline information about the observatories.

<http://www.biota-africa.org> > BIOTA Maroc > EI Miyit (EMY)

2) From there a mouse click leads directly to the vegetation page of that observatory. The webpage shows an interactive map which divides the observatory into 100 hectares and which shows details about habitat features symbolised by different colours. Numbers indicate the rank of each hectare and, thus, the sampling priority.

3) If the user wants further information on plot number, ranking and geographical coordinates he only has to click on the ranking number in the map.

4) The user can browse for hectares and years in which vegetation surveys have been performed. In a query form he can select year and plot size. Again an interactive map of the observatory grid will appear, this time indicating the species richness of the plots in the respective year.

5) By clicking on a number a list with the scientific names of all occurring species will appear. The query form allows the user to filter life forms or life cycle durations. To compare the results of two queries with each other, it is possible to use a second query form independently. This feature allows the user to visualise firstly temporal changes over time, and secondly differences between plot sizes or between locations.

Conclusions

We offer stakeholders and scientists the possibility to screen the data for interesting data sets and patterns. If they want to analyse the data thoroughly, they can order the datasets from the BIOTA Data Facility (subject to the signature of the BIOTA Data Sharing Protocol).