



PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS



First International Congress

Documenting, Analysing and Managing Biodiversity in the Middle East

20-23 October 2008

Intercontinental Hotel, Aqaba, Jordan

DAAD

- 16:30 – 16:45 **SE2-31:** Speciation along the fragmented Irano-Turanian distribution zone: Phylogeography of *Pistacia atlantica* and its galling aphids
Inbar, M.; Avrani, S.; Ben-Shlomo, R.
- 16:45 – 17:00 **SE2-32:** Biodiversity and faunistics of Weevils in Israel (Coleoptera: Curculionoidea)
Friedman, A.L. L.; Freidberg, A.

Tuesday, 21 October

Lecture Hall DB3

Conserving and Managing the Biodiversity of the Middle East: Status and Perspectives (SE4)

Co-chairs: NN, NN

- 13:30 – 14:00 **SE4-12: Keynote** – Managing biodiversity in the Middle East: A challenge both for the countries in the region and the international community
Kasperek, M.
- 14:00 – 14:15 **SE4-13:** Terrestrial habitats and biodiversity in the Eastern Mediterranean coastal areas of Turkey and conservation concerns
Yılmaz, K. T.
- 14:15 – 14:30 **SE4-14:** Biodiversity and endemism of Babors Forest National Park
Djirar, N.
- 14:30 – 14:45 **SE4-15:** First inventory of habitats and biodiversity of the buffer zone in Cyprus
Güçel, S.; Charalambidou, I.; Göçmen, B.; Karataş, A.; Özden, Ö.; Soyumert, A.; Kassinis, N.
- 14:45 – 15:00 **SE4-16:** Aquatic endemism on the Western shore of the Dead Sea: Dimensions and protection
Dimentman, C.; Por, F. D.
- 15:00 – 15:30 **Coffee break**
- 15:30 – 15:45 **SE4-17:** Species diversity across the Jordanian – Israeli border
Shanas, U.; Abu Ghalyun, Y.; Alshamli, M.; Cnaani, J.; Guscio, D.; Khoury, F.; Mittler, S.; Nassar, K.; Shapira, I.; Simon, D.; Sultan, H.; Topel, E.; Ziv, Y.
- 15:45 – 16:00 **SE4-18:** The Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*) population in the Southern Levant
Ben Ari, Y.; Narkiss, T.; Kronfeld-Schor, N.; Bar-Gal, G. K.; Saltz, D.; Dolev, A.
- 16:00 – 16:15 **SE4-19:** Identification and documentation of endemic and endangered plant species in the Lebanon mountain series: Distribution and urbanization threats
Houri, A.; Houry, N. M.

Biodiversity of beetles along a rainfall gradient

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One of the most important factors determining biodiversity in the Middle East is the availability of water. The greatest changes seen in species assemblages occur along a gradient linked to water availability. Studying the changes in such assemblages along water availability gradients is therefore a critical tool for understanding biodiversity in the Middle East. Understanding species turnover along a rainfall gradient can explain most of the diversity in our area. Water availability affects biodiversity by several mechanisms. The amount of water determines which species can survive along the humidity gradient, which plant species are present in the habitat and what is the pattern and plant cover of woody species. The contrast between woody patches and open patches determines landscape diversity and consequently species diversity. In this research we show how beetle diversity changes between woody patches and open patches along a rainfall gradient. We also study the changes in species assemblages along the rainfall gradient in Israel from 900 mm annual rainfall to 90 mm. The research was carried out in the MARAG consortium sites (Israel Long Term Ecological Research). Our results show large changes from desert habitats to Mediterranean habitats. The changes are in species pool, in species assemblages, and in their response to the landscape diversity. Diversity increases with rainfall, but beyond 400 mm annual rain, there is no increase.

First inventory of habitats and biodiversity of the buffer zone in Cyprus

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Cyprus' location in the South-East Mediterranean on the crossroads between three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa), in combination with its particular climatic conditions, the long-term isolation of the island and human influence for millenia, have resulted in a considerable diversity of species and habitats and the presence of endemic, rare, and endangered flora and fauna. Overall, despite the unique biodiversity of Cyprus at both a European and an international level, there is a general lack of complete biodiversity studies. Whereas information about the presence of flora and fauna species is known for most areas, complete inventories of these areas including complete flora and fauna species lists and basic population estimates do not usually exist. This situation is even more apparent for the buffer zone for which there is a complete lack of information at the most basic level, i.e. in relation to the presence and absence of particular flora and fauna species. The scarcity of complete biodiversity studies from most areas plus the absence of any information from the buffer zone constitutes a major weakness in nature conservation planning in Cyprus. In this context, we have formed the first bi-communal academic network in Cyprus. Eight study sites have been selected across the width of the buffer zone covering different habitat types, e.g. river, coastal, farmland etc. and since July 2007, basic biodiversity surveys of the buffer zone by identifying plant, mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian and invertebrate species in order to compile a species inventory has been undertaken. The project is supported by the United Nations Development Program - Action for Cooperation and Trust (UNDP-ACT) and is being carried out under the auspices of the Cyprus Environmental Stakeholder Forum.