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NEWSLETTER

Issue 6
(May/August 2014)

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The ICT Proposers' day 2014 (#ICTpropday) is a networking event organised by the European Commission and will be held in Florence, Italy on the 9th and 10th of October 2014. This event is specifically dedicated to networking and promoting research and innovation in the field of Information and Communication Technologies. It will... [more](#)

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Open exchange of scientific knowledge and European copyright: The case of biodiversity information

08.06.2014

As a part of the series of final project outputs a new pro-iBiosphere article published in the open access journal ZooKeys assesses the need and future for building an Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management System (OBKMS) - the infrastructure for a system that will intelligently manage and integrate digital biodiversity information. Background.... [more](#)

The pro-iBiosphere project will soon come to an end

Pro- iBiosphere 20.08.2014



The Coordination and Support Action pro-iBiosphere will come to an end by the 31st of August 2014. The project was launched for two years to investigate ways to increase the accessibility of biodiversity data, improve the efficiency of its curation and increase the user base of biodiversity data consumers and applications. Ten of its key major outcomes have been summarised in the "[pro-iBiosphere final brochure](#)".

The project delivered a series of recommendations on various pressing topics to the wider biodiversity informatics community, for instance, on how to improve the use of digital infrastructures among taxonomists, on how to address barriers to the open exchange of biodiversity knowledge that arise from European laws, in particular European legislation on copyright and database protection rights. The recommendations have been documented in various pro-iBiosphere deliverables ([here](#) available).

The project conducted 5 [pilots](#) and organised a total of seven [meetings](#). The enthusiasm, involvement and breadth of the community participation to these meetings was very impressive!. The pro-iBiosphere [final event](#) took place from the 10th - 12th of June 2014 at the Bouchout Castle (Botanic Garden Meise, Belgium). An audience consisting of more than 75 persons participated in the event. Activities organised during the event included a [Workshop on the Biodiversity Catalogue](#), [Demonstrations on the project pilots](#), [Demonstrations on the outcomes of the Data Enrichment Hackathon](#), a [Training on WikiMedia](#), a [Poster session](#) and the [Final Conference](#).

A major highlight of the Final conference was the official launch and ceremony of the [Bouchout Declaration for Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management](#). At present (August 2014) more than 170 institutions and 90 organisations have signed the Declaration. For more information please see the news items "The Bouchout Declaration: A commitment to open science for better management of nature" (published below on page # and "The Bouchout Declaration: A contribution from the biodiversity community to Open Digital Science" (published on the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) website).

The conference proceedings, including an event report (detailing the statistics and outputs of the Final Conference), a Storify (i.e. a collection of tweets and pictures) and pictures, are available [here](#).

It has been a pleasure working with all of you!

Soraya Sierra

pro-iBiosphere Project Leader

BioVeL meeting "In Practice and in future" to be hosted in Paris, France on November 13, 2014

Stephanie Morales 15.07.2014



The next [BioVeL](#) meeting will take place in Paris, France on November 13, 2014.

This one-day event, entitled "BioVeL : In Practice and in future" aims at presenting the achievements, experiences gained and lesson learnt from the BioVeL initiative which has been working on building a virtual laboratory for biodiversity research. This event will also provide an opportunity to introduce BioVeL plans for the future.

BioVeL is a pilot implementation of some of the core ideas from the LifeWatch Preparatory Phase. In

the past three years the project has been working with the biodiversity research community to construct, test, and revise some essential elements of a robust e-infrastructure for biodiversity and ecosystem research.

The event will be structured around the 3 key goals that encapsulate the BIH2013 initiative.

- Integration: Making better use of existing data and tools.
- Cooperation: Working together towards a global biosphere model.
- Promotion: Informatics leadership to serve the needs of science and policy.

For more information and registration, click [here](#).

For any additional information, please contact: elisabeth.paymal@fondationbiodiversite.fr.

Find out more on the BioVel project a www.biovel.eu.



ICT Proposers' Day 2014 - Registration is open

Stephanie Morales 24.06.2014

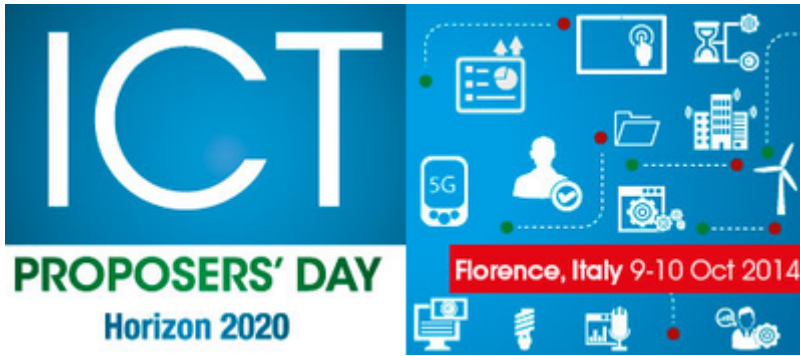


The ICT Proposers' day 2014 (#ICTpropday) is a networking event organised by the European Commission and will be held in Florence, Italy on the 9th and 10th of October 2014.

This event is specifically dedicated to networking and promoting research and innovation in the field of [Information and Communication Technologies](#). It will focus on networking for the [Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2015](#).

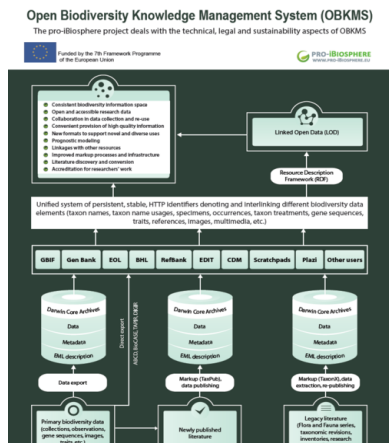
It is free of charge and offers an exceptional occasion to build quality partnerships as it will connect academia, research institutes, industrial stakeholders, SMEs and government actors from all over Europe. The registration to attend the event is now open.

Find out more on ICT Proposers' Day [website](#). Register now [here](#).



Brochure

Pro- iBiosphere 17.06.2014



[Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management System \(OBKMS\)](#)

The Bouchout Declaration: A commitment to open science for better management of nature

Pro- iBiosphere 12.06.2014



The [Bouchout Declaration](#) targets the need for data to be openly accessible, so that scientists can use the information for new types of research and to provide better advice. Currently, data may be prevented from becoming open or usable because of copyright or concerns of institutions that hold the data, or because it is not in a form that can be easily managed by computers. The Declaration identifies mechanisms to structure open data so that they can be drawn together, queried and analysed on a much larger scale than was previously possible.

The Bouchout Declaration allows the community to demonstrate its support for data to be openly available. It extends previous efforts, like the [Berlin Declaration](#), to the biodiversity sciences. The objective is to promote free and open access to data and information about biodiversity by people and computers. This will help to bring about an inclusive and shared knowledge management infrastructure that will inform our decisions so that we respond more effectively to the challenges of the present and future.

"Biodiversity research is painstakingly built up from the study of billions of specimens over hundreds of years from every

region of the Earth. We are now in a position to share this hard-won knowledge freely with everyone who wishes to read, extend, interconnect, or apply it. We should do so as soon as humanly possible. If we do, we will not only make biodiversity research more accessible, discoverable, retrievable, and useful. We will make it more useful for the critical purpose of preserving biodiversity itself," comments Peter Suber from the [Harvard Open Access Project](#) on the significance of the declaration.

International initiatives like the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) support science and society by gathering and helping scientists to analyse knowledge acquired by past generations and from streams new observations and technologies. The GBIF's Executive Secretary Donald Hobern commented: "This knowledge cannot be recreated and needs to be used and reinterpreted over time. We need to manage it as a precious resource of value to the whole human race. This is why Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management matters."

The Bouchout Declaration emerged from the [pro-iBiosphere project](#) (a Coordination and Support Action funded through the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under Grant Agreement ?312848) as a reaction to the need of better access to biodiversity information. The inaugural ceremony of the Bouchout Declaration (including official launch of the website) will take place on the 12th of June 2014 during the final event of the project.

"Museum collections around the world hold invaluable biodiversity information that are often hidden in dark rooms. Digitalizing and providing free and open access to these resources through an Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management System in Europe is crucial for the advancement of biodiversity research and better management of nature for a sustainable future. We are happy to be one of the first institutions which endorsed the Declaration" concluded Prof. Johannes Vogel, Director General of the Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin.

Universities, research institutions, funding agencies, foundations, publishers, libraries, museums, archives, learned societies, professional associations and individuals who share the vision of the Bouchout Declaration are invited to join the signatories. If you wish to join the list of signatories or would like to receive additional information please email bouchout@plazi.org.

Among the [initial signatories](#) are some of the world's leading natural history museums, botanical gardens, and scientific networks.



Classical monographs re-published in advanced open access

Pro- iBiosphere 11.06.2014



The new Advanced Books platform of Pensoft opens new horizons for semantic book publishing

Easy access to legacy data collected over hundreds-of-years of exploration of nature from the convenience of people's own computers for anyone all over the world? It may sound futuristic but a brand new pilot showcases how this is possible here and now.

The new workflow demonstrates a re-publication of a volume of [Flora Malesiana](#) in a semantically enriched HTML edition available on the newly launched, [Advanced Books](#) publishing platform. The platform was demonstrated today at the EU funded [pro-iBiosphere](#) project which supported, in part, the re-publication of *Flora Malesiana*.

The screenshot displays the 'Advanced books (02 Jun 2014)' interface. On the left, a table lists taxonomic entries with columns for description, distribution, and species names. Below the table is a detailed page for *Knema olivarezii* Merr., including botanical illustrations (Fig. 34), a caption, and a full species description with morphological details and references.

| Description | Distribution | Species |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Lower leaf surface with mixed minute scale-like and stellate-dendroid hairs. Style 1 mm long. Fruits 2.2-2.4 by 1 cm. Male buds pear-shaped, 2 mm wide; anthers 4 or 5. — Lesser Sunda Islands (W Flores, at 700 m). | | <i>K. steenisi</i> |
| Leaves with truncate apex, lower surface early glabrescent. — Central Sulawesi. | | <i>K. celebica</i> |
| Leaves not truncate at apex, lower surface with persistent indumentum or late glabrescent. | 34 | |
| Lower leaf surface with hairs 0.1 mm long. — Philippines. | | <i>K. kunthii</i> subsp. <i>parvifolia</i> |
| Lower leaf surface with hairs of mixed sizes, 0.2-0.7 mm long. — Philippines, N & C Sulawesi. | | <i>K. stellata</i> |

Knema olivarezii Merr.
Knema olivarezii Merr. Philipp. J. So. Bot. 13 (1916): 208
Knema olivarezii Merr. Enum. Philipp. Fl. 2 (1921): 183
Knema olivarezii Merr. W.J. de Wilde Blumea 25 (1979): 437
Lectotype: Alvarez 81 22395 Lucon.

Tree 10-15 m. Twigs somewhat angular, 2-2.5 mm in diameter, glabrescent, at first with dense rusty dendroid hairs 0.5 mm long; bark striate, not tending to crack or flake. Leaves chartaceous, oblong to lanceolate, 8-14 by 2.5-3.5 cm, base rounded or short-attenuate, apex longly acute(=acuminate); upper surface olivaceous-brown, lower surface greyish, with subsistent grey-brown hairs 0.2-0.3 mm long, when shed leaving minute hair scars; dots absent; midrib raised above; nerves 12-15 pairs, somewhat raised above; venation fine and distinct above; petiole 8-15 by 1-2 mm, late alabescent.

When Linnaeus was laying the foundations of taxonomy as a science in his *Species Plantarum* and *Systema Naturae* books he probably did not imagine that his methods of publication of natural history data would remain almost unchanged for more than 270 years! The bulk of the information on the living World is still closed in paper-based legacy literature, especially in fundamental regional treatises such as *Flora*, *Fauna* and *Mycota* series, hardly accessible for readers, despite the dramatic changes in the publishing technologies that have taken place over the last decade.

The new pilot, developed by [Pensoft Publishers](#) in a cooperation with the [Naturalis Biodiversity Center](#), [Plazi](#), and [Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum Berlin-Dahlem](#) (BGBM), demonstrates how a fundamental book in natural history can start a new life with *Advanced Books*. Re-publication of the *Flora of Northumberland & Durham*, published in 1838, will be the next to appear as a result of a collaboration between the [Botanical Garden Meise National Botanic Garden](#) of Belgium and Pensoft.

Flora Malesiana is a systematic account of the flora of Malesia, the plant-geographical unit spanning six countries in Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, and Papua New Guinea. The plant treatments are not published in a systematic order but as they come about by the scientific efforts of some 100 collaborators all over the world.

With the new platform, such scientifically important historical monographs, enriched with additional information from up-to-date external sources related to organisms' names, species treatments, information on their ecology, distribution and conservation value, morphological characters, etc., become freely usable for anyone at any place in the world.

The re-publication in advanced open access comes with the many other benefits of the digitization and markup efforts such as data extraction and collation, distribution and re-use of content, archiving of different data elements in relevant

repositories and so on.

"Advanced Books will bring many outstanding scientific monographs to a new life, however the platform is not only restricted to e-publish our legacy literature." commented Prof. Lyubomir Penev, Managing Director of Pensoft. "New books are mostly welcome on the platform, joining their historical predecessors in an open, common, human- and machine-readable, data space for the benefit of future researchers and the society in general" concluded Prof. Penev.

###

Original Source:

de Wilde W (2014) Flora Malesiana. Series I - Seed Plants, Volume 14. Myristicaceae. Advanced Books: e1141.

doi:

[10.3897/ab.e1141](https://doi.org/10.3897/ab.e1141)

Open exchange of scientific knowledge and European copyright: The case of biodiversity information

Pro- iBiosphere 08.06.2014



As a part of the series of final project outputs a new pro-iBiosphere article published in the open access journal ZooKeys assesses the need and future for building an Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management System (OBKMS) - the infrastructure for a system that will intelligently manage and integrate digital biodiversity information.

Background. The 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development is helping the European to prepare for an integrative system for intelligent management of biodiversity knowledge. The infrastructure that is envisaged and that will be further developed within the Programme "Horizon 2020" aims to provide open and free access to taxonomic information to anyone with a requirement for biodiversity data, without the need for individual consent of other persons or institutions. Open and free access to information will foster the re-use and improve the quality of data, will accelerate research, and will promote new types of research. Progress towards the goal of free and open access to content is hampered by numerous technical, economic, sociological, legal, and other factors. The present article addresses barriers to the open exchange of biodiversity knowledge that arise from European laws, in particular European legislation on copyright and database protection rights.

We present a legal point of view as to what will be needed to bring distributed information together and facilitate its re-use by data mining, integration into semantic knowledge systems, and similar techniques. We address exceptions and limitations of copyright or database protection within Europe, and we point to the importance of data use agreements. We illustrate how exceptions and limitations have been transformed into national legislations within some European states to create inconsistencies that impede access to biodiversity information.

Conclusions. The legal situation within the EU is unsatisfactory because there are inconsistencies among states that hamper the deployment of an open biodiversity knowledge management system. Scientists within the EU who work with copyright protected works or with protected databases have to be aware of regulations that vary from country to country. This is a major stumbling block to international collaboration and is an impediment to the open exchange of biodiversity knowledge. Such differences should be removed by unifying exceptions and limitations for research purposes in a binding, Europe-wide regulation.

Original Source:

Egloff W, Patterson DJ, Agosti D, Hagedorn G (2014) Open exchange of scientific knowledge and European copyright: The case of biodiversity information. ZooKeys 414: 109–135. doi: [10.3897/zookeys.414.7717](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.414.7717)

