Explore: a new tool for virtual natural history collection management

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Résumé

Financed by the French Research National Agency, ReColNat aims to facilitate access to French natural history collections. Alongside a digitisation effort, a platform gathering all the virtual collections of the partners' institutions was developed. The web application, Explore (http://explore.recolnat.org/), is a tool developed at the MNHN in the frame of the project, specifically dedicated to the consultation of the platform.

The search engine allows the user to browse through the results, imaged or not, and to compare to a selection. Results of searches may be selected and downloaded. The interface produces distribution maps of any entries which have been georeferenced. Browsing by geographical distribution directly on maps is also possible. A statistical section also allows the user to browse the data by the institution of provenance, geographical origin and discipline.

In addition to consulting collections, new functionalities will be provided by the end of 2015, namely:

- User comment (after login)

- Modification of an entry (moderated)

- Addition of a new determination (moderated)

- Databasing of a new specimen/batch

Explore will mainly be used for databasing new sets of data. The newly produced data and modifications of existing ones will feed into linked databases systems, such as SONNERAT for the Francophone network of herbaria.

Explore will allow broad access to a large part of the natural history collections held in France, and to non-French members of the Francophone network of herbaria. Botanists worldwide, and particularly those studying the flora of tropical Asia, are invited to become active in knowledge improvement of biodiversity collections, as the tools provide broad new

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horizons for collaborative research on biodiversity.
This poster, presenting the new tool, will come with a demonstration.