The Data Paper: sharing biodiversity data and publishing about it

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Résumé

Broadly available, shared databases, giving access to a large amount of biodiversity data and metadata, have become key tools in contemporary botany. Data production and management are, however, time-consuming work and individual data providers can doubt the utility of small datasets that will be drown in a huge total pool of data. Moreover, the organization of datasets very often reflects a particular research project or type of collection, and their use by a third party would only benefit from a description. Based on these observations, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), in collaboration with Pensoft Publishers and Nature, has created the Data Paper as a tool to answer these issues.
Data papers are scientific peer-reviewed articles published in scholarly journals, which aim to describe a particular dataset available online. Unlike conventional research articles, their purpose is to describe data rather than to present analyses. In addition to the recognition given by a published peer-reviewed article with its own DOI, this type of publication allow researchers and data providers to introduce and promote datasets to a broader audience, and to describe them in a synthetic and understandable way.

The GBIF Integrated Publishing Toolkit includes help to create Data Paper drafts, in order to facilitate the redaction of a Data Paper describing a dataset shared on the GBIF portal (www.gbif.org). Moreover, Data Papers can describe any dataset, even if published on other data repositories, as long as it is freely and permanently available online.
Data papers are giving an important opportunity for data publishers to communicate on datasets, and for the public to discover them and to understand the ways they should be used.

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