

28th European Vegetation Survey Meeting in Madrid: Vegetation Diversity and Global Change

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The twenty-eighth annual meeting of the European Vegetation Survey has been held in Madrid from September 2 to 6 at the School of Pharmacy (Complutense University) with the title ‘Vegetation Diversity and Global Change’. European Vegetation Survey is a working group of IAVS (International Association of Vegetation Science) born in 1992 as a new initiative related to the European Habitats Directive (Bulletin of the European Communities) which urged member countries to conserve their most significant natural spaces. That directive led the countries to work in the preparation of detailed cartographies of its vegetation and the creation of Natura 2000 Network, which included the most important “natural vegetation units” of each country and provided them with special protection. More than 160 experts from 25 countries has attended it.

The Department of Pharmacology, Pharmacognosy and Botany has organized this event for the first time in Madrid. Traditionally Pharmacy has been considered as guarantor of environmental health and its relationships with the Official Professional Pharmaceutical College of Madrid has resulted in sponsoring the congress, and count on the presence of its president, Luis González Díaz in the Opening Ceremony, together with the vice-dean of the Faculty, Manuel Córdoba on behalf of the Dean Irene Iglesias, the general secretary of EVS (European Vegetation Survey) Milan Chytry, and the chair of the Organizing Committee Rosario G. Gavilán (see Figures 1, 2).

The congress included three keynotes lectures and 124 presentations as oral or poster organized around 12 oral and three poster sessions over three days. Adrian Escudero, Alexandro Chiarucci and Pilar Rodríguez Rojo as keynote speakers covered greatly some of the main features of EVS: functional aspects of plant community assembly, ways of measure biodiversity (habitats) and different types of Iberian grassland vegetation. Then, oral sessions widely covered other aspects of vegetation: vegetation types from forest (temperate, boreal and thermophilous or Mediterranean) to sand dunes, halophilous vegetation, high mountain vegetation, wetland, riparian or aquatic vegetation. Six particular sessions were dedicated to the assessment and conservation of European habitats and to the dynamic and succession of vegetation. Other sessions included the development of new methodologies and databases for vegetation studies and also vegetation patterns for big areas. All of those thematic aspects of vegetation studies were also reflected in the poster sessions showing all works EVS members are developing now along Europe and surrounding territories.

On Friday, two post-symposium excursions were also organized, one to the Sierra de Guadarrama National Park, to visit upland areas including the glacial circus of Dos Hermanas and Peñalara peaks and Peñalara lagoons. The second excursion was organized to the southeast of Madrid, to see the diversity of vegetation in gypsum marls (Gavilán, Sánchez-Mata & Gutiérrez Girón, 2019; see Figure 2). The third event organized after the Meeting was the social dinner to share some traditional values of the country; a flamenco show in Madrid was the appropriate atmosphere to relax from the intensity of the work done altogether the former days.

The journal *Mediterranean Botany* (formerly *Lazaroa*, IF: 0.947) will organize a special issue with a selection of contributions presented in this EVS meeting. News will be upcoming at the end of October at <http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/MBOT/index>

The Organizing Committee was mainly formed by people from the Department of Pharmacology, Pharmacognosy and Botany (Rosario G. Gavilán (chair), Alba Gutiérrez Girón, Daniel Sánchez Mata, José M^a Pizarro, Rosina Magaña, Javier Pérez Hernández, Zuzana Ferencova); Institute of Environmental Sciences, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Toledo (Federico Fernández González), Sierra de Guadarrama National Park (José Luis Izquierdo) and Department of Biology, Autonomous University of Madrid (Irene Sánchez, Esteban Ramírez), Biodiversia S. Coop. (Camila Monasterio and Guillermo Amo). Senior representatives professors from other Madrid universities and Spanish research centers formed part of the Advisory Council and the Scientific Committee was formed by the Steering EVS Committee (see Gavilán & Gutiérrez Girón, 2019). All of us worked enthusiastically to cover all expectations of people attending the Meeting, hopefully Madrid contributed as well. Thank you for coming!

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Figure 1. The Opening Ceremony. From left to right: Milan Chytrý, general secretary of EVS (European Vegetation Survey); Luis González Díaz, president of Madrid Official Professional Pharmacy College; Manuel Córdoba, the Pharmacy Faculty vice-dean on behalf of the Dean, Irene Iglesias, and Rosario G. Gavilán, chair of the Organizing Committee. Right: Milan Chytrý introducing EVS features in the Opening Ceremony.



Figure 2. Some pictures from the 28th European Vegetation Survey. From up to down and left to right. Left, Starting the meeting: Registration desk; right, Professors Wolfredo Wildpret de la Torre and Daniel Sánchez Mata answered questions to a UCM journalist on vegetation conservation problems in Canary Islands. Excursion to Sierra de Guadarrama National Park: left, José Luis Izquierdo and Rosario G. Gavilán explaining *Festuca curvifolia* (carpetana) grasslands, Peñalara peak at the bottom; right, Alba Gutiérrez Girón leading one of the groups. Excursion to southeastern Madrid (El Salobral): left, group picture; right, learning on plants and vegetation from childhood! (J. Sibik son).

Bibliography derived from the Meeting

Gavilán, R. & Gutiérrez Girón, A. (Eds.). 2019. Vegetation and Global Change. Abstract Book.

Gavilán, R., Sánchez-Mata, D. & Gutiérrez Girón, A. (Eds.). 2019. Vegetation and Global Change. Excursions booklet.