

63rd IAVS Symposium

September 20-23, 2021

The virtual event, organized by IAVS

*“The 63rd Annual Symposium of the IAVS will be held on **September 20-23, 2021**, this time fully virtually. We acknowledge that due to widespread travel restrictions, organizing an in-person meeting this year would be highly challenging. We believe that the virtual format of the symposium will provide an excellent opportunity for all of us to meet, discuss the latest developments in the field of vegetation science, and also socialize. The local organizing committee is served by some of the members of the IAVS Governing Board.”*



Format of the Symposium

The meeting will be held entirely online, using a dedicated online conference platform prepared for us by a professional company.

The symposium program will be structured similarly to what we are used to from our past symposia. During each of the four main conference days, we will have plenary talk, Special Session and a workshop, all held live in virtual meeting rooms. We will also have a number of contributed oral talks and posters with an option for lightning talks; these will be prerecorded and offered on-demand. The symposium will also include the traditional General Assembly, which will be live and open to all symposium participants, and also Young Scientists' Awards for excellent presentations. Live events will be accessible to symposium participants via video call, and will also be recorded. All on-demand content (including recorded live events, except workshops) also will be available for limited time after the conference ends. Discussion during the live events will be moderated by the host, while on-demand talks and posters will allow questions to be asked by chat. We learnt from the experience of other societies to know which format works best, what technical and other difficulties we may face and how to prevent them; we feel confident that we can

organize an event which will satisfy our scientific and social needs as members of the Society.

Scientific program

As always, we invite contributions from all aspects of vegetation science. For this very special year, the framing theme of the Symposium is **Vegetation goes Virtual**. We have chosen this theme to acknowledge the peculiarity of the present situation when all aspects of our life are affected by restrictions related to COVID 19. With few exceptions, vegetation ecologists cannot do their research virtually; we need to go out and study vegetation in the field. However, this does not mean that we cannot meet virtually to discuss our findings. Of course, an in-person meeting has an important added value of social interactions, which can hardly be satisfied through the online platform, and we hope to return to some form of in-person meetings in future years. But for now, let's try to go with what is possible and do our best to enjoy the virtual meeting!

Financial support

As is our tradition, IAVS has allocated substantial funding to support the participation of IAVS members in financial need through our Global Sponsorship Committee. This support will include covering part of or the entire cost of the registration fee for eligible students and researchers. We will provide further details soon, once the conference website is functional. The application process will be very similar to attending a regular annual symposium.

Call for Special Sessions and Workshops

The Local Organizing Committee invites proposals for **Special Sessions**, offering a forum for the presentation and discussion of important and timely aspects of vegetation science, and also short **Workshops**, allowing participants to improve their skills in using tools needed for vegetation science research. The deadline for proposals is **April 8, 2021**, and the notifications of acceptance will be sent at the beginning of May 2021.

Please, consider that since we are organizing the meeting online, we need to adjust the structure of these two types of events to guarantee smooth delivery. **Special Sessions** will be of two types: live events (up to four for entire symposium), and on-demand sessions composed of pre-recorded talks. Live Special Session should be planned as up to 2 hours long, including a break, composed of up to five talks, including general discussion; each Session needs to have at least one host (usually the organizer/s) who will control for time and moderate discussion. Pre-recorded Special Session offers more flexible format, may consist of higher number of contributed talks, with organizing providing an introduction or a summary. **Workshops** should also be planned as up to 2 hours events, including a break. They may consist of a short theoretical introduction, plus a practical part when participants are separated into smaller groups (in separate breakout rooms) to conduct requested tasks. The

topic for the workshop needs to be relatively narrow, allowing this short format to be possible. We suggest providing participants with online workshop materials in advance. It may also be possible to provide longer workshops related to the symposium (but not within the main conference days). Still, please consider that due to the global reach of our membership, it is not easy to find a longer time slot that would accommodate participants from different parts of the world.

Please submit proposals for Special Sessions or Workshops (approximately 1 page) by email to iavs2021@mci-group.com. Proposals should include the following information:

Title: The title should allow conference attendees to understand the focus of the Special Session or the Workshop.

Abstract: Provide a brief abstract of no more than 200 words in which you explain the topic's rationale, especially why it is relevant for vegetation scientists.

Additional information: For Special Sessions, please provide a short list of proposed speakers willing to contribute with their talk. For Workshops, please describe briefly your consideration about the structure and how you plan to adapt to online delivery.

Local Organizing Committee

- Susan Wiser (IAVS President)
- Javier Loidi (Chair of the IAVS Meetings Committee)
- Martin Diekmann (past IAVS President, a current member of the IAVS Awards Committee)
- David Zelený (IAVS Secretary)

Scientific Committee

The list of members will be announced in the second circular

Important dates

- Submissions of Special Sessions and Workshop proposals: **April 8**
- Launching registration and abstract submission website: **during April**
- Abstract submission deadline: **May 22**
- IAVS attendance grant applications deadline: **May 22** (no extension possible)
- The rest of the dates will be announced in the second circular