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editorial

Making the most of the *news and update* section: share your views on the most recent research in biogeography

The aims of *Frontiers of Biogeography* include disseminating research in biogeography to a broad audience¹ and being a leading forum for biogeographers. Now published with eScholarship², we have consolidated our affordable open-access status while providing an easy, modern and professional setup throughout all steps of the editorial process. Here we highlight a key section in the journal—*news and update*—as a forum for the community: providing a place for finding and discussing the latest advances and trends in biogeographical research.

The *news and update*³ section provides a way to keep up to date with the increasingly large literature published across the diverse field of biogeography. Of particular importance are the *update* articles, which highlight recent research (specific papers, special issues or recent advances in a particular field) that can be of general interest for anybody interested in biogeography, regardless of his/her particular field of study. The editorial board of the journal contributes to a continuous flow of articles in this section, and *Frontiers of Biogeography* especially welcomes independent submissions of *update* articles. The more diverse these submissions are, the wider will be the coverage of current trends in the literature provided by this section. The only limitation is that *updates* must not be written by the authors of the original articles being highlighted. Also, you may wish to check with the editorial team that no-one else is working on an update on the same paper or theme.

There are many reasons for providing a short digest of a given article or body of research. The most straightforward may be highlighting a paper you like or believe is of high relevance, or can become a cornerstone for a particular field or research topic (e.g. Hortal 2011). But *updates* can

also be used to discuss a polemical paper (e.g. Beck 2011) or the current evolution of research on a given question or methodology (e.g. Blois 2012), to place recent advances into a wider theoretical context and show how they complement it (e.g. Parent 2012), to show how despite their novelty these advances are rooted in an already consolidated body of knowledge (e.g. Burrige 2012), or even to identify new lines of research (e.g. La Sorte 2011). Being short and concise reviews, *updates* can be good for training graduate students on scientific writing, and are thus an ideal outcome of journal clubs or discussion groups. Needless to say, this section provides the opportunity to share the excitement about some fresh articles that you discussed with your peers over a beer or a coffee, or during lunch. If you have benefitted from discussing the most recent high-quality or mind-boggling research then others will, too—especially if it helps others of us see beyond the narrow confines of our specific topics.

Also within the *news and update* section, *Frontiers of Biogeography* publishes summaries of recent meetings, workshops or symposia. These articles can either provide a short account of the topics that were discussed (e.g. Martin et al. 2011) and the main outcomes of the meeting (e.g. Jenkins and Ricklefs 2011), or provide a deeper discussion on one or several of the issues raised during it (e.g. Kamino et al. 2012). These summaries can be submitted by either the organizers or any participant (or group of participants), so if you are involved in a meeting that may be of general interest for biogeographers, please consider contacting our editorial board and publishing a short digest in *Frontiers*.

Importantly, this section also includes a prolific and regular series of *book reviews* on many topics related to biogeography (e.g. Dormann

¹ <http://escholarship.org/uc/search?entity=fb;view=aimandscope>

² <http://escholarship.org/>

³ The instructions for authors for these specific sections can be found at <http://escholarship.org/uc/search?entity=fb;view=submissionguidelines>

2012), filling in the gap left by the disappearance or severe reduction of book review sections from many other journals. Last but not the least, the *news and update* section accepts *dissertation abstracts*, where the aims and results of recently defended PhD theses are summarized and put into a wider context by the defendant (e.g. Arora 2012)—an excellent way of bringing such a body of research to a broad audience in a more holistic, integrated way than is afforded by a series of journal papers.

The *news and update* section has been growing for more than three years. Increasing contributions from many different backgrounds and perspectives can put current biogeography in a nutshell, published quarterly. That is the aim. So we encourage you all to share current advances in your topic of research by submitting articles for this section. Rather than wondering why nobody talks about a particular new paper, or why *Frontiers* does not cover some of the research you think is important, consider this section yours, and be an active part of it. It will be just one small step for you, but it will contribute to a giant leap towards a truly multidisciplinary biogeography.

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