

Preface

Biodiversity research aims at comprehending the totality and variability of organisms, their morphology, genetics, life history, habitats and geographical ranges. It usually refers to biological diversity at three levels: genetics, species, and ecology. Biodiversity is an outstanding domain that deals with heterogeneous datasets and concepts generated from a large number of disciplines in order to build a coherent picture of the extend of life on earth. The presence of such a myriad of data resources makes integrative biodiversity research increasingly important, but at the same time very challenging. It is severely strangled by the way data and information are made available and handled today. Semantic Web techniques have shown their potential to enhance data interoperability, discovery, and integration by providing common formats to achieve a formalized conceptual environment, but have not been widely applied to address open data management issues in the biodiversity domain.

The 2nd International Workshop on Semantics for Biodiversity (S4BioDiv) thus aimed to bring together computer scientists and biologists working on Semantic Web approaches for biodiversity and related areas such as agriculture or agro-ecology. The goal was to exchange experiences, build a state of the art of realizations and challenges and reuse and adapt solutions that have been proposed in other domains. The focus was on presenting challenging issues and solutions for the design of high quality biodiversity information systems based on Semantic Web techniques. The workshop was a full-day event on October 22nd co-located with the 16th International Semantic Web Conference (ISWC 2017), October 21-25, Vienna, Austria.

In total, 13 paper submissions presenting new research results and ongoing projects have been submitted. All of these were reviewed by at least three members of the program committee. Out of the submitted contributions, 6 full papers and 4 poster papers have been accepted for presentation at the workshop and publication in these proceedings.

The program included two keynote talks highlighting two vital and challenging topics related to biodiversity research and Open Science in general. Alison Specht, director of the Centre for the Synthesis and Analysis of Biodiversity (CESAB), talked about "Engaging the Domain Expert: Is it just a Dream?". Oscar Corcho, full professor at the Ontology Engineering Group, ETSI Informáticos, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain presented his thoughts "Towards Reproducible Science: A few Building Blocks from my Personal Experience". To stimulate interdisciplinary debate, the workshop encompassed a one-hour panel discussing controversial topics in the field.

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S4BioDiv Chairs
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