

Report on the 2nd phytoPal Meeting at the XI International Palynological Congress, Granada, 5th July 2004.

Attendees

Ken Dorning	Kath Grey	Ken Higgs
Jun Li	Gary Mullins	John Marshall
Malgorzata	Stewart Molyneux	Jafar Sabouri
Moczydlowska-Vidal		
Thomas Servais	Ludovic Stricanne	Paul Strother
Reed Wicander	Sebastian Willman	Huaicheng Zhu

Summary

- The possibility of adding pictures to the database was raised. However, it was noted that the inclusions of images would be something that would grow with time and that the images could be maintained on separate web pages and accessed from the database by using hyperlinks.
- The existence of the complete Cambrian and Ordovician databases collated by Malgosia and by Thomas and co-workers was noted.
- A permanent home of the phytoPal Database was discussed. At present it is housed on the University of Leicester server. The CIMP web pages are hosted by the University of Sheffield, but had limited space and would have no room for phytoPal.
- It was noted that the Taxonomic Database was largely complete, with the taxonomic information up to 1990 having been added. The database would now be updated to include the last 14 years of systematic changes.
- The need to refine and expand on the occurrence data already added to the database was noted and it was decided that both stratigraphical and palaeogeographical data would be needed. This refinement would occur under the leadership of the partners in the project in each area of their specialisation. This would enable the principle scientific aim of producing a Sepkoski-type curve for phytoplankton diversity through the Palaeozoic to be achieved.
- Occurrence data could be related to absolute ages and this facility would be included in the database.
- A fully updated taxonomic database checked over by the partners would be required by the Lille 2004 meeting, as this would represent the halfway point of the project. As the taxonomic database was nearing 90% completion it was decided to send it to the partners now so that a start could be made on assessing its accuracy.
- Data would be sent to the partners as Excel files. Additions and corrections would be made using codes (the original stratigraphical data will be in the form of **1** for where a taxon is present, with a cell being left blank where a taxon is absent. **X** should be inserted where a stratigraphical range is extended and **0** [zero] inserted to replace **1** where a stratigraphical range is reduced).
- The need for partners to undertake exchange visits was highlighted. We need to avoid everybody wanting to make an exchange visit in the final year of the project. The sequence of exchange visits would partly depend on the plan of

visits by Gary Mullins to each of the partners. Jun Li would be with Reed Wicander from September-December 2004 and Reed considered that this would provide a good time for Gary's first visit.

- The phytoPal workshop in Lille would take place in conjunction with the Palaeontological Association meeting (17-20th December 2004) and would most likely occur on the 15th-16th December 2004. The meeting would take place at the University and delegates would be housed in local hotels.
- A phytoPal workshop will take place in association with the AASP meeting in St Louis, 18th-21st September 2005. A half-day symposium for phytoPal will take place at that meeting.