

Editorial. The Nagoya Protocol and Taxonomy

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Abstract. The Editor-in-Chief of Phegea attended the XXVI International Congress of Entomology in Helsinki, July 17–22, 2022. One of the hottest items was whether the Nagoya Protocol obstructs taxonomy science and the activities of taxonomists. The Protocol was agreed upon in 2010 and the entomological community has to comply with the fair access and benefit-sharing regulations defined by the Protocol. It might help to follow the Nagoya Protocol when biodiversity data are shared in a non-monetary way via global mega data aggregators and biodiversity data platforms.

Samenvatting. De hoofdredacteur van Phegea woonde het XXVI Internationale Congres voor Entomologie bij in Helsinki, 17–22 juli 2022. Een van de meest besproken onderwerpen was de vraag of het Nagoya Protocol de taxonomiewetenschap en de activiteiten van taxonomen in de weg staat. Het protocol is in 2010 overeengekomen en de entomologische gemeenschap moet voldoen aan de eerlijke toegang en verdeling van voordelen met de door het Protocol gedefinieerde voorschriften. Het kan helpen om het Nagoya Protocol te volgen wanneer biodiversiteitsgegevens worden gedeeld in een niet-monetaire manier via wereldwijde megadata-aggregators en biodiversiteitsdataplatforms.

Résumé. Le rédacteur en chef de Phegea a assisté au XXVI congrès international d'entomologie à Helsinki, du 17 au 22 juillet 2022. L'un des sujets les plus brûlants était de savoir si le protocole de Nagoya entrave la science de la taxonomie et les activités des taxonomistes. Le protocole a été approuvé en 2010 et la communauté entomologique doit se conformer aux règles d'accès équitable et de partage des avantages définies par le protocole. Il pourrait être utile de suivre le protocole de Nagoya lorsque des données sur la biodiversité sont partagées de manière non monétaire via des agrégateurs mondiaux de mégadonnées et des plateformes de données sur la biodiversité.

Keywords: Benefit sharing – Biodiversity – Open data — Identification — Food security.

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XXVI International Congress of Entomology in Helsinki

The Editor-in-Chief of Phegea attended the XXVI International Congress of Entomology in Helsinki, July 17–22, 2022 (Fig. 1). The Congress was enormously inspiring. It was challenging to follow the interesting presentations and subsequent discussions. However, the most important item was that finally it was possible to meet in person many practising entomologists after three years of postponing this Congress.

One of the hottest items to cause online discussions during these last years was whether the Nagoya Protocol obstructs taxonomy science and the activities of taxonomists. Therefore, a special symposium with those who wrote and negotiated the Nagoya Protocol was organized. The symposium concluded that two points should be kept in mind, and we need to start from these:

- a new Protocol cannot be prepared and negotiated (the political climate is different from 2010).
- within the framework of the Protocol, the countries received a lot of freedom in decision-making, including not applying any restrictions (quite a few European countries adopted that policy).

The good news for us is that taxonomy is exempted from the restrictions of the Nagoya Protocol. As far as I understood the exceptions were made to protect the biocontrol branch, which is very important for food security; both the identification and import of biocontrol agents are crucial. The food security branch is developing very rapidly, changing the usual way we address biodiversity issues. Food security and biodiversity loss are

interconnected problems, so they cannot be solved separately. The only problem that remains is Digital Sequencing Information (DSI). I believe that molecular taxonomists will quickly solve this problem.

What is the Nagoya Protocol about?

The Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), and its supplementary agreement of the Nagoya Protocol which has now been ratified by 113 UN member states and the EU, firmly established the territorial sovereignty over all genetic resources and regulated the rights of scientists to use such resources. The Protocol was agreed upon in 2010 and the entomological community has to comply with the fair access and benefit-sharing regulations defined by the Protocol and to learn to work in different ways, with different thinking and different reasoning. Despite the guidelines being clear, the implementation of the legislation and the translation of the Nagoya Protocol into law is a very slow, complicated, and diverse process, full of legal and practical uncertainties. Furthermore, a deep and non-consensual split is created along North-South governmental lines for meeting the benefit-sharing obligations defined by the Nagoya Protocol. Though all parties recognize that knowledge sharing and exchange in the form of Open Access that documents successes and failures are one of the best practices, it does not satisfy the goals of benefit sharing as defined by the Nagoya Protocol. The adopted Code of Conduct (CETAF 2019) and annexed best practices of the CETAF, uniting the major European Insect Collections and depositories, is intended to show a way to achieve the successful development of community-based approaches and the non-monetary sharing of benefits inside the European Union.

Why Open Biodiversity Data matter

Global Biodiversity Information Facilities aggregates biodiversity data on a global scale and strongly focuses on the integration of a variety of heterogeneous data into a synergetic framework of biodiversity data across different domains (GBIF 2018). Here it is suggested that the global non-monetary, free and open access to biodiversity data, through sharing of datasets under open license and aggregation through an intergovernmental collaborative network composed of governmental bodies and international organizations from countries of all global regions and of all income levels, could be helpful in the context of the current discussions within CBD. The GBIF community is dedicated to the vision of free and universal

access to biodiversity data, for science, society, and a sustainable future. The opening of primary biodiversity data obtained globally and processed by FAIR principles (European Commission 2018) can assist in removing barriers that prevent institutions and individuals from sharing data—due to a wide range of factors, including professional, cultural, institutional, legal, and economic concerns. The non-monetary sharing of biodiversity data via global mega data aggregators and biodiversity platforms (De Prins & De Prins 2011–2022) can serve as common ground for solving the disagreements related to the benefit-sharing applications between biodiversity-rich and economy-rich countries as well as stimulating international cooperation on biodiversity research, beneficial for all parties involved.

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Fig. 1. The Opening Session of the 26th International Congress of Entomology, Helsinki, 17 July 2022. © Jurate De Prins.