M3.18 Platform for Cybertaxonomy

workshop in Berlin

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Work package: WP3 'Training, outreach and community support'
Partner: RBINS
Responsible Partners for workshop: BGBM, UPMC
Reporters: BGBM

Report on the workshop and evaluation

In several meetings with European taxonomists the need for an in-depth training in using the EDIT Platform tools was expressed. The ViBRANT workshop for users of the EDIT Platform for Cybertaxonomy was held from 11-13 November at the Botanic Garden and Botanical Museum Berlin-Dahlem (FUB-BGBM). The aim of the workshop was to explain the new Taxonomic EDITor, the Data Portals and other components of the Platform to users, as well as to give an introduction to the software for structured taxonomic descriptions and keys, Xper2. The meeting brought together 40 participants representing a wide range of international biodiversity-related institutions and e-infrastructures (including Euro+Med Plantbase, e-Floras, German Red Data Book editors, Pensoft publishers, Chinese Virtual Herbaria, Atlas Florae Europaeae).

The workshop was split into two parts, 1.5 days to explain the EDITor and the data portals, 0.5 days for Xper2. For the EDITor and data portal workshop, 3 parallel working groups (1 in German and 2 in English language) were led by two developers and one or two taxonomists from the FUB-BGBM. One group was solely formed by Euro+Med Plantbase family editors and taxonomic experts. For Xper2 two parallel groups were led by four colleagues from Paris. To explain the new Taxonomic EDITor two virtual box images where created (the images had the software - data Portal, Taxonomic Editor and cdmserver preinstalled). One image included a simple dataset with 10 taxa and factual data from the Compositae tribe Cichorieae. The other image included a more complex dataset from Euro+MedPlantBase, to give the editors the opportunity to do the hands-on training with the data they are handling in the framework of this project.

All three groups were able to get extensive hands-on experience with the Taxonomic EDITor and to observe the direct interaction of the EDITor with the data portals. Feedback from the users was generally positive. Some of them expressed the need for a "light" version of the EDITor which makes it easier to use for less experienced users. Constructive criticism from the participants will help to improve functionalities of the EDITor, and some of them will use the EDIT Platform in the future for their projects. The introduction and hands-on training on Xper2 was also well received by the audience and yielded some fruitful feedback for the presenters of that part of the workshop.