Grasslands in the Palaearctic biogeographical realm are exceptionally species rich; they are a treasure of nature. However, their values are often neglected in man’s thinking, either from the perspective of management of natural resources or policy measures. The aim of the 16th annual Eurasian Grassland Conference is to highlight the ecosystem values Palaearctic grasslands deliver to the world, and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on how we effectively ensure their sustainability. In addition, it aims to promote networking and collaboration between those interested in all aspects of semi-natural and natural grassland research and conservation. The conference is intended to bring together the latest research and link this to practical management and policy, thereby contributing to the sustainability of semi-natural grasslands and their animal and plant resources.

The conference will take place from 29th May to 5th June 2019, jointly hosted by the universities of Graz, the capital city of the province of Styria (Austria), and Maribor, the second largest city of Slovenia. The academic part of the conference will be held at the Institute of Biology, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Graz, in the heart of Austrian Styria.

Two excursions are planned. The mid-conference excursion (31 May) will focus on species rich Arrenatherion grasslands in a “hay-milk” region in the western part of Styria (Austria). Moreover, a three-day post-conference excursion will take place in Slovenia (2–5 June). On the first day, we will visit the Goričko Landscape Park with dry grasslands on acid non-carbonate substrate (NE Slovenia). During the second day, we will visit the wooded (dry) grasslands (the remains of an ancient cultural landscape) along the Drava River, the low tertiary hilly Haloze region, which has the highest density of orchid-rich Mesobromion meadows. The third day will take us to the Slovenian Dinaric (sub-Mediterranean Illyrian) dry meadows (alliance Scorzoneron villosae) and karst pastures (alliance Saturejion subspicatae).

As in previous years, there will be:

- Technical workshops, dedicated to actions on grassland management and networking
- IAVS travel grants, available for those who fulfil the grant allocation criteria
- Young Investigator Prizes, for young scientists for the best oral or poster presentations to the conference
- Conference publications, in the form of Special Features (SFs) with selected contributions from the conference and published in international, peer-reviewed journals, guest-edited by EDGG members

Important dates
- Early Bird registration deadline – 28 February 2019
- Late registration deadline – 29 March 2019
- Abstract submission deadline – 29 March 2019

Preliminary programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29th May</td>
<td>Welcome in Graz, registration 16:00 – 20:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>30th May</td>
<td>Talks and posters</td>
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<tr>
<td>31st May</td>
<td>Mid-conference excursion (Styria, Austria), optional technical workshop, in the evening: grassland party</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st June</td>
<td>Talks and posters; EDGG General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd June – 5th June</td>
<td>Post-conference excursion (Slovenia), optional, max. 40 participants</td>
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Registration

The conference web page with the possibility to register and upload your abstracts will be launched in January 2019 (all EDGG members will be informed by e-mail when the website is available). Further information (fees, detailed schedule) will be announced in the Second Circular (*Palaearctic Grasslands* 39, December 2018).

Organizers

The Eurasian Dry Grassland Group (EDGG) ([www.edgg.org](http://www.edgg.org))
The University of Graz ([https://www Uni-graz.at](https://www.uni-graz.at/))
The University of Maribor ([https://www.um.si/en/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.um.si/en/Pages/default.aspx))

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Hayfield near Neumarkt/Styria, Austria. Photo: M. Magnes.

Sub-Mediterranean Illyrian Grasslands, association *Danthion-Scorzoneretum*. Photo: N. Pipenbaher.

Orchids-rich *Mesobromion* meadows in Haloze region, NE Slovenia. Photo: S. Škornik.