

Call for participation and presentations: 19th Eurasian Grassland Conference Bolzano (EGC2024) Italy, 26 August – 1 September 2024

As was announced in PG 58-59, the 19th Eurasian Grassland Conference will be held in Bolzano (Bozen) in South Tyrol (Trentino-Alto Adige region) from 26th August until the 1st September 2024. The theme of the event will be **‘Grasslands as biodiversity hotspots’**. The venue for the conference sessions will be the Eurac Research headquarters. Destinations of the excursions will be the nearby inner-alpine dry grasslands (Mid-Conference Excursion) and the Alpine meadows and pastures of the Dolomites (Post-Conference-Excursion).

Registration

Further information about the registration for the event will be available soon on the **conference website** www.egc2024.it.

Venue

The conference venue will be in the city of Bolzano/Bozen in the research center Eurac Research headquarters building (Viale Druso/Drususallee 1). It can be reached from the old town or the train station in approximately 15 minutes by foot. Alternatively, there are bus-stops directly in front of the entrance (bus stop ‘Eurac Research’) and it is possible to

arrive by public transport. The first day’s keynote talk and the icebreaker will be held in the Museum of Nature South Tyrol. It is situated within a 10-minute walk from the train station in the old town of Bolzano/Bozen (Bindergasse 1).

Oral and poster presentations

We invite all participants to present their research outcomes in a short oral presentation (15 min incl. discussion) or with a poster (incl. a three-slide short presentation). As already practised in previous EGCs, oral presentations of scientific results and on non-scientific activities (such as conservation management) on the topic of grasslands will be given in several thematic sessions. The large-format posters will be exhibited in the foyer of the Eurac main building. In addition to the printed poster, a short presentation should be prepared. The poster should be presented briefly with a total of three slides and a maximum of 3 minutes. The slides should NOT be identical to the poster but represent a kind of graphic abstract: Slide 1 briefly presents the topic and the background of the research. Slide 2 presents the methods and the study site. Slide 3 presents the results of the research work. There will then be an opportunity to ask questions. The maximum time for the presentation including discussion is 5 minutes.



Sub-alpine grassland in the southwestern Dolomites. Photo: Eurac Research/Ma. Jaider.

Preliminary Program

- **Monday, 26 August**

Workshop on insects in grasslands, with lecture in the morning and excursion in the afternoon, main focus on wild bees, butterflies and grasshoppers

Opening Talk, Andreas Hilpold & Thomas Wilhalm: Grasslands in South Tyrol. Naturmuseum Südtirol

Icebreaker, Naturmuseum Südtirol.

- **Tuesday, 27 August**

1st Conference day, Eurac Research headquarter.

- **Wednesday, 28 August**

Mid-Conference Excursion - Vinschgau valley.

- **Thursday 29 August**

2nd Conference day, Eurac Research headquarter.

General assembly.

Grassland Party, Eurac Research courtyard.

- **Friday 30 August – Sunday 1 September**

Post-Conference Excursion - Dolomites and Eisacktal.

Workshop and workshop excursion

The workshop will be led by three insect experts. Elia Guariento works mainly with butterflies and ants, Lisa Obwegs with wild bees and Andreas Hilpold with grasshoppers. In the morning session they will present an introduction to the biology, the methodology and the ecology of the four taxonomic groups with a special focus on grasslands. In the afternoon we will take the cable car to Ritten/Renon where we will search for insects using a set of different methods.

Excursions

Mid-conference Excursion:

Vinschgau: It will combine a short walk in the dry continental steppelike grasslands of the Vinschgau valley with a trip to the alpine grasslands in Schnalstal/Val Senales.

Post-conference Excursion:

The post-conference excursion will lead us to the subalpine and alpine areas of the Isarco/Eisack valley and the Western Dolomites. We will see various types of grasslands, such as extensive subalpine pastures (*Nardetea*) and alpine grasslands on acidic and carbonate bedrock. In addition to the botanical aspects, we will discuss conservation issues. The main question will be, if man-made grasslands of the montane and subalpine zone will survive for the future, against the strong tendencies of both abandonment and management intensification.

Maximum number of participants: 35 persons.



Andrena sp., *Leptophyes albobittata*, *Lysandra bellargus*. All three occur frequently in landscapes with grasslands and are to be expected for the surroundings of Bolzano. Photos: Eurac Research.

Conference fees

Registration fees (including conference, workshop, mid-term excursion and grassland party):

Regular registration fee, non-IAVS members: € 210

Regular registration fee, IAVS members: € 200

Student registration fee: non-IAVS members: € 190

Student registration fee, IAVS members: € 180

Optional programme and fees:

Ice Breaker Event: € 25

Post-conference excursion: € 110

Financial support

Thanks to the IAVS, we can support a number of participants with travel grants. Travel grants will be awarded according to the IAVS criteria, based on income level and country of origin. They will preferentially be given to early-career and other financially constrained scientists. The support usually covers only part of the participant's costs, according to the number of successful applications.

Eligibility and requirements: The applicants for travel grants should be IAVS members. To qualify for a travel

grant, active participation at the conference (oral presentation or poster) is required. Only the presenter of the contribution will be supported, so each applicant should apply with a separate talk or poster, and she/he will be the presenter. After the conference, grantees must provide a short report of the event, and some photos that can be used in *Palaeartic Grasslands*. Travel grants can be applied for during online registration, including a short motivation letter. Information about the results of the **travel grant applications will be given at the latest by 30th July**.

IAVS support for Ukrainian scientists: In addition to the travel grants, **participation by Ukrainian IAVS members is completely free** (no conference fee). The respective fees are directly paid by IAVS to the local organising committee. Additionally, Ukrainian participants can apply for travel grants to cover the costs of their journey.

Young investigator prize: As in previous years, **prizes will be awarded to young scientists** for excellent presentation of their research (orally or in poster form). For these purposes, early career scientists (less than 35-year-old) will be asked during registration if they wish to participate in the contest. During her/his presentation, the applicant needs to explain clearly her/his contribution to the work.



Steppe-like grasslands with *Stipa capillata* next to Juval Castle in the Vinschgau valley, from the EDGG Field Workshop 2023. Photo: N. Skobel.

Green event

We plan to organize a green event:

- Most of the offered food will be vegetarian. Only in a few occasions, meat products will be served – in that case the meat is from local small-farm production.
- We will serve milk products from local production, preferably from small farms with high ecological standards
- Please bring your own bottles! The tap water quality in Bolzano is high, no need to buy water. We will not serve drinking water from plastic bottles.
- Please come by train! Bolzano is well connected to most of Italy, Austria, Germany, Switzerland etc. Also, a train ride from Paris or Budapest can be done in less than 12 hours, usually quite comfortably! Please find more information on how to reach Bolzano/Bozen on the conference-website: www.egc2024.it.

Contact

Do you have any questions? Please don't hesitate to contact the conference organizers about any details, we are happy to help! Our email address is: infoegc@eurac.edu

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Extensive meadows with *Nardus stricta* on the Seiser Alm/Alpe di Siusi. Photo: A. Hilpold.



Subalpine grasslands in the Villnöss/Funes valley, in the background the Geisler/Odle mountain peaks. Photo: A. Hilpold.