

Report on the outcomes of a Virtual Mobility¹

Action number: CA18201

Grantee name: Joaquim Santos

Virtual Mobility Details

Title: Building an interactive platform for European plant conservation actions

Start and end date: 20/12/2022 to 20/03/2023

Description of the work carried out during the VM

Description of the virtual collaboration and activities carried out during the VM, with focus on the work carried out by the grantee. Any deviations from the initial working plan shall also be described in this section.

(max. 500 words)

As planned, an initial draft of the platform was developed using using LARAVEL, a free and open-source PHP web framework intended for the development of web applications following the model–view–controller architectural pattern.

The development was made taking into account the data gathered during the action, but with total flexibility to accommodate any kind of dataset that can be arranged in a tabular format.

The data can be uploaded by submitting a CSV file (with any character as separator). The dataset can then be displayed in a web interface with indexing, searching and filtering capabilities. The fields that can be used to navigate the records are decided by the administrators of the platform, and can be changed by them at any moment without the need of any technical intervention on the code of the platform.

Individual records of the dataset are also editable using web forms. The fields can be defined to use several types of html form inputs (images, text, textarea, select, etc.). The permissions to edit the records are defined in a hierarchical way (administrators, owner). New records can be added to the datasaset by registered users, and the administrators can then approve the publication for viewers.

The initial draft of platform was presented to the Activity members on a virtual meeting on the 23rd of February, and there was some discussion on some of the functionalities. Later, a presential meeting with the Activity coordinators Maja Lazarević and Sílvia Castro took place in Coimbra (Portugal). Some possible additional features were discussed, namely the possibility to add restrictions of who can see

¹ This report is submitted by the grantee to the Action MC for approval and for claiming payment of the awarded grant. The Grant Awarding Coordinator coordinates the evaluation of this report on behalf of the Action MC and instructs the GH for payment of the Grant.

some fields (administrators, owners, registered users, viewers) and have geographical informations displayed on maps.

The first version of the platform is ready to be published, but some fine-tuning can be made in the future.

A Virtual Machine was requested to the IT services of the University of Coimbra, but it was denied in face of the lack of space on the University servers at the moment. Conversations were made with the Faculty of Biology of the University of Belgrade, and the response was positive. Nevertheless, technical details are to be discussed yet. Because the requirements of the platform are very accessible, there is a good probability for the platform to be hosted there.

Description of the VM main achievements and planned follow-up activities

Description and assessment of whether the VM achieved its planned goals and expected outcomes, including specific contribution to Action objective and deliverables, or publications resulting from the VM. Agreed plans for future follow-up collaborations shall also be described in this section.

(max. 500 words)

The development of the platform followed pretty much the initial plan. The publication of the dataset of past and on-going conservation actions on threatened plant species, using a web interface that can be navigated and searched, is paramount for the objectives of the Action. This platform will not only allow this but will also enable future additions of new conservation actions, and keeping each one of them up to date. A sandbox version of the platform is available for testing at <http://193.136.200.85/conservedplants>. After populating it with real data and proceeding with some user testing it can be migrated to the final server.

On the technical side, one of the major features is the possibility for the administrators to define new fields and all their properties without technical intervention. This flexibility of the data model also allows the possibility to use the same platform to host additional datasets of the action (people, plant species, publications, etc.).

Despite the current maturity of the platform, it is possible to continuously improve its functionalities, so I'm available to continue to work on any requests that the members of the Activity might have.