



e-bulletin

December 2007

## EURISCO Updates and News

This "EURISCO News" is a series of e-bulletins to provide feedback to National Focal Points (NFP) as well as being a forum for NFP and others to put forward their comments and suggestions.

In order to make the EURISCO Catalogue sustainable and meeting the NFPs and users needs I would like to invite all of you to contribute to the e-bulletin. All ideas, comments, suggestions, and questions are **welcome**.

This e-bulletin provides information on: [Recent and on ongoing activities](#), [Planned Meetings](#), [Dissemination activities](#) and [News](#).

## Recent and ongoing activities

### **2007 – An overview**

During 2007 EURISCO activities focused on improving data quality and quantity, namely taxonomy and GIS data; translation of the two fact sheets into nine languages; EURISCO database technology updating; Web site redesign and updating; and monitoring visitors/users.

To enhance the data quality and quantity in the EURISCO Catalogue, at the National Inventory (NI) and individual institutions level, two types of reports were made: taxonomic and GIS. For the taxonomic reports the Taxonomic Checker (GRIN taxonomy) (<http://pgrdoc.ipgri.cgiar.org/taxcheck/grin/>) was used.

The taxonomy was checked in the following order: all elements; genus, species, epithet and epithet author; genus, species and epithet; genus, species and species author; genus and species; genus. As a result of this exercise reports on thirty one NI were generated, representing a total of 220 institutions.

For the GIS reports, latitudes and longitudes available in the Catalogue were mapped (using Google earth) and the results checked against the declared country of origin, which resulted in reports on sixteen NIs, regarding GIS data. The reports generated were sent to the National Focal Points (NFPs) for correction and update of the NIs and subsequent uploading of the data to EURISCO. This will ensure the improvement of data quality in the system and at the data providers' level. There is an intention to make this data quality monitoring exercise a routine activity.

The English version of the EURISCO fact sheets were updated as of September 2007 and simultaneously translated into the following languages: Azerbaijani, Croatian, Czech, Danish, German, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovak and Turkish, and will be available on the EURISCO Web site. This was an input-in-kind from the NFPs,

while Bioversity provided the layout and printing.

The Web site redesign and the database updating is estimated to have a first prototype before the end of 2007, for inputs and improvement before a final version be widely available. The request for updates on the contacts and on-line NIs descriptions and links are to be implemented in the new site.

### A few facts:

The monitoring of visitors' provides useful feedback to data providers and the Catalogue management, contributing to adjusting the contents and aims of the Catalogue and to helping to better respond to the users' needs.

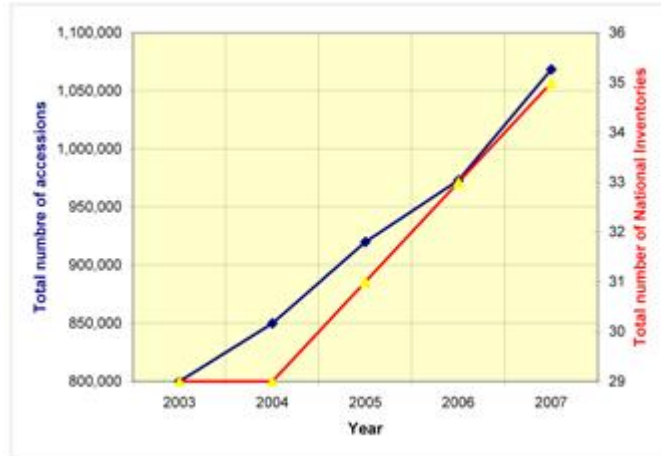
There has been a marked increase in the number of visitors to the Catalogue. This increase reflects the added impact of the Catalogue as a one stop shop for accession level information on the material maintained in European ex situ collections, as well as on the countries' National Inventories it makes available.

Year	# Hits	# Page Viewed	# Visitors	Size
2005	31,225	11,498	599	441.32 MB
2006	79,903	36,703	2,401	937.76 MB
2007	111,730	54,378	5,229	1.54 GB
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,858</b>	<b>102,579</b>	<b>8,229</b>	-

Since 2006, there has been a decrease in the "average time per session". However, a possible explanation could be that there has been an increase in the number of repeated users who have familiarized with the Catalogue and who are thus able to more rapidly access and view the information they are looking for.

	All days to Nov. 06	All days to Sept. 07
<b>Total accesses</b>	21,364	60,424
<b>Sessions by repeated users</b>	4,272	18,003
<b>Total sessions users</b>	1,617	6,612
one-time users	1,099	4,191
repeated users	518	2,421
Six+-time users	177	674
<b>Average accesses (time) per session</b>	3.98	2.72

The general interest in the Catalogue is also geographically expanding. It is now being accessed from a total of 125 countries, compared to 68 countries in 2006.



The increase in the number of NIs in the Catalogue, currently holding data on 35 National Inventories, as well as the quantity and quality of accession level data made available through the Catalogue, is the reflection of the overall success of this regional network that is bridging the gap between data holders and users at the global level (see full article: <http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/Regions/Europe/Newsletters/index.asp>).

## Planned meetings

Meeting	Venue	Starting date	Finish date	Report
EURISCO ADVISORY GROUP	Bonn, Germany	To be confirmed 2008	To be confirmed 2008	-
EPGRIS3 (Activity 4-03 & 04)	Bonn, Germany	To be confirmed 2008	To be confirmed 2008	-

## Dissemination activities

As public awareness materials, the two fact sheets were updated and translated to other nine languages and distributed in scientific and technical meetings in Europe.

The electronic version of these materials will be made available through the EURISCO site and we hope they will play an important role in raising the public awareness to the effort that, throughout Europe, has been made by the NFP and the importance of the EURISCO Catalogue in assisting the scientific community and the public in general in "Finding seeds for the future". After all, EURISCO is "A window to Europe's plant diversity".

Also the EURISCO poster has been updated and will be available at the EURISCO website.

*If you are interested in receiving any of the EURISCO public awareness materials send us an [email](#) with your request and include your contact details.*

The 2008 will be the year to move forward, further efforts to further consolidate the Catalogue as the "one stop shop" window for information on *ex situ* plant collections that enables users to search and access information on crops, forages, wild and weedy species, farmers' varieties and breeding lines, maintained in the European *ex*

*situ* germplasm collections will be undertaken. The strengthening of its content, the data quality improvement, the update of technology in use both for data providers and for the data base are on the front line, all these and more should be done hand in hand with the data providers -NFPs.

The re-design and update of the EURISCO website are the major launch for 2008 building on the efforts to make it more user-friendly, more useful and more attractive. Besides, also an overall assessment of EURISCO will be carried on in 2008 (see more details below- News "EURISCO for 2008").

## News

### **EURISCO going on 1.1 million**

One of EURISCO's main objectives is to promote the conservation and facilitate the sustainable utilization of these materials for the benefit of the present and future generations and that goes hand in hand with the mission of making information and associated germplasm data, widely, freely and readily available to users through the Internet.

At this point EURISCO is almost making available information on 1.1 million accessions. This has only been possible due to the more frequent updating of the Country's NIs data and the development of new NIs. This year the Macedonia NI joined the EURISCO Catalogue raising it to a total of 35 NIs. As of today, not all NI are yet available; Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Malta, Moldova and Turkey, are either starting building their NI or are at the state of finalizing it and have not yet upload it to the Catalogue,

The greater objective is to reach 2 millions, the estimated total number of accessions being held in European collections. However, it is not only the numbers that matter, also the quality of the data being made available is a major attribute. The importance of such value, quality, is a major outreach and challenge for the EURISCO data providers. The first attempt to improve data quality was done in 2007 with the taxonomy and GIS reports to NFPs and these and other activities and actions will be carried on for 2008 with the objective of follow up on setting the road ahead to improve the data that is available through the NI to EURISCO.

### **EURISCO in ALIS**

Also another objective is to start the discussions on the possibility to have EURISCO as the ITPGRFA reporting mechanism for the European countries. This would help countries to identify and flag the MLS material and thus identifying annex I material meeting this way the requirement set in the ITPGRFA as ratified by the European countries. Besides, the potential to implement a "shopping card system" in line with what was presented at the last ITPGRFA Governing Body Meeting is an issue to be discussed within the coming year.

And last but not the least the possibility for EURISCO to be part of the Global System for ALIS should be seen as a key contribution to the implementation of a coherent Global Information System in the framework of the ITPGRFA.

EURISCO being considered one of the most successful and sustainable examples from which to learn from, it will be therefore one of the elements for the global Accession Level Information System (ALIS) on Plant Genetic Resources, (see article "Going Global - Info4seeds" on page 15 at <http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/Regions/Europe/Newsletters/index.asp>).

### **EURISCO for 2008**

Four years went by since its launch; looking through the years it is relevant and worth mentioning that all this

has only been possible due to the NFPs commitment and countries' contribution, in their capacity to upload and update the system with their NI. At this point, EURISCO is offering researchers around the world a single entry-point to plant diversity held by European countries, representing more than one million accessions across the European continent maintained in more than 200 European institutes, holding information on roughly 18% of total worldwide holdings and more than half of the accessions maintained in Europe. It is, therefore, time to rethink the overall approach and ensure that all NIs and NFPs are able to contribute, in a sustainable and constant manner, with their NIs to the Catalogue.

Starting in 2008 and for the following five years, EURISCO work will turn the page. It will focus on the future road map, i.e. development, deployment and sustainable support to the network.

In order to address these and bridge the gap between capabilities, at all levels, the call for an external assessment of the overall EURISCO operation is essential at this stage. This assessment has the objective to set a road map for the next 5 years, covering not only but also the technical and scientific ongoing developments in these areas of work. The objective of this assessment is to develop a strategic document evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the Catalogue and envisioning the recommended further developments for the next 5 years. This assessment will be funded by the Biodiversity Informatics Project, Bioversity International and it will be done in consultation with all NFPs and end users. This will start in December 2007 until April 2008. The final report and the EURISCO road map for the next 5 years will be publicly available by April-May 2008.

## Season's Greetings



*Source: Filomena Rocha, Banco Português de Germoplasma Vegetal, Portugal.*

***Ilex aquifolium* L.**

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