



FIRST CIRCULAR

A meeting of the European Mycological Association (EMA)
and the International Society for Fungal Conservation (ISFC)



FUNGAL CONSERVATION IN A CHANGING EUROPE

The Challenges Ahead

Ohrid, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [FYROM]
Sunday 1 to Friday 6 October 2017

This is the first circular announcing a special meeting organized by the **EMA** jointly with the **ISFC**, and hosted by *Ss. Cyril and Methodius University*, Skopje. The meeting is open to anyone interested in fungal conservation in Europe and beyond. This announcement provides information about registration for the meeting, its preliminary programme, the venue, accommodation, costs, and transport.

Why a meeting is needed

Fungal conservation is on the move:

- governments are starting to include fungi in their conservation policies;
- the **IUCN** has prioritized fungi for red-listing at a global level;
- a ground-breaking initiative is making that priority happen;
- a UK-based project is searching for species which are apparently rare and have not recorded for years, to determine if they are truly extinct or merely overlooked;
- molecular techniques are being introduced as tools for fungal conservation;
- biological records databases for fungi are entering their second generation and are now reaching a size which can start to provide meaningful information.

But there are also new challenges.

In some countries, recent political changes have introduced administrations deeply hostile to conservation of any kind. The European Union, which provided a stable environment for conservation is itself now threatened: the UK is already leaving; other countries may follow. Europe is receiving huge numbers of refugees. There are new wars and disputes, such as those in Ukraine. What do such changes mean for fungal conservation? This meeting will review these developments, to make mycologists aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and of the opportunities and threats which fungi face.

Background. Fungi are critically important components of all the world's main ecosystems. Without them, life on this planet would be unsustainable. But they are endangered. They face the same threats as animals and plants. Fungi have no special features which make them immune from climate change, exploitation, habitat destruction, persecution and pollution. It is almost incredible that, until the last couple of decades, they were almost totally overlooked by the conservation movement, and their conservation is still almost totally overlooked by governments.

The *European Council for Conservation of Fungi [ECCF]*, established in 1988 and now the conservation wing of the **EMA**, was first to recognize this problem. It has been followed by similar bodies in Africa, Asia, Australasia, North and South America, and the Arab world. In 2010 the *International Society for Fungal Conservation [ISFC]* was formed, and in 2013, the *International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]* (the world's foremost conservation NGO) formally recognized that protection of fungi was just as important as protection of animals and plants.



Host: Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje.

Local Organizer: Prof. Mitko Karadelev, Institute of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Arhimedova 5, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia [e-mail: mitkok@pmf.ukim.mk].

Scientific Support: IUCN Species Survival Commission (Chytrid, Zygomycete, Downy Mildew and Slime Mould Specialist Group; Cup-fungi, Truffles and Allies Specialist Group; Lichen Specialist Group; Mushroom, Bracket and Puffball Specialist Group; Rust and Smut Specialist Group).



The Global
Fungal Red List Initiative



British Mycological
Society promoting fungal science



IUCN SSC
Lichen
Specialist
Group



Preliminary Programme

A vibrant and exciting programme is being prepared, with plans for a keynote lecture on fungal conservation in the genomic age. Other invited presentations will present leading European fungal conservation projects, and educational, infrastructural and political challenges for fungal conservation in 21st century Europe. There will also be parallel workshops on red-listing for different fungal groups, under the supervision of Chairs of the IUCN's Species Survival Commission Fungal Specialist Groups, and leaders of the Global Fungal Red List Initiative.

Offered papers and posters relating to fungal conservation are wanted. Those focusing on Europe or providing a review of fungal conservation within individual European countries will be particularly welcome, though contributions dealing with global issues, or with countries next to or near Europe will also be accepted. They should deal with threats to fungi (habitat loss, climate change, pollution, exploitation, invasive species), political aspects of fungal conservation (activism, "brexit", CBD obligations, infrastructure, refugees, war etc.), and ecology of threatened fungi. Prizes will be awarded for the best student posters.

In addition to lectures, posters, presentations, workshops and the usual social events, there will be a one-day field excursion to the Pelister National Park, visiting *Pinus peuce* forest. The National Park is approximately 50 km from Ohrid. On return to the hotel, participants will have the opportunity to examine collections with microscopes and to mount a small exhibition of collected species. On one evening during the week, there will also be a formal meeting of the **ECCF**.

An abstract volume is planned, and preliminary agreement has been reached to publish the proceedings of the meeting as a special issue of *Fungal Conservation*, the on-line publication of the **ISFC**.

Accommodation

Accommodation and all indoor sessions will be in the **Hotel Tino** [www.hoteltino-svstefan.com], less than 3 years old, and located on the shores of Lake Ohrid, 4 km from Ohrid town centre. The hotel has 43 double rooms and 9 apartments. It offers free WiFi, free parking, and has a swimming pool, sauna and other facilities (see hotel website). There is a well-equipped seminar hall suitable for displaying posters, and a meeting room with a video screen. If needed, parallel sessions can be accommodated. The cost is expected to be about €50 per night for a single room full board. Alternative simpler accommodation is also available nearby at a price of about €30 per person per night excluding lunch.

Ohrid

Ohrid is a small city (population about 42,000) located on the shore of Lake Ohrid in the extreme southwest of **FYROM**. Being rich in picturesque houses and monuments, the city is a UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Site, while the adjacent lake is a UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site. These accolades make the location doubly attractive as a place for meetings.

Travel

For those travelling by air, Skopje Airport, served by various carriers from many major European cities, is likely to be the most practical. Ohrid is about two hours by road from the airport. The organizers hope it will be possible to facilitate transport to and from the hotel (preliminary agreement has been reached with a suitable company, but the price is not yet fixed). Further advice about travel between Skopje Airport and the hotel will therefore only be supplied to those registering for the meeting.

Registration

Registration fees for EMA Members and Associates are lower than for non-members, with a lower tier (for those from countries classified by the World Bank as low- or middle-income economies) and a higher tier for all others. The fee provides participation in all sessions, the meeting programme and other meeting documents, coffee and tea break refreshments, and admission to the welcome reception. **Cancellation:** before 1 September, 70% of the fee will be refunded. After 31 August no refunds will be made.

Registration Fees	Before 1 July	After 30 June
• EMA Ordinary Members and Associates, upper tier	€70	€90
• EMA Student Members, upper tier	€50	€70
• EMA Ordinary Members and Associates, lower tier	€50	€70
• EMA Student Members, lower tier	€30	€50
• Non-Members	€100	€140

Second Circular Request

If you are interested in attending this meeting, please complete the form below, and e-mail it to Prof. Mitko Karadelev [mitkok@pmf.ukim.mk], with "Fungal Conservation" and your name as the subject line.

Family name

Given (first) name(s).....

Title (Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms, Prof. etc.).....

Name for meeting badge.....

Gender.....

Institution / place of work

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Address line 1

Address line 2.....

Town / City

County / oblast / region etc.

Postcode

Country

Are you an EMA Member?.....

Are you an EMA Associate?.....

Are you a Student?

Type of presentation offered: lecture / poster

Title of offered presentation.....

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