NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ARCHAEOBOTANICAL NETWORKS: NOT ONLY DATABASES

Tools and keys for an interdisciplinary science and versatile applications

The great accumulation of botanical data coming from past deposits is at the base of the current need to create flexible platforms to collect information, improve knowledge on existing analyses and share data for common projects and publications. The existence of large datasets on plant micro/macroremains from archaeological sites, as well as from other sedimentary contexts, can give more and more accurate floristic lists and quantification of the environments and human-environment interactions. Despite the urgency of creating specialized networks and databases, there are few opportunities for scientific projects to support the needs of continuous updating and the maintenance of networks. Moreover, low cooperation among the different networks seems the only possible option as, currently, the net-systems have a low chance to talk to each other.

This workshop encourages the dialogue among networks and the different subfields of archaeo and palaeo botany. The BRAIN–Botanical Record of Archaeobotany Italian Network, ArboDatMulti, ArchbotLit, etc (brainplants.successoterra.net; https://www.wikis.uni-kiel.de/archbotlit/; https://lape.prf.jcu.cz/en/arbodat-databasis/) wants to be examples as they are databases of archaeobotanical research and analyses which was developed starting from the results on plant records from archaeological sites ; then, also some different type of sites close to archaeological sites in Italy (off-sites, or near-sites), and located in the Mediterranean basin were added. Web site hosts the inventory of the researches, mainly archaeological, including pollen, palynomorphs, seeds/fruits, wood, charcoals and other plant remains analyses. The website also makes the archaeobotanical data available for archaeological researches and studies on conservation and biodiversity on a long-term perspective.

Following the idea that archaeobotany is a key tool 'for the understanding of the biological-cultural diversity', the general network on archaeobotany can include several different and specialty networks, becoming fruitfully used to deepen the history of past vegetation, land cover, land-uses and palaeoethnobotany, and the modern assessment of biodiversity conservation and ecological strategy for sustainability. Maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services in a changing environment requires a competent knowledge of the past. The joint action of sciences and humanities, that is intrinsically rooted in archaeobotany, is based on digital platforms in the networks. The collected data are able to give the temporal perspective that informs correct reconstructions of past contexts, and realistic restoration and management targets.

The workshops wishes to explore the experiences of several databases, and proposes a more cooperative interaction between the different networks.

The workshop will be co-managed by Anna Maria Mercuri and Wiebke Kirleis