Announcement

Nordic-Baltic Grassland Vegetation Database (NBGVD) News and call for contributions

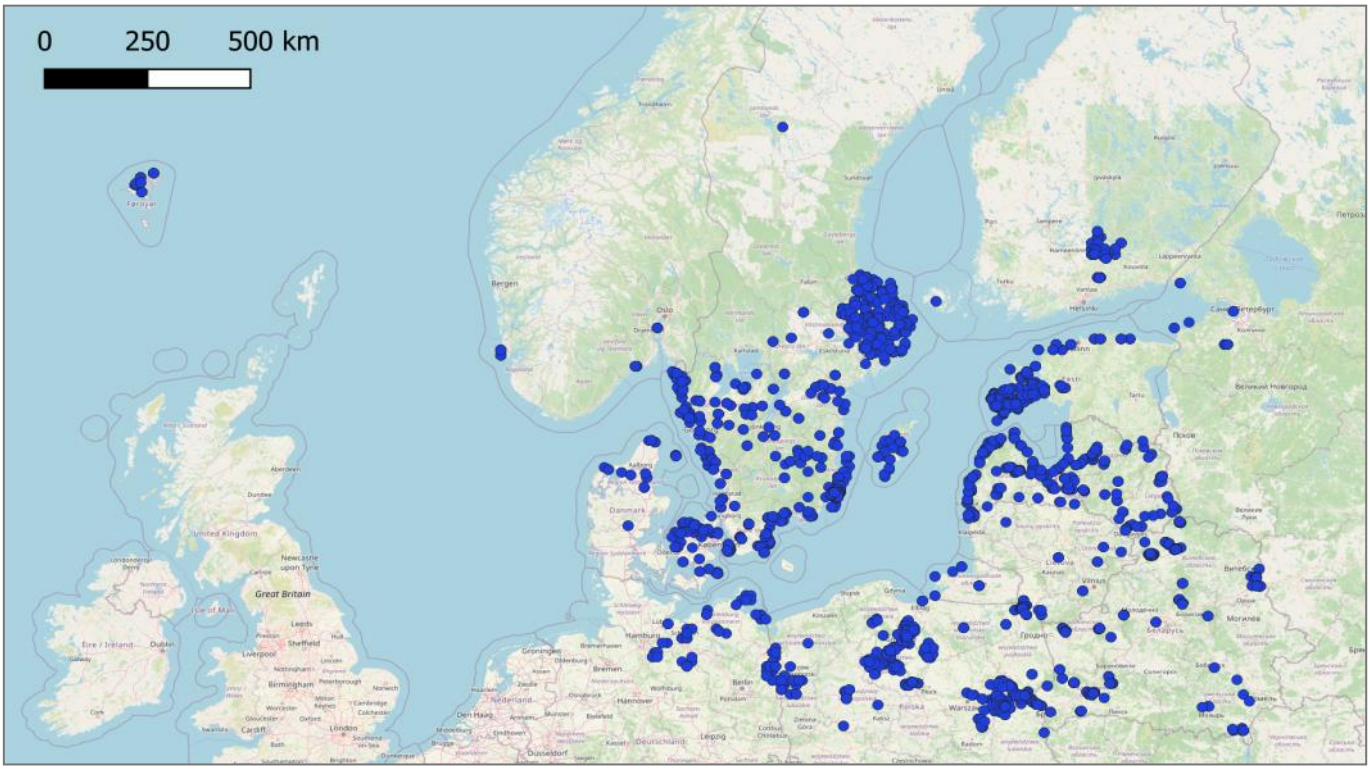
NBGVD is the EDGG-associated vegetation-plot database that collects vegetation-plot data of grasslands and other open habitats (except segetal and aquatic) from the Nordic-Baltic region, i.e. Northern Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, NW Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Faroe Islands and Iceland. We are interested in any vegetation plots of plot sizes from 0.25-100 m^2, with complete species lists including cover or abundance data for at least the vascular plants. While NBGVD started with a focus on dry grasslands, we are now collecting all types of grasslands (wet, mesic, dry, sandy, rocky, saline, alpine), heathlands, dune communities, tall forb communities, and any other vegetation type that is not a forest, tall shrubland, segetal or aquatic community. You find updated information on NBGVD on our homepage at the EDGG website.

While the NBGVD has stagnated for several years, in the course of 2022 we could achieve three major improvements:

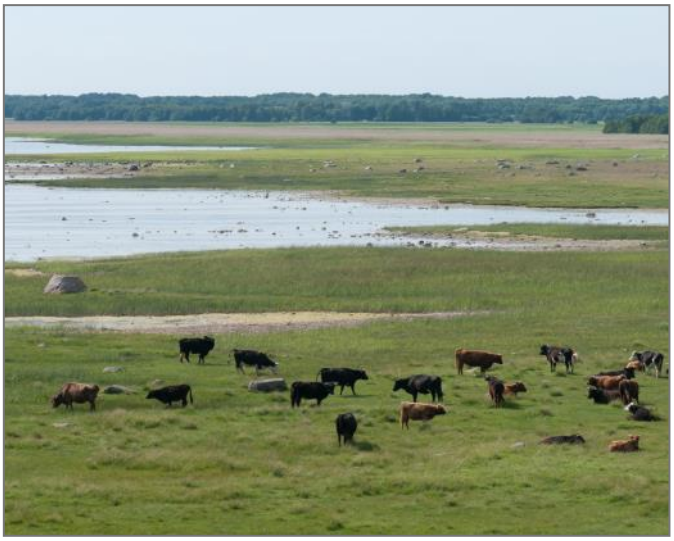
- We removed ca. 3,400 plots from Germany, which are now provided by our partner database GrassVeg.DE.
- We added ca. 1,200 plots, mainly from Northern Poland and Sweden.
- We improved the coordinate precision of many plots and removed various other inconsistencies.

On 4 November, NBGVD contained 9,839 plots, which were distributed as follows:

- **Countries**: Sweden (27.9%), Belarus (16.5%), Poland (14.4%), Estonia (13.3%), Latvia (9.5%), Faroe Islands (7.3%), Norway (3.4%), Denmark (2.2%), Finland (1.5%), Russia (1.5%), Germany (1.3%), Lithuania (1.2%).
- **Phytosociological classes**: *Festuco-Brometea* (16.0%), *Koelerio-Corynephoretea* (10.6%), *Sedo-Scleranthetea* (5.5%), *Scheuchzerio-Caricetea* (3.2%), *Trifolio-Geranietea* (3.1%), *Molinio-Arrhenatheretea* (2.4%), *Ammophiletea* (0.7%) other herbaceous classes (2.6%), unassigned (56.0%).
- **Plot sizes**: 1 m² (34.6%), 4 m² (19.3%), 25 m² (10.2%), 0.64 m² (9.0%), 100 m² (3.5%), 9 m² (3.2%), other and not indicated (20.2%).
- **Precision of coordinates**: ≤ 10 m (30.5%), ≤ 100 m (4.2%), ≤ 1000 m (20.5%), ≤ 10 km (39.3%), > 10 km (5.5%).



Spatial distribution of the plots contained in NBGVD on 4 November 2022. Note that the remaining 123 German plots will soon be transferred to GrassVeg.DE. It is evident that the Middle and Northern parts of Fennoscandia as well as Iceland and Svalbard and Jan Mayen are hitherto missing in the database and thus particularly welcome.



Three typical vegetation types of which we seek plot data for NBGVD: Saline grasslands in Estonia – Mesic grassland on Gotland, Sweden – Sandy dry grasslands in NE Poland. Photos: J. Dengler.

This positive development was mainly possible through private scholarships awarded to Dr. Olha Chusova and Nadia Skobel from Ukraine, who supported us with data preparation for NBGVD. Many thanks to both! Nadia Skobel is based as a refugee at the University of Warsaw and is continuing this work. Currently, we still have money for digitisation/ preparation. Therefore, we will continue this work in order to fill important spatial data gaps in the European Vegetation Archive (EVA; http://euroveg.org/eva-database) which hardly has any grassland and heathland data from the Nordic countries.

We thus will digitise valuable datasets from the literature and welcome you to send us pdf's of relevant papers with published vegetation plots. It would be even better if our members based in the region or working in the region would provide their own published and unpublished data in digital format as this allows much faster integration into the database. As a data contributor you do not only support NBGVD, EVA and Ukrainian scientists, you also ensure that your valuable data are permanently preserved for science and allow a better coverage of the Nordic-Baltic region in future continental to global studies of grassland vegetation. As a contributor you remain the sole owner of your data and can decide under which conditions it is available for research (restricted, semi-restricted, free). Additional benefits are that according to the NBGVD Bylaws (see our homepage), you will be invited for co-authorship in papers using NBGVD data and you can also get access to the complete European (EVA) and global (sPlot) databases for own research projects. We are sure that our Nordic-Baltic members have lots of valuable data in digital format, which they could make available for science via NBGVD, often just with a few clicks. Sometimes you might have even published the data together with a paper, but we are not aware of that, and the data are therefore not readily available for broad-scale analyses. Our main foci now are the most underrepresented countries in EVA, namely Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Estonia, Northern Poland and Denmark. Note that on the EVA maps Denmark and Poland appear better covered than they are in reality because most of the numerous Danish data are pure presence-absence data, while the majority of Polish data is in the Polish Vegetation Database (PVD).

Thus, do not hesitate and contact us to discuss possible data provisions. Also, any other contribution, such as help with the preparation of data and financial contribution to the scholarships for Ukrainian scientists, are welcome.

Thank you!

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