

Foreword

COST Action FA0901 “Putting Halophytes to Work – From Genes to Ecosystems” aims at assembling an interdisciplinary group of plant, soil, ecological, horticultural and agricultural scientists who collate existing knowledge on halophytes, from proteomics to ecosystems, in order to inform future directions of research that will impact on conservation of coastal environments, restoration of degraded lands and agricultural and horticultural products of nutritional, pharmaceutical or industrial interest.

This issue of Ecological Question provides a unique forum to present and discuss recent work and generate a new understanding of the ecosystems in which halophytes grow and flourish, and to achieve the objectives and goals proposed for the Working Group 1 (WG1): “Ecology, ecosystem analysis, rhizosphere dynamics and plant responses to pedo-climatic conditions”.

Through the interdisciplinary communication between scientists, we expect to evaluate available data on the responses of crop plants and halophytes to salinity, flooding and other environmental variables, compare and evaluate current methods for estimating plant production and turnover under saline conditions, evaluate the use of halophytes in protecting coastal zones and in restoring degraded land, and identify new research areas that should produce added benefits to countries associated with COST and the world at large.

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