



# Biodiversity data workflows for Digital Twins

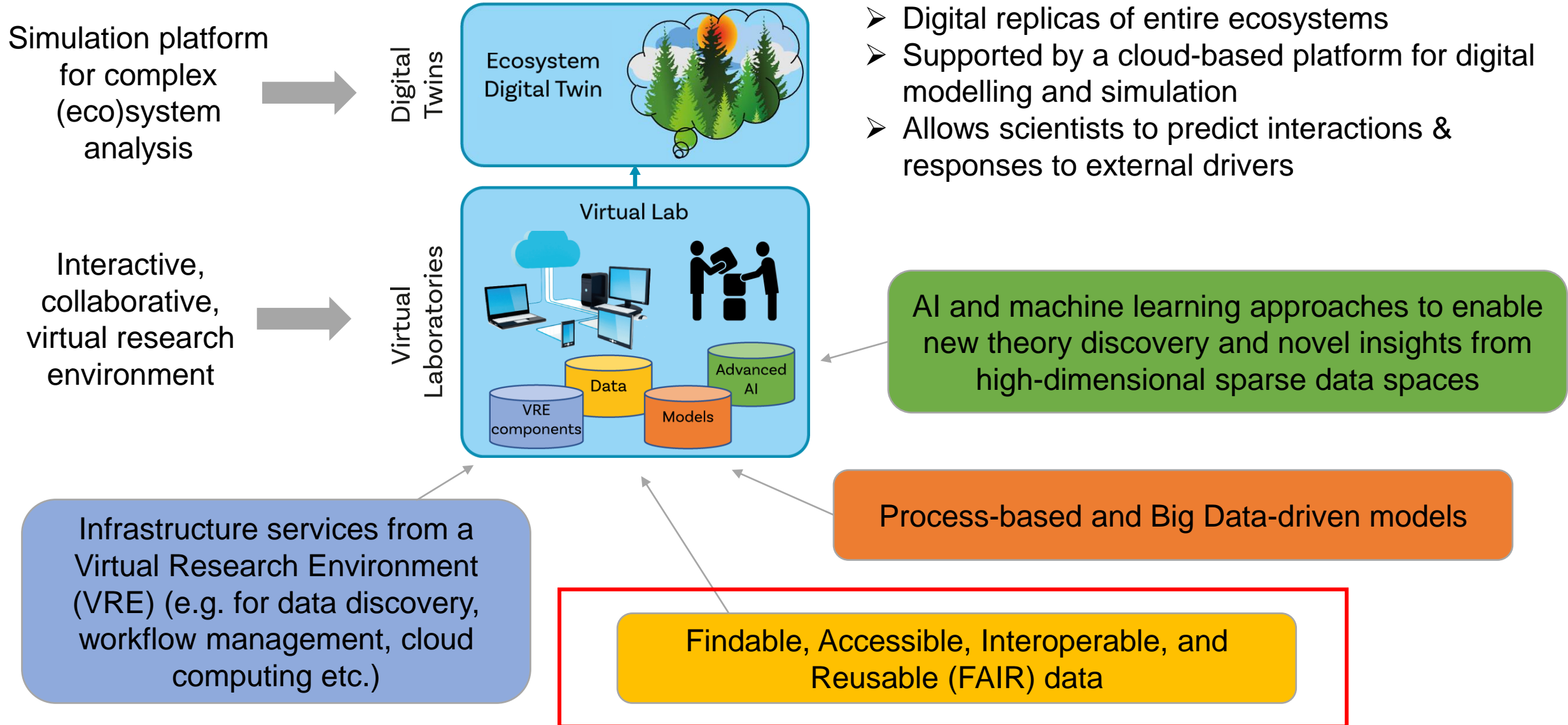
W. Daniel Kissling<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED), University of Amsterdam

<sup>2</sup>Virtual Laboratory & Innovations Center (LW-VLIC), LifeWatch-ERIC

*Digital Twin Conference, Wageningen, 14 December 2022*

# Digital Twins of ecosystems



# Biodiversity data

## Workflows

### 1 Primary observations



#### Opportunistic observations

- Incidental occurrence and abundance data from research and citizen science



#### Structured surveys

- Inventories & checklists from research and citizen science
- Long-term species monitoring



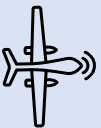
#### Trait sampling

- Morphological measurements
- Physiological measurements
- Phenology records



#### DNA sampling

- Intraspecific genetic diversity
- eDNA



#### Airborne remote sensing

- Imaging spectroscopy
- LiDAR



#### Satellite remote sensing

- Multispectral - thermal
- Radar
- Hyperspectral
- LiDAR

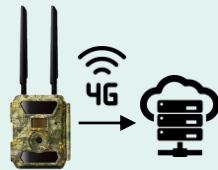
### 2 Data generation

#### Data integration and harmonization



- Data mobilization
- Data standardization
- (Meta)data standards
- Ontologies and vocabularies

#### Automated data streams



- Autonomous sensors
- Data transmission
- Data archiving & big data storage
- Remote sensor monitoring

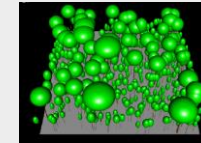
#### Big data processing



- Efficient, scalable and distributed computing
- HPC and cloud services
- Free and open-source software

### 3 Models and simulations

#### Simulations and trend analysis



Ecosystem simulation



Biodiversity change indicators

#### AI models

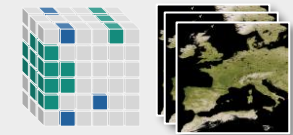
Detection, tracking, classification, segmentation



#### Scenarios and forecasts

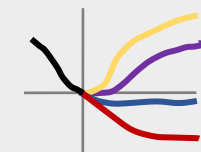
Predictive models

$$Y \sim f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$



Near-term ecological forecasts

Scenario development



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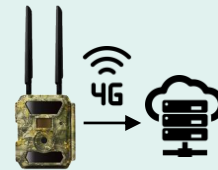
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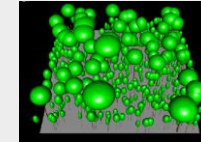
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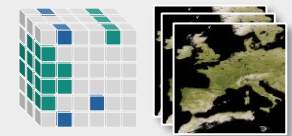
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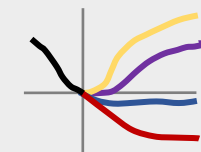
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Workflow  
1

# Workflow 1: Data integration & harmonization

Ecological Informatics 64 (2021) 101372

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

 **Ecological Informatics**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolinf](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolinf)





Integrating long-tail data: How far are we?

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<sup>b</sup> Environmental Data Initiative, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Madison, WI 53706, United States of America

## Long-tail data:


- small, tabular, site-based datasets
- collected by individual researchers
- often different in formats, units, semantics etc.
- little data curation and mostly not shared
- but contain very valuable information


Ecological Informatics 62 (2021) 101206

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

 **Ecological Informatics**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolinf](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolinf)





Integration and harmonization of trait data from plant individuals across heterogeneous sources

Tim P. Lenters<sup>a</sup>, Andrew Henderson<sup>b</sup>, Caroline M. Dracxler<sup>a</sup>, Guilherme A. Elias<sup>c</sup>,  
Suzanne Mogue Kamga<sup>d</sup>, Thomas L.P. Couvreur<sup>e</sup>, W. Daniel Kissling<sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Theoretical and Computational Ecology (TCE), Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED), University of Amsterdam, P.O. Box 94240, 1090 GE Amsterdam, the Netherlands  
<sup>b</sup> The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458-5126, USA  
<sup>c</sup> Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ciências Ambientais, Universidade do Extremo Sul Catarinense UNESC, Av. Universitária, 1105, 88806-000 Criciúma, SC, Brazil  
<sup>d</sup> Université de Yaoundé I, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Département des Sciences Biologiques, Laboratoire de Botanique systématique et d'Ecologie, B.P. 047 Yaoundé, Cameroon  
<sup>e</sup> IRD, DIADE, Univ Montpellier, Montpellier, France

## Trait data integration workflow:

- harmonizes quantitative individual-level plant trait data
- captures data from heterogeneous sources (taxonomic revisions and ecological datasets)
- standardizes data using terms from existing ontologies

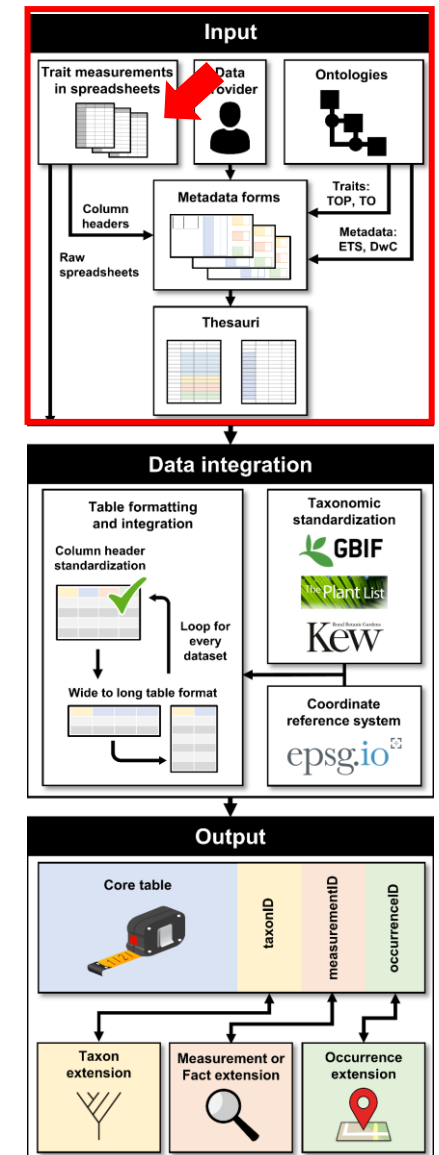
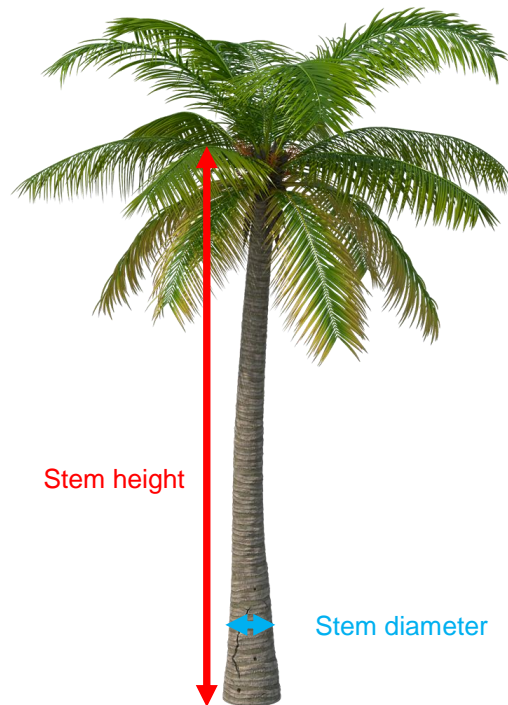
# Workflow 1: Data integration & harmonization

## Spreadsheets from taxonomists and ecologists

Herbari	Country	Plheight	Stemhei	Stemdia	Sheathl
ny	panama		2		
ny	panama		4		
ny	panama	3		0.95	20
ny	panama		5	1.13	23
mo	panama	3		0.68	
mo	panama	2			
mo	panama	2		0.68	16.5
mo	panama	4		0.89	

Dlongitude	Elevation	Sex	Stemheight	Stemdiameter	Petiole
102.4	300		0.8	0.52	15
114.18		pistillate			
		pistillate		0.4	8.7
		sterile			5.7
		pistillate			29.5
114.13		staminate			
114.16		pistillate		0.87	10
105.21		pistillate			
108.31	372	sterile	1.5		45
106.25		pistillate			32.5
105.21		staminate			

## Capturing trait measurements from the field or herbarium specimens



# Workflow 1: Data integration & harmonization

## Ontologies for traits

TOP A Terminological Resource for Plant Functional Diversity

HOME FACETED SEARCH HIERARCHY SEARCH INDEX SEARCH REFERENCES API ADMINISTRATION

**A Thesaurus of Plant Characteristics for Ecology and Evolution**

TOP, a Thesaurus Of Plant characteristics, defines standards for a functional approach to plant diversity by stabilizing the terminology for concepts widely used in ecology and evolution. TOP provides names, definitions, formal units and synonyms for more than 700 plant characteristics: plant traits and environmental associations.

TOP can be searched via :

- **FACETED SEARCH**, filtering the available information by grouping terms into facets
- **HIERARCHY SEARCH**, providing a tree that progressively unfolds and a search field where terms or TOP identifiers can be entered
- **INDEX**, a complete alphabetical list of all concepts defined in TOP

Plant Trait Ontology

A controlled vocabulary to describe phenotypic traits in plants.

Search TO

Terms Download Ontology Homepage Request a Term

- standardized trait names, metadata information and unambiguous identifiers (URI) for each term

## Additional metadata standards

TDWG Home Terms Guides GitHub

### Darwin Core

Darwin Core is a standard maintained by the [Darwin Core Maintenance Interest Group](#). It includes a glossary of terms (in other contexts these might be called properties, elements, fields, columns, attributes, or concepts) intended to **facilitate the sharing of information about biological diversity** by providing identifiers, labels, and definitions. Darwin Core is primarily based on taxa, their occurrence in nature as documented by observations, specimens, samples, and related information.

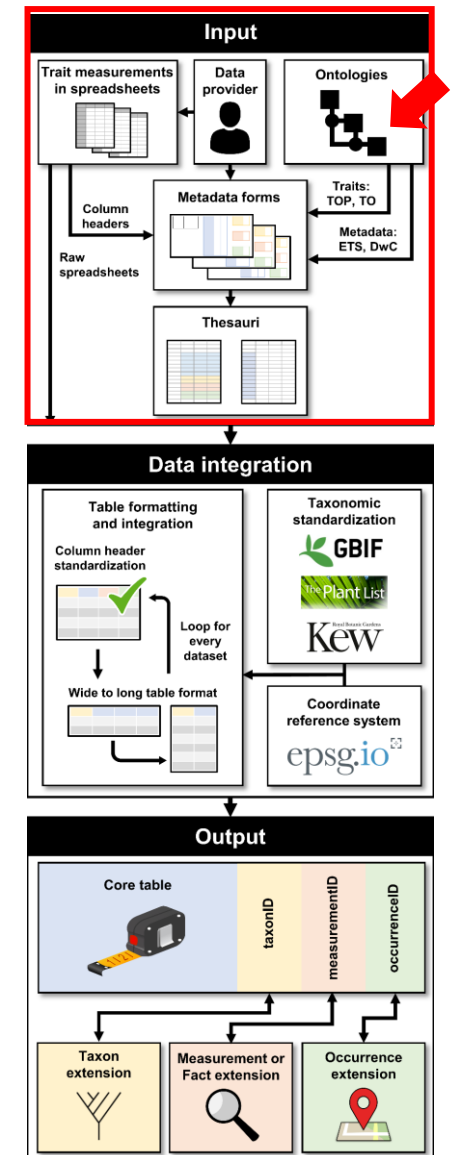
Ecological Trait-data Standard Vocabulary About Guidelines

### Ecological Trait-data Standard

Florian D. Schneider, Malte Jochum, Gaëtane LeProvost, Caterina Penone, Andreas Ostrowski, Nadja K. Simons  
v0.10, released: 28 March 2019

### Vocabulary

This defined vocabulary aims at providing all essential terms to describe datasets of functional trait measurements and facts for ecological research.



# Workflow 1: Data integration & harmonization

## Metadata form

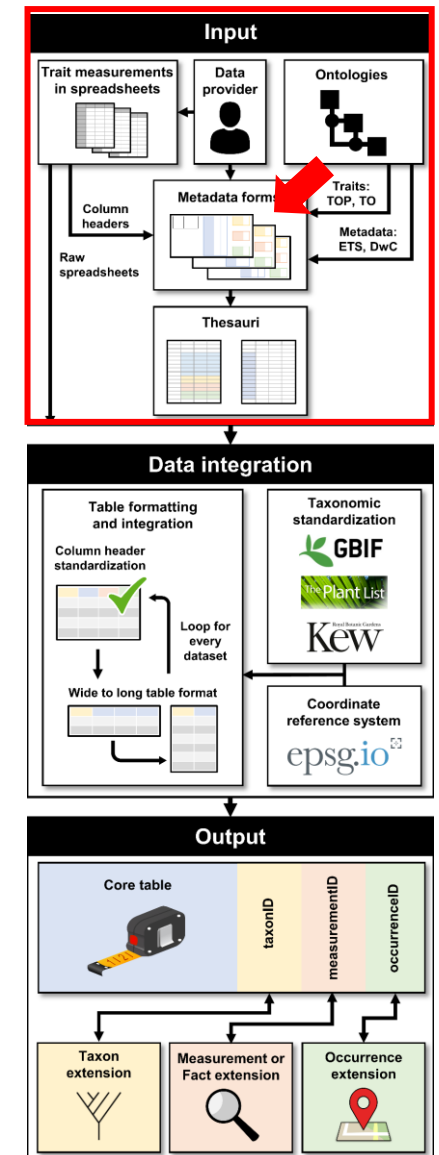
<b>Name (dataset provider):</b>	Guilherme Elias
<b>Date (dd/mm/yyyy):</b>	20/04/2020
<b>Dataset name:</b>	Areaceae#1
<b>Reference:</b>	Elias, G. A., Colares, R., Antu...
<b>verbatimCoordinateSystem:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Decimal degrees <input type="checkbox"/> Degrees-minutes-seconds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UTM
<b>verbatimSRS:</b>	SIRGAS 2000 / UTM zone 22S
<b>basisOfRecord:</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> LivingSpecimen <input type="radio"/> PreservedSpecimen <input type="radio"/> FossilSpecimen <input type="radio"/> HumanObservation <input type="radio"/> MachineObservation

Quantitative traits	Fill in ↓ (name)	Fill in ↓ (unit)
Plant_height	H	m
Stem_length		
Stem_width	Tree Girth	cm
Leaf_sheat_length		
Petiole_length		
Petiole_thickness		
Peduncle_length		
Peduncle_width		
Distance_scar_bracteole		
Prophyll_length		
Peduncle_bract_length		
Apical_leaflet_length		
Apical_leaflet_width		
Apical_leaflet_angle		
Apical_leaflet_vein_count		
Basal_leaflet_angle		
Basal_leaflet_length		
Basal_leaflet_width		
Median_leaflet_length		
Median_leaflet_width		
Leaflet_number		

Taxon	Fill in ↓
scientificName	Species
genus	
specificEpithet	
infraspecificEpithet	
originalNameUsage	
morphotype	
verbatimTaxonRank	

Measurement or Fact	Fill in ↓
measurementDeterminedDate	
measurementDeterminedBy	

Occurrence	Fill in ↓
identificationID	
recordNumber	
institutionCode	
verbatimLatitude	Y
verbatimLongitude	X
verbatimElevation	
country	
stateProvince	





# Workflow 1: Data integration & harmonization

## Thesauri

Metadata form 1

Quantitative traits	Fill in ↓ (name)	Fill in ↓ (unit)	Taxon	Fill in ↓
Plant_height	H	m	genus	
Stem_length			species	Species
Stem_width	Tree Girth	cm	infraspecificEpithet	
Leaf_sheat_length				
Petiole_length				
Petiole_thickness				
			Occurrence	Fill in ↓
			institutionCode	
			verbatimLatitude	Y
			verbatimLongitude	X
			verbatimElevation	
			country	
Measurement or Fact		Fill in ↓		
measurementDeterminedDate				
measurementDeterminedBy				

Metadata form 2

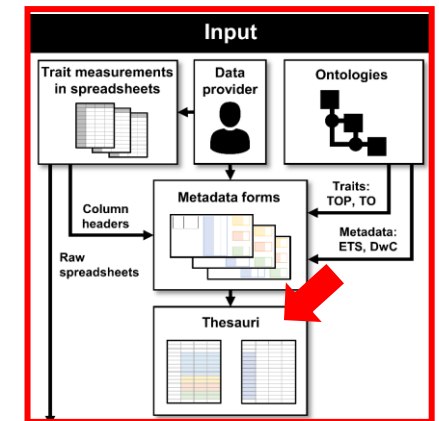
Quantitative traits	Fill in ↓ (name)	Fill in ↓ (unit)	Taxon	Fill in ↓
Plant_height			genus	
Stem_length	Stemheight	m	species	Species
Stem_width	Stemdiameter	cm	infraspecificEpithet	
Leaf_sheat_length				
Petiole_length				
Petiole_thickness				
			Occurrence	Fill in ↓
			institutionCode	Herbarium
			verbatimLatitude	
			verbatimLongitude	
			verbatimElevation	
			country	
Measurement or Fact		Fill in ↓		
measurementDeterminedDate				
measurementDeterminedBy		Collector		

Metadata thesaurus

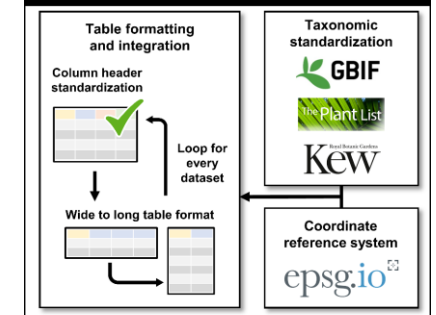
Spreadsheet:	1	2
Plant_height	H	
Stem_length		Stemheight
Stem_width	Tree Girth	Stemdiameter
Leaf_sheat_length		
Petiole_length		
Petiole_thickness		
genus		
species	Species	Species
infraspecificEpithet		
measurementDeterminedDate		
measurementDeterminedBy		Collector
institutionCode		Herbarium
verbatimLatitude	Y	
verbatimLongitude	X	
verbatimElevation		
country		

Units thesaurus

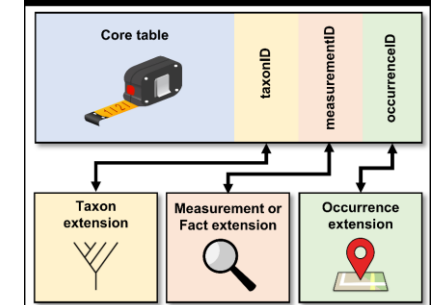
Spreadsheet:	1	2
Plant_height	m	
Stem_length		m
Stem_width	cm	cm
Leaf_sheat_length		
Petiole_length		
Petiole_thickness		



Data integration



Output



# Workflow 1: Data integration & harmonization

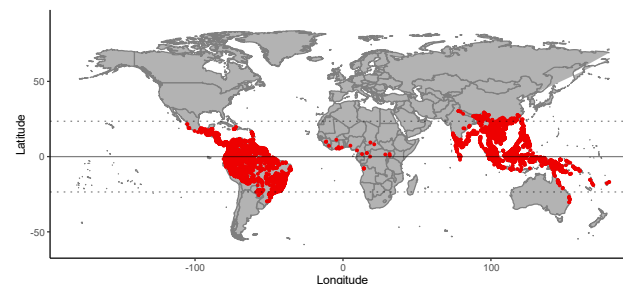
## Core table with standardized trait information

scientificName	verbatimTraitName	traitName	traitValue	traitUnit	traitID	taxonID	measurementID	occurrenceID
Syagrus romanzoffiana	Tree Girth	Stem_width	76 cm	http://purl...	1 NA			1
Syagrus romanzoffiana	Tree Girth	Stem_width	60 cm	http://purl...	1 NA			1
Syagrus romanzoffiana	Tree Girth	Stem_width	87 cm	http://purl...	1 NA			2
Syagrus romanzoffiana	H	Plant_height	1300 cm	http://purl...	1 NA			2
Syagrus romanzoffiana	H	Plant_height	800 cm	http://purl...	1 NA			2
Syagrus romanzoffiana	H	Plant_height	1300 cm	http://purl...	1 NA			2
Rhapis evansi	Stemheight	Stem_length	80 cm	http://purl...	2		1	3
Rhapis evansi	Stemdiameter	Stem_width	0.4 cm	http://purl...	2		1	3
Rhapis excelsa	Stemheight	Stem_length	150 cm	http://purl...	3		2	4
Rhapis excelsa	Stemheight	Stem_length	250 cm	http://purl...	3		2	4
Rhapis excelsa	Stemdiameter	Stem_width	0.87 cm	http://purl...	3		3	5
Rhapis excelsa	Stemdiameter	Stem_width	1.36 cm	http://purl...	3		3	5

## Extension tables

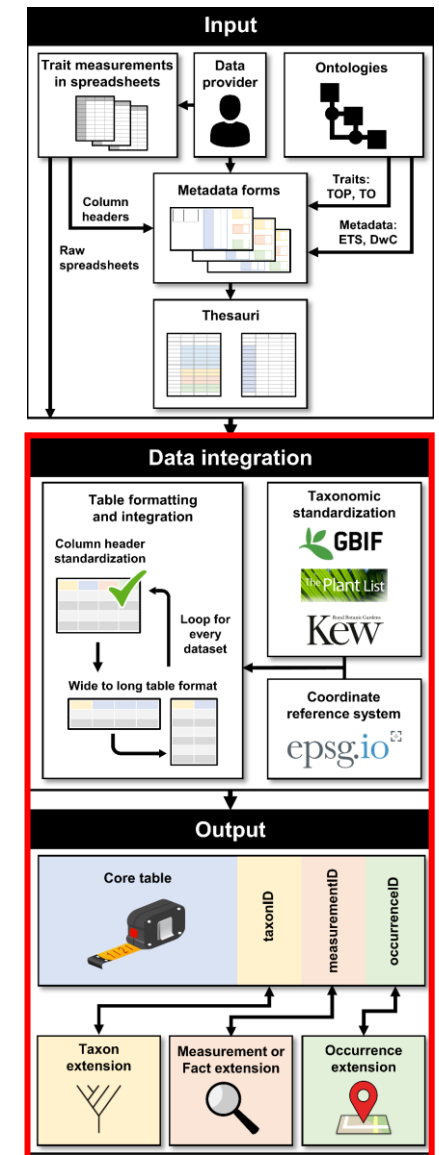


## Occurrence



## Trait data mobilization:

- 138,993 individual trait measurements for 50 standardized traits covering 551 unique palm species (22%)



# Biodiversity data

## 1 Primary observations



### Opportunistic observations

- Incidental occurrence and abundance data from research and citizen science



### Structured surveys

- Inventories & checklists from research and citizen science
- Long-term species monitoring



### Trait sampling

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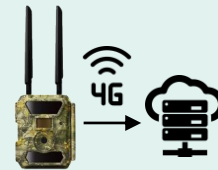
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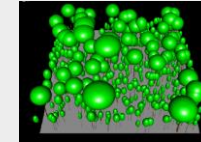
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Ecosystem simulation



Biodiversity change indicators

### AI models

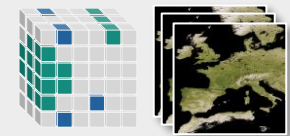
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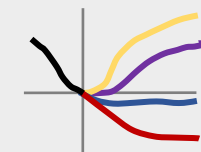
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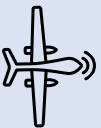
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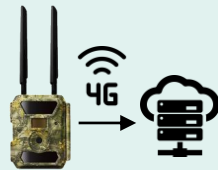
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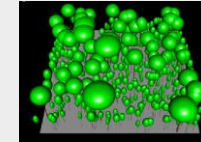
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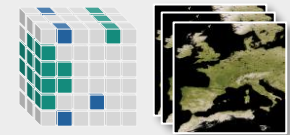
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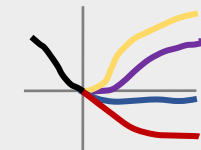
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Near-term ecological forecasts



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Workflow 2

# Workflow 2: Automated data streams

SYNTHESIS

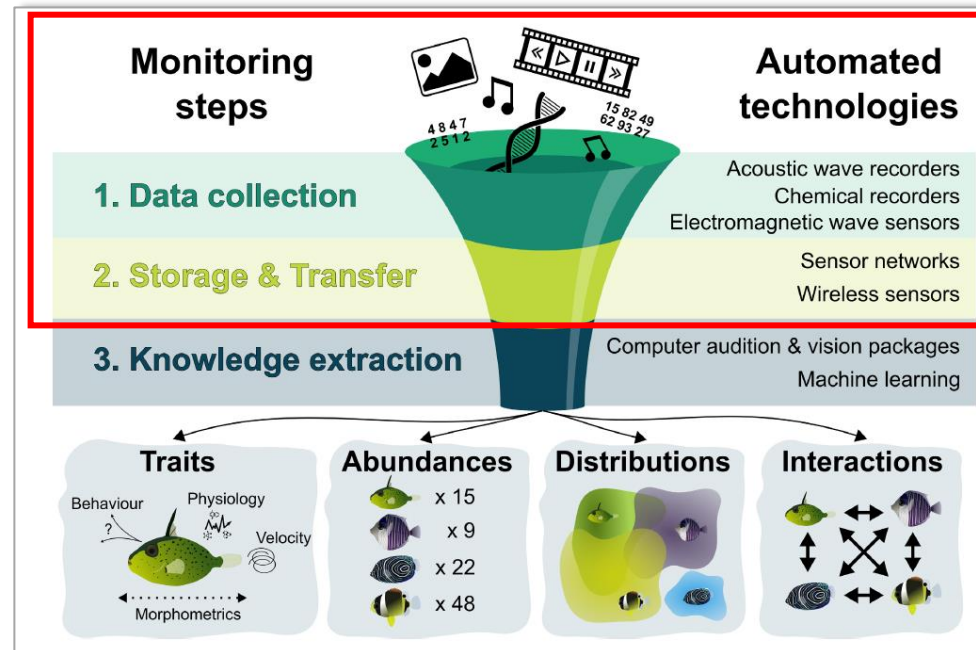
ECOLOGY LETTERS  WILEY

## Towards the fully automated monitoring of ecological communities

Marc Besson<sup>1,2</sup>  | Jamie Alison<sup>3,4</sup>  | Kim Bjerge<sup>5</sup>  | Thomas E. Gorochoowski<sup>1,6</sup>  |  
Toke T. Høye<sup>3,7</sup>  | Tommaso Jucker<sup>1</sup>  | Hjalte M. R. Mann<sup>3,7</sup>  |  
Christopher F. Clements<sup>1</sup> 

## Automated biodiversity monitoring:

- (near)real-time observations
- sampling of remote areas and at unfeasible times
- high-frequency observations without observer disturbance



# Workflow 2: Automated data streams



Insect cameras



Automated Moth Trap



Wildlife cameras



AudioMoth



Bird radar

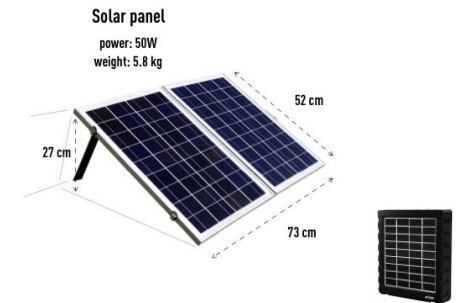


Aeroecology Cam

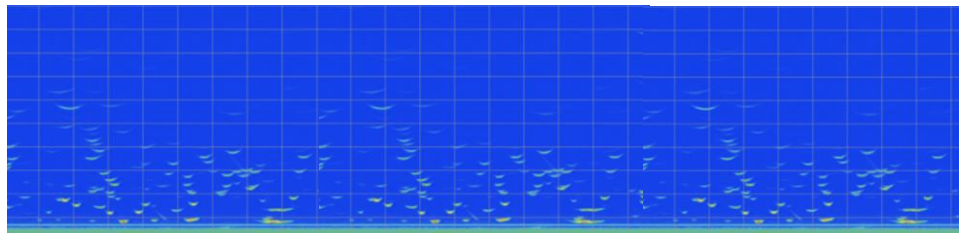
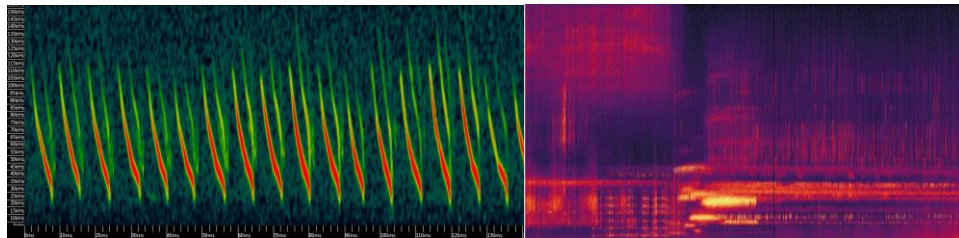


## Autonomous deployment of sensors

- Power supply:
  - solar panels (12V/50-60W/100W) & batteries (AA or 12V)
  - main power (230 volts AC, 200-300 W)
- Data transmission:
  - 4G (SIM cards)
  - wired network



# Workflow 2: Automated data streams



## Number of devices

- 10 × DIOPSIS insect cameras

- 47 × wildlife cameras

- 26 × AudioMoth

- 1 × Birdscan MR1 Radar

## Data volume

- ~ 2.5 months/device
- ~ 1 Mio images
- ~ 715 GB

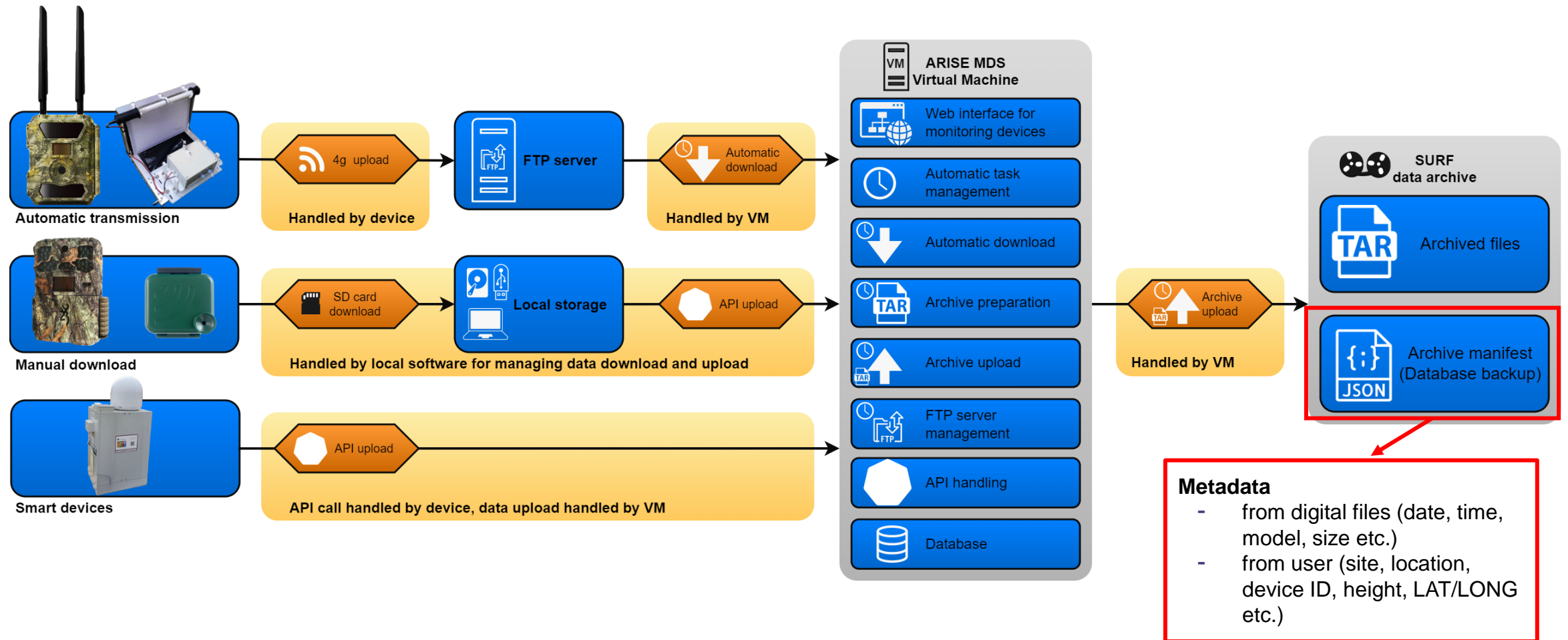
- ~ 6 months/device
- ~ 770,000 images
- ~ 452 GB of data

- ~ 5.5 months/device
- ~ 6,000 audio files
- ~ 16 TB of data (compressed)

- ~ 1 year
- ~ 26 TB raw data
- ~ 0.5 TB derived data (signatures, thumbnails, PDP + MSSQL database)

# Workflow 2: Automated data streams

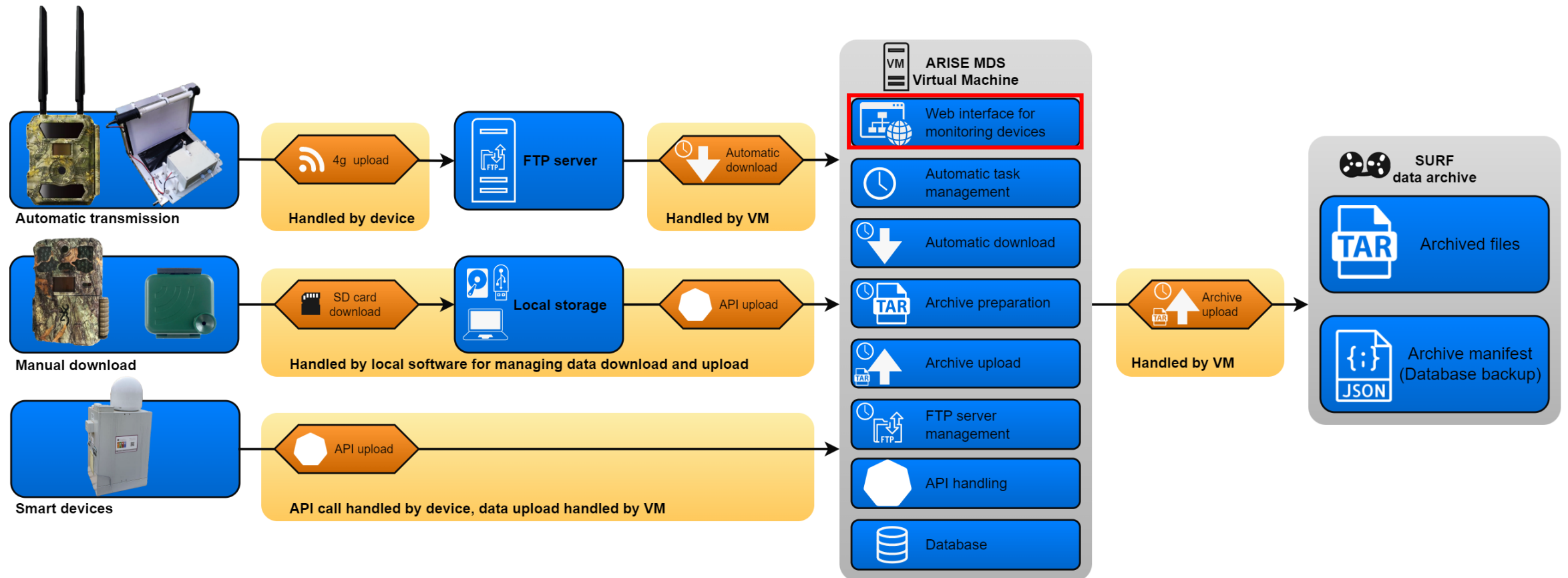
- 1 Digital sensors
- 2 Data transfer
- 3 Data upload
- 4 Data management
- 5 Data archiving





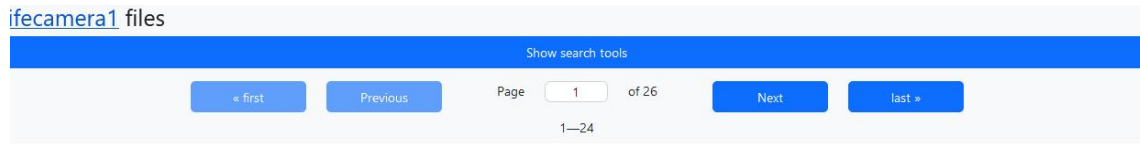
# Workflow 2: Automated data streams

- 1 Digital sensors
- 2 Data transfer
- 3 Data upload
- 4 Data management
- 5 Data archiving



# Workflow 2: Automated data streams

(Near)real-time data viewing



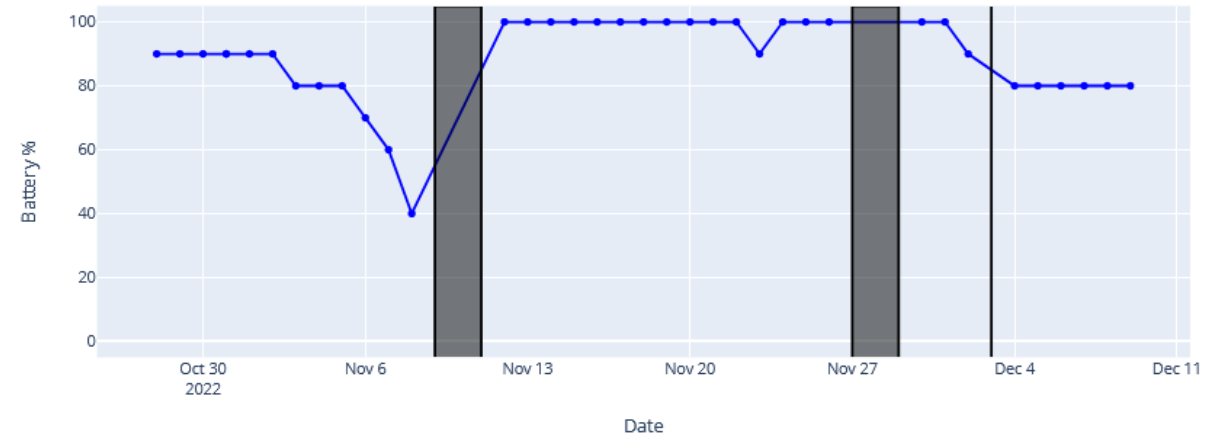
GP\_1\_27052022\_wildlifecamera1\_2022-12-09\_10-43-21\_(7)GP\_1\_27052022\_wildlifecamera1\_2022-12-09\_10-43-18\_(8)GP\_1\_27052022\_wildlifecamera1\_2022-12-09\_10-43-14\_(9)



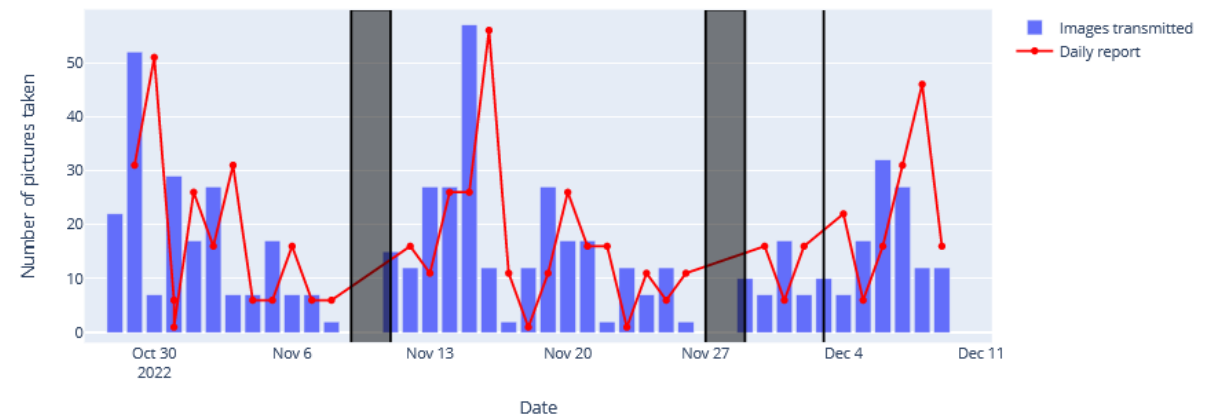
GP\_1\_27052022\_wildlifecamera1\_2022-12-09\_10-43-11\_(10)GP\_1\_27052022\_wildlifecamera1\_2022-12-09\_10-43-07\_(11)GP\_1\_27052022\_wildlifecamera1\_2022-12-09\_10-41-42\_(2)

## Remote monitoring of sensor performance

Battery usage



Pictures taken



# Biodiversity data

## 1 Primary observations



**Opportunistic observations**

- Incidental occurrence and abundance data from research and citizen science



**Structured surveys**

- Inventories & checklists from research and citizen science
- Long-term species monitoring



**Trait sampling**

- Morphological measurements
- Physiological measurements
- Phenology records



**DNA sampling**

- Intraspecific genetic diversity
- eDNA



**Airborne remote sensing**

- Imaging spectroscopy
- LiDAR



**Satellite remote sensing**

- Multispectral - thermal
- Radar
- Hyperspectral
- LiDAR

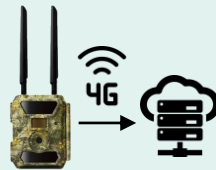
## 2 Data generation

**Data integration and harmonization**



- Data mobilization
- Data standardization
- (Meta)data standards
- Ontologies and vocabularies

**Automated data streams**



- Autonomous sensors
- Data transmission
- Data archiving & big data storage
- Remote sensor monitoring

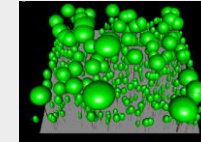
**Big data processing**



- Efficient, scalable and distributed computing
- HPC and cloud services
- Free and open-source software

## 3 Models and simulations

**Simulations and trend analysis**



Ecosystem simulation



Biodiversity change indicators

**AI models**

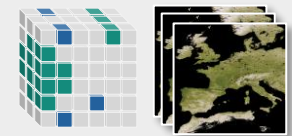
Detection, tracking, classification, segmentation



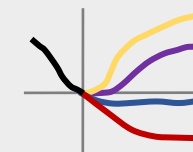
**Scenarios and forecasts**

Predictive models

$$Y \sim f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$



Near-term ecological forecasts



Scenario development



Workflow 2

# Biodiversity data

## 1 Primary observations



### Opportunistic observations

- Incidental occurrence and abundance data from research and citizen science



### Structured surveys

- Inventories & checklists from research and citizen science
- Long-term species monitoring



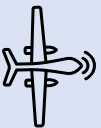
### Trait sampling

- Morphological measurements
- Physiological measurements
- Phenology records



### DNA sampling

- Intraspecific genetic diversity
- eDNA



### Airborne remote sensing

- Imaging spectroscopy
- LiDAR



### Satellite remote sensing

- Multispectral - thermal
- Radar
- Hyperspectral
- LiDAR

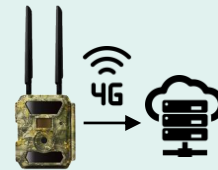
## 2 Data generation

### Data integration and harmonization



- Data mobilization
- Data standardization
- (Meta)data standards
- Ontologies and vocabularies

### Automated data streams



- Autonomous sensors
- Data transmission
- Data archiving & big data storage
- Remote sensor monitoring

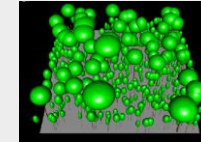
### Big data processing



- Efficient, scalable and distributed computing
- HPC and cloud services
- Free and open-source software

## 3 Models and simulations

### Simulations and trend analysis



Ecosystem simulation



Biodiversity change indicators

### AI models

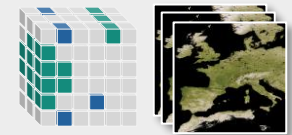
Detection, tracking, classification, segmentation



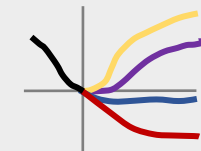
### Scenarios and forecasts

Predictive models

$$Y \sim f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$



Near-term ecological forecasts



Scenario development



Workflow  
3

# Workflow 3: Big data processing

Trends in Ecology & Evolution

CellPress  
REVIEWS

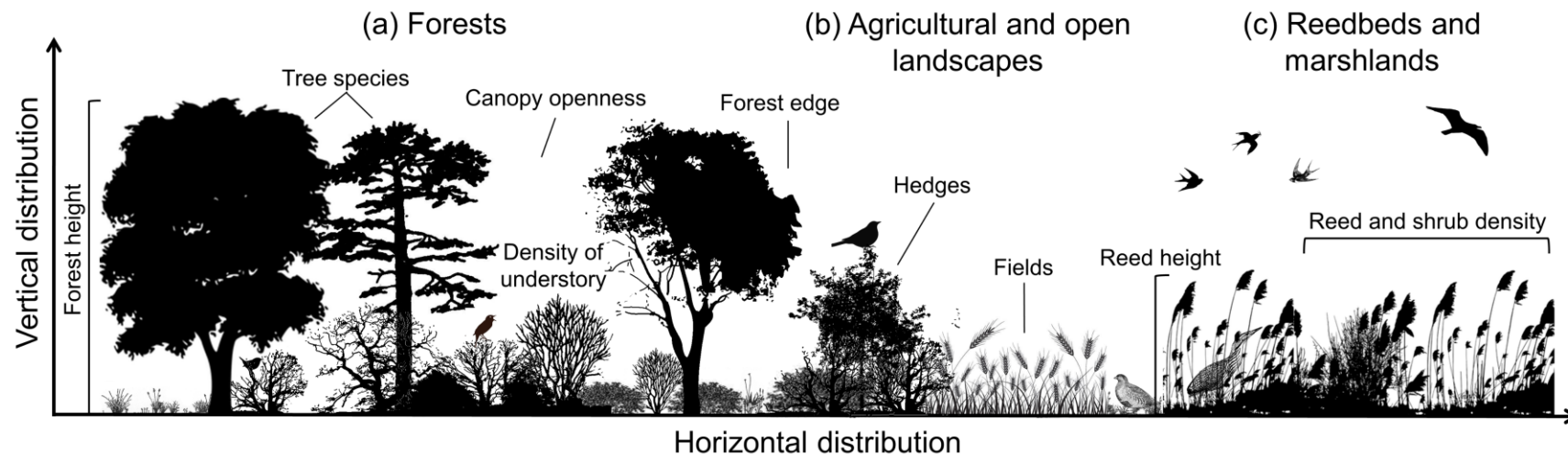
Opinion

## Standardizing Ecosystem Morphological Traits from 3D Information Sources

R. Valbuena,<sup>1,2,3,14,\*</sup> B. O'Connor,<sup>1</sup> F. Zellweger,<sup>2,4</sup> W. Simonson,<sup>1</sup>  
P. Vihervaara,<sup>5</sup> M. Maltamo,<sup>6</sup> C.A. Silva,<sup>7,8</sup> D.R.A. Almeida,<sup>9</sup> F. Danks,<sup>1</sup>  
F. Morsdorf,<sup>10</sup> G. Chirici,<sup>11</sup> R. Lucas,<sup>12</sup> D.A. Coomes,<sup>2</sup> and N.C. Coops<sup>13</sup>

### Remote sensing data with 3D information:

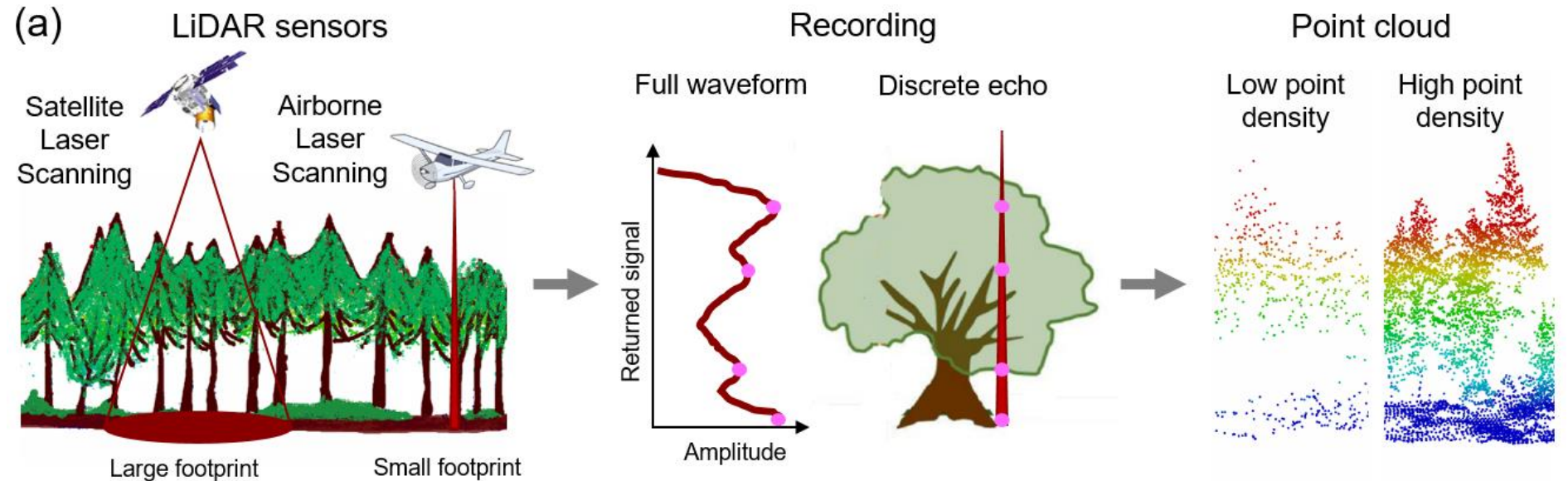
- large data volumes (e.g. multiple terabytes of raw data)
- many software tools are not open-access
- processing requires a high degree of specialization
- very important because they provide 3D measurements of ecosystem structure



# Workflow 3: Big data processing

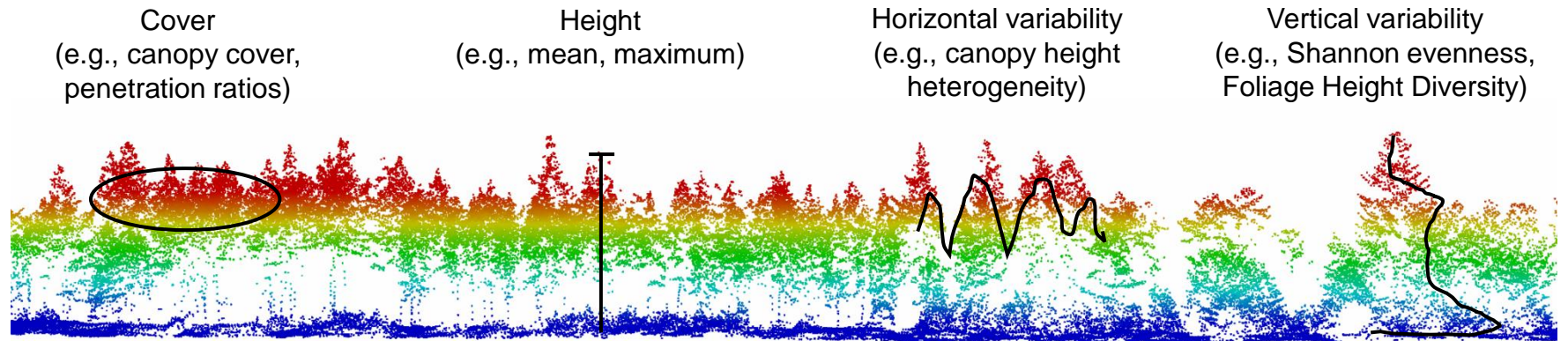
## LiDAR

Light Detection And Ranging (LiDAR) technology provides 3D point clouds of vegetation, terrain and infrastructure from which metrics of ecosystem structure can be derived.



## LiDAR metrics

Statistical properties of 3D point clouds characterizing vegetation structure



# Workflow 3: Big data processing

SoftwareX 12 (2020) 100626

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

**SoftwareX**



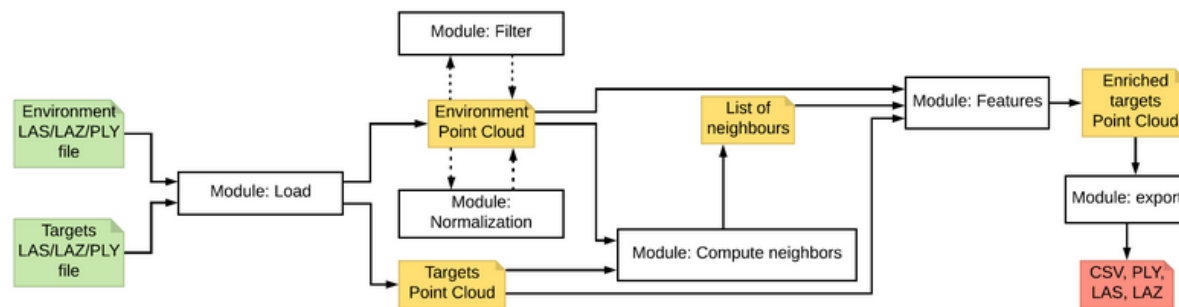
journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/softx](https://www.elsevier.com/locate/softx)

Original software publication

**Laserchicken—A tool for distributed feature calculation from massive LiDAR point cloud datasets**

C. Meijer<sup>a,\*</sup>, M.W. Grootes<sup>a</sup>, Z. Koma<sup>b</sup>, Y. Dzigan<sup>a</sup>, R. Gonçalves<sup>a</sup>, B. Andela<sup>a</sup>, G. van den Oord<sup>a</sup>, E. Ranguelova<sup>a</sup>, N. Renaud<sup>a</sup>, W.D. Kissling<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Netherlands eScience Center, Science Park 140, 1098 XG Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
<sup>b</sup> Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED), University of Amsterdam, P.O. Box 94240, 1090 GE Amsterdam, The Netherlands

## Laserchicken software:

- cross-platform Python tool for extracting statistical properties of 3D point clouds
- free and open-source software (FOSS)
- designed for efficient, scalable, distributed processing of multi-terabyte datasets

**Table 1**

Features currently implemented in Laserchicken..

Feature name	Formal description	Example of use	References
Point density	$\frac{N}{V}$ where $V$ is the target volume or area	Point cloud spatial distribution	
Pulse penetration ratio	$\frac{N_{\text{ground}}}{N_{\text{total}}}$	Tree species classification	[17]
Echo ratio	$100 \cdot \frac{N_{\text{sp}}}{N_{\text{SD}}}$	Roof detection	[18]
Skewness	$\frac{1}{\sigma^3} \cdot \sum \frac{(z_i - \bar{z})^3}{N}$	Vegetation, ground, and roof classification and detection	[19]
Kurtosis	$\frac{1}{\sigma^4} \cdot \sum \frac{(z_i - \bar{z})^4}{N}$	Vegetation, ground, and roof classification and detection	[19]
Standard deviation	$\sqrt{\sum \frac{(z_i - \bar{z})^2}{N-1}}$	Classification of reed within wetland	[20]
Variance	$\sum \frac{(z_i - \bar{z})^2}{N-1}$	Classification of reed within wetland	[20]
Sigma Z	$\sqrt{\sum \frac{(R_i - \bar{R})^2}{N-1}}$ where $R_i$ is the residual after plane fitting		Adapted from [20]
Minimum Z	$Z_{\text{min}}$	Simple digital terrain model in wetlands	[20]
Maximum Z	$Z_{\text{max}}$	Height and structure of forests	[21]
Mean Z	$\frac{1}{N} \cdot \sum Z_i$	Height and structure of forests	[21]
Median Z	$Z_{\text{median}}$	Height and structure of forests	[21]
Range Z	$ Z_{\text{max}} - Z_{\text{min}} $	Height and structure of forests	[21]
Percentiles Z	Height of every 10 <sup>th</sup> percentile.	Height and structure of forests	[21]
Eigenvalues	$\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3$ , with $ \lambda_1  \geq  \lambda_2  \geq  \lambda_3 $	Classification of urban objects	[22]
Normal vector	eigen vector $\vec{v}_3$	Roof detection	[23]
Slope	$\tan(\arccos(\vec{v}_3 \cdot \vec{k}))$ , where $\vec{k} = [0, 0, 1]^T$	Planar surface detection	[24]
Entropy Z	$-\sum_i p_i \cdot \log_2 p_i$ , with $p_i = \frac{N_i}{\sum_j N_j}$ and $N_i$ points in bin $i$	Foliage height diversity	[25]
Coefficient variance Z	$\frac{1}{\bar{z}} \cdot \sqrt{\sum \frac{(z_i - \bar{z})^2}{N-1}}$	Urban tree species classification	[8]
Non-ground density absolute mean	$\frac{100}{N_{\text{non-ground}}} \cdot \sum_{i \in \text{non-ground}}  z_i - \bar{z}_{\text{non-ground}} $	Urban tree species classification	[8]
Band ratio	$\frac{N_{z_1 > z_2}}{N_{\text{tot}}}$ with $Z_i$ and $Z_j$ provided by user	Height and vertical structure of vegetation	

# Workflow 3: Big data processing

Ecological Informatics 72 (2022) 101836

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

**Ecological Informatics**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolinf](https://www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolinf)

ELSEVIER

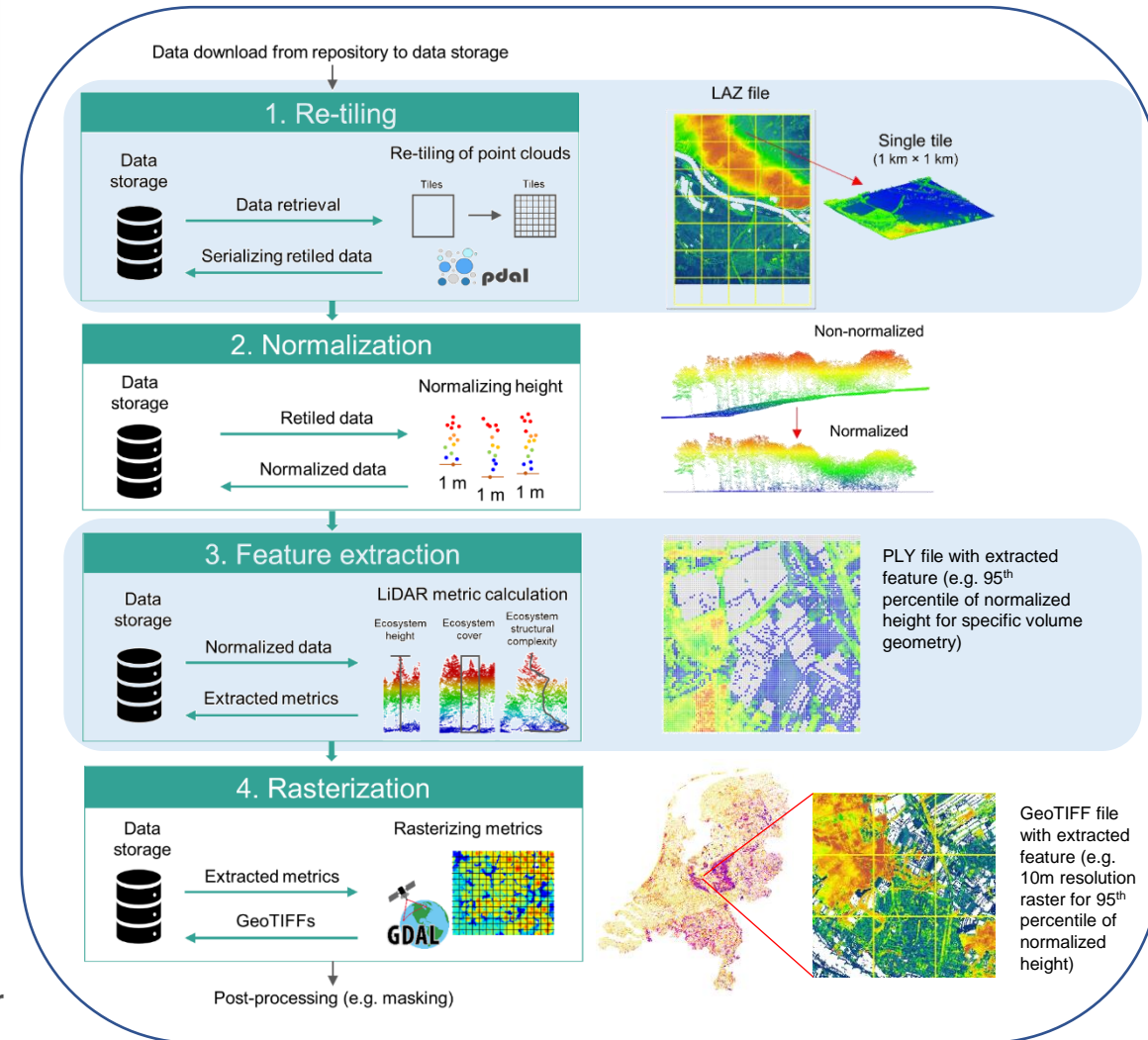
Laserfarm – A high-throughput workflow for generating geospatial data products of ecosystem structure from airborne laser scanning point clouds

W. Daniel Kissling<sup>a,b,\*</sup>, Yifang Shi<sup>a,b</sup>, Zsófia Koma<sup>a,c</sup>, Christiaan Meijer<sup>d</sup>, Ou Ku<sup>d</sup>, Francesco Nattino<sup>d</sup>, Arie C. Seijmonsbergen<sup>a</sup>, Meiert W. Grootes<sup>d</sup>

Check for updates

## Laserfarm workflow:

- High Performance Computing (HPC) workflow for processing multi-terabyte LiDAR point clouds
- Deployable on various computing infrastructures (e.g. cluster of virtual machines, cloud computing environments)
- Free and open-source software (FOSS) tool
- Implemented in Python and available as Jupyter notebook





# Workflow 3: Big data processing

Laserfarm workflow tested on multiple IT infrastructures and platforms

## SURFsara HPC Cloud and Grid



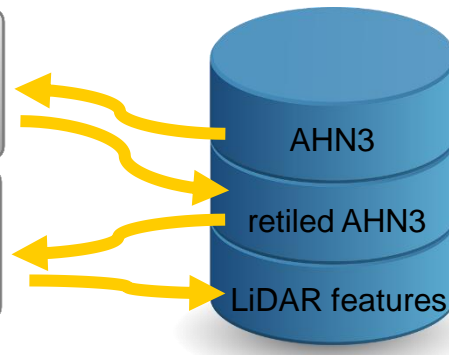
<https://www.surf.nl/en/about-surf/subsidiaries/surfsara/>

### HPC Cloud

- Cluster
- Multi-core processors for multi-threaded applications
- Fast network for distributed memory applications



### Data storage (dCache)



- Distributed data storage system
- Cluster of machines that mimics a large disc
- Data storage: 100 TB

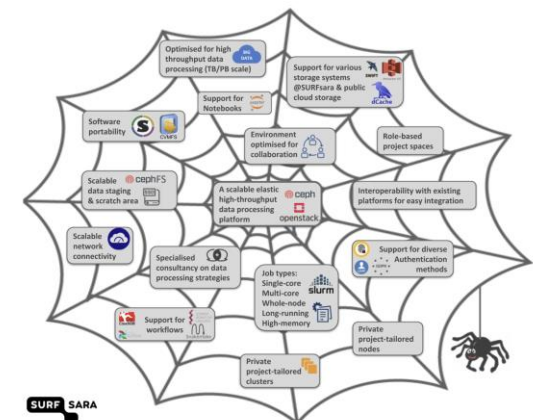
## Microsoft Azure Cloud



## LifeWatch



## SURFsara Spider



# Workflow 3: Big data processing

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

**Data in Brief**

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/dib](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/dib)

**Data Article**

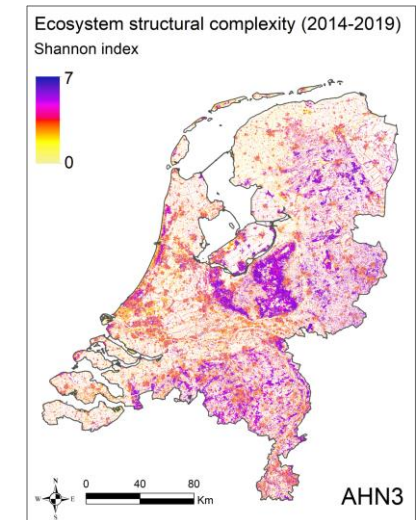
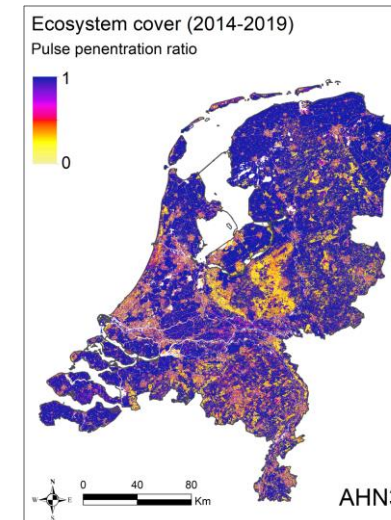
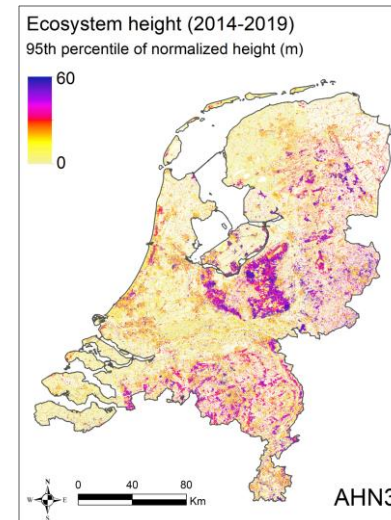
## Country-wide data of ecosystem structure from the third Dutch airborne laser scanning survey

W. Daniel Kissling<sup>a,b,\*</sup>, Yifang Shi<sup>a,b</sup>, Zsófia Koma<sup>a,c</sup>, Christiaan Meijer<sup>d</sup>, Ou Ku<sup>d</sup>, Francesco Nattino<sup>d</sup>, Arie C. Seijmonsbergen<sup>a</sup>, Meiert W. Grootes<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>University of Amsterdam, Institute for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED), P.O. Box 94240, 1090 GE Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
<sup>b</sup>LifeWatch ERIC, Virtual Laboratories and Innovations Centre (VLIC), University of Amsterdam Faculty of Science, Science Park 904, 1098 XH Amsterdam  
<sup>c</sup>Aarhus University, Department of Biology, Center for Sustainable Landscapes Under Global Change, Ny Munkegade 116, 8000 Aarhus C, Denmark  
<sup>d</sup>Netherlands eScience Center, Science Park 402 (Matrix III), 1098 XH Amsterdam, The Netherlands

## Data products of ecosystem structure:

- 10 m resolution raster layers of ecosystem structure
- 25 LiDAR metrics of ecosystem height, cover and structural complexity
- GeoTIFF files
- can be readily used by ecologists in a geographic information system (GIS) or analytical open-source software such as R



# Biodiversity data

## (Big) data challenges

**Variety**  
Diverse data sources

**Velocity**  
Speed of change

**Volume**  
Data size

### 1 Primary observations



**Opportunistic observations**  
• Incidental occurrence and abundance data from research and citizen science



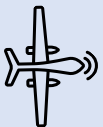
**Structured surveys**  
• Inventories & checklists from research and citizen science  
• Long-term species monitoring



**Trait sampling**  
• Morphological measurements  
• Physiological measurements  
• Phenology records



**DNA sampling**  
• Intraspecific genetic diversity  
• eDNA



**Airborne remote sensing**  
• Imaging spectroscopy  
• LiDAR



**Satellite remote sensing**  
• Multispectral - thermal  
• Radar  
• Hyperspectral  
• LiDAR

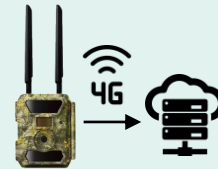
### 2 Data generation

#### Data integration and harmonization



- Data mobilization
- Data standardization
- (Meta)data standards
- Ontologies and vocabularies

#### Automated data streams



- Autonomous sensors
- Data transmission
- Data archiving & big data storage
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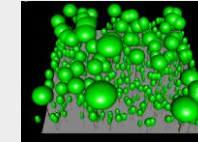
#### Big data processing



- Efficient, scalable and distributed computing
- HPC and cloud services
- Free and open-source software

### 3 Models and simulations

#### Simulations and trend analysis



Ecosystem simulation



Biodiversity change indicators

#### AI models

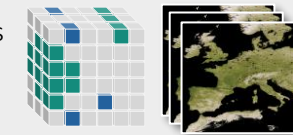
Detection, tracking, classification, segmentation



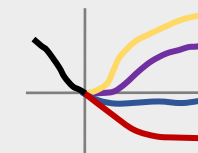
#### Scenarios and forecasts

Predictive models

$$Y \sim f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$$



Near-term ecological forecasts



Scenario development



**Workflow 2**

**Workflow 1**

**Workflow 3**

# Digital Twins of ecosystems

Simulation platform  
for complex  
(eco)system  
analysis



Digital  
Twins

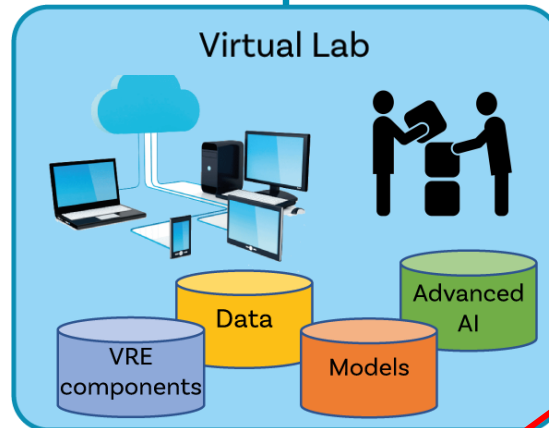


- Digital replicas of entire ecosystems
- Supported by a cloud-based platform for digital modelling and simulation
- Allows scientists to predict interactions & responses to external drivers

Interactive,  
collaborative,  
virtual research  
environment



Virtual  
Laboratories



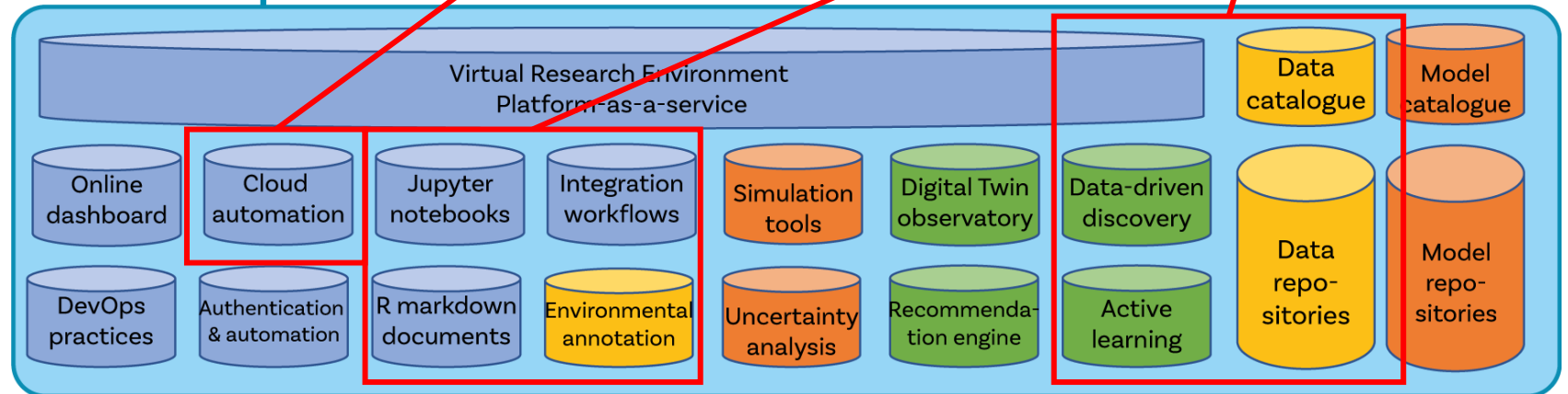
Cloud computing

Data discovery and  
data management

Workflow  
management

**What do we need to  
develop Digital  
Twins of  
ecosystems?**

Infrastructure  
services



# Virtual research environments

## Virtual Laboratory & Innovations Centre



**Peter H.  
van Tienderen**

Interim Director of VLIC

Executive Board



**W. Daniel  
Kissling**

VLIC Scientific Coordinator



**Jacco  
Konijn**

Project Manager



**Zhiming  
Zhao**

VLIC Technical Manager



**Spiros  
Koulouzis**

Virtual Research Environment  
Developer



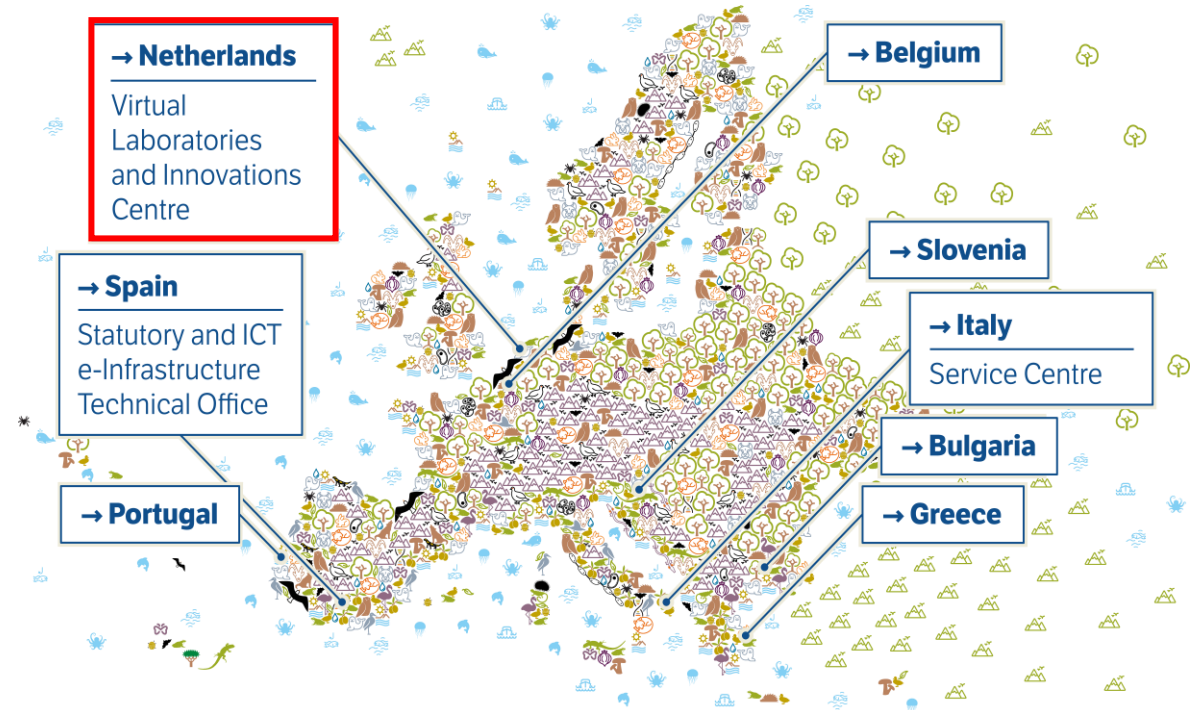
**Yifang  
Shi**

Scientific Developer for Ecological  
Applications of LIDAR Remote  
Sensing



**Joris  
Timmermans**

Scientific Developer for Essential  
Biodiversity Variables Workflows



# Virtual research environments

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Applications of LIDAR Remote  
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Joris  
Timmermans

Scientific Developer for Essential  
Biodiversity Variables Workflows



Received: 24 November 2021 | Revised: 21 April 2022 | Accepted: 3 May 2022

DOI: 10.1002/spc.3098

RESEARCH ARTICLE

WILEY

## Notebook-as-a-VRE (NaaVRE): From private notebooks to a collaborative cloud virtual research environment

Zhiming Zhao<sup>1,2</sup> | Spiros Koulouzis<sup>1,2</sup> | Riccardo Bianchi<sup>1,2</sup> | Siamak Farshidi<sup>1</sup> | Zeshun Shi<sup>1</sup> | Ruyue Xin<sup>1</sup> | Yuandou Wang<sup>1</sup> | Na Li<sup>1</sup> | Yifang Shi<sup>2,3</sup> | Joris Timmermans<sup>2,3</sup> | W. Daniel Kissling<sup>2,3</sup>

### Notebook-as-a-VRE:

- building a VRE by extending the notebook environment of end-users
- current design based on Jupyter, but other environments (e.g. R-Studio) can also be considered and supported

# Virtual research environments

## Component containerizer

- turns cells of python code into standardized RESTful API services and Docker containers to make them reusable (FAIR-CELLS)

## Experiment manager

- provides a workflow of services with customized data flow and data input

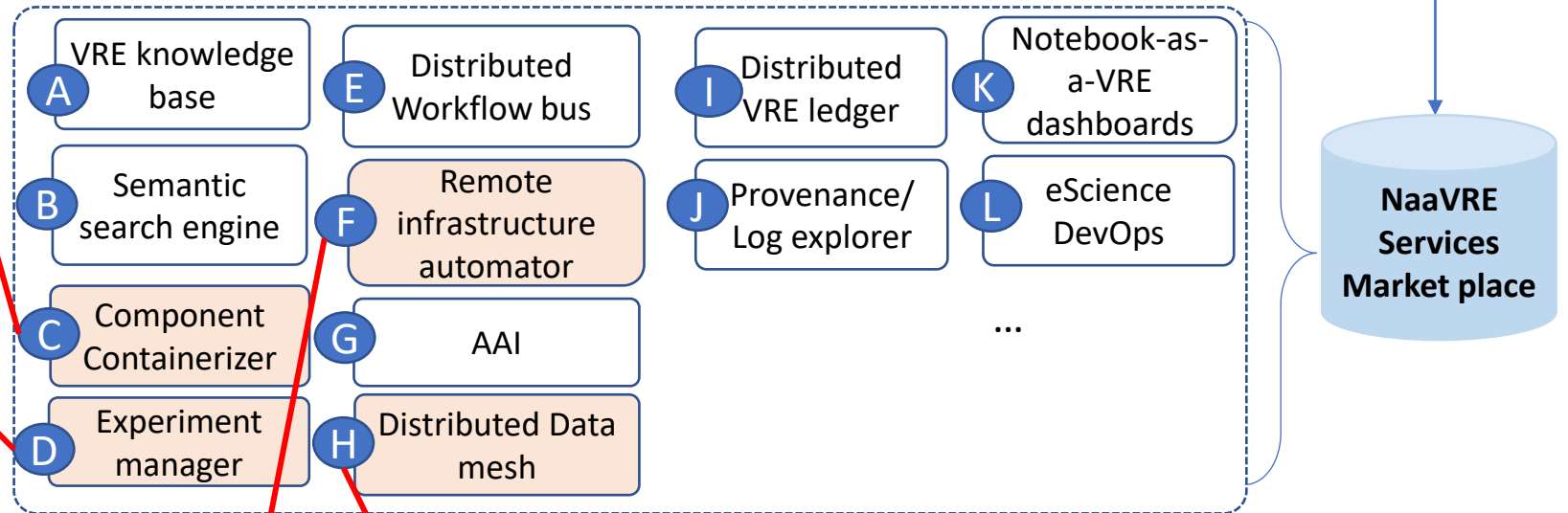
## Remote infrastructure automator

- automates the workflow execution on remote cloud environments (e.g. container deployment and workflow scheduling)

## Distributed Data mesh

- supports data management in the workflow (centralized option = WebDAV, decentralized option = IPFS)

## System architecture of NaaVRE



# Digital Twins of ecosystems

Simulation platform  
for complex  
(eco)system  
analysis



Digital  
Twins

Wadden Sea  
Ecosystem  
Digital Twin



Veluwe  
Ecosystem  
Digital Twin



Other  
Ecosystem  
Digital Twin

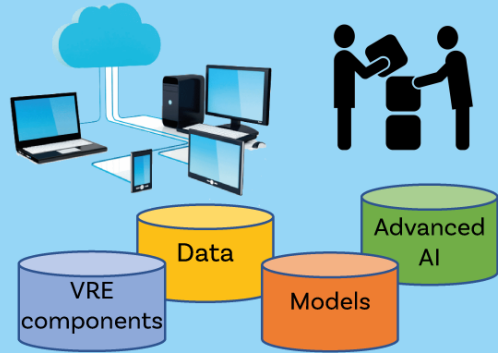


Interactive,  
collaborative,  
virtual research  
environment

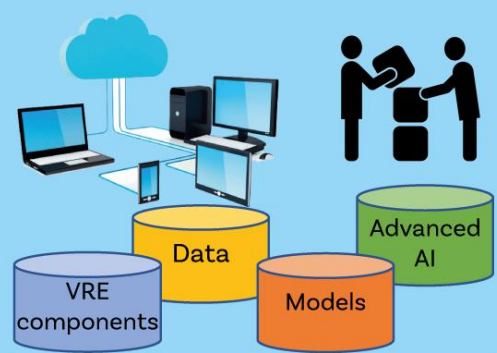


Virtual  
Laboratories

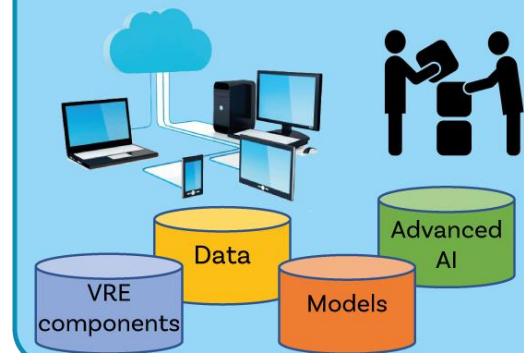
Wadden Sea Virtual Lab



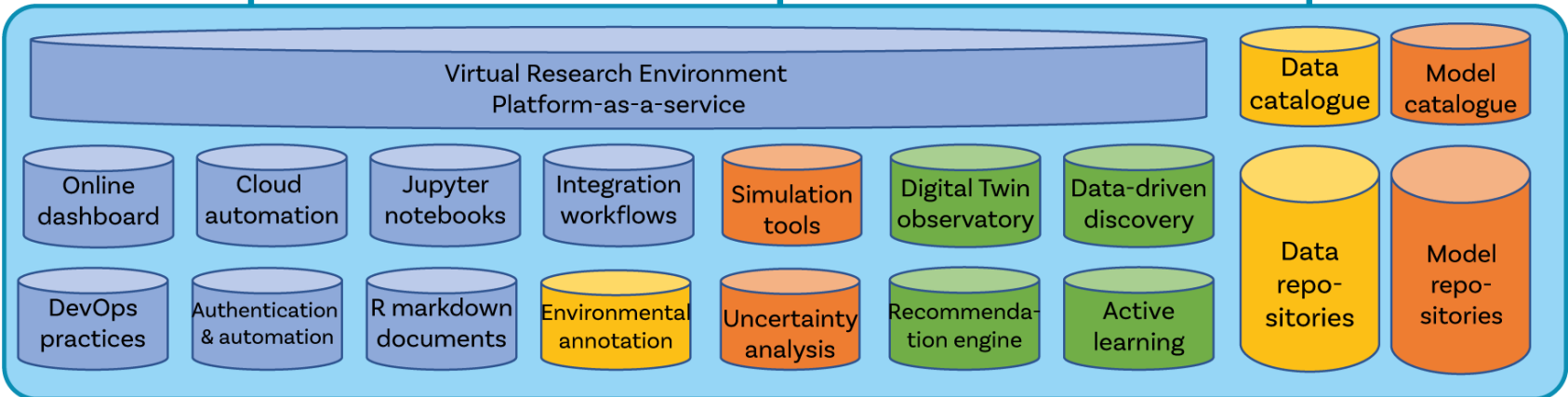
Veluwe Virtual Lab



Other Virtual Lab



Infrastructure  
services







UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM  
Faculty of Science



Institute for Biodiversity  
and Ecosystem Dynamics

# Biodiversity data workflows for Digital Twins

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**Thank you for your attention**



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