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Editorial: launching *Software Notes*

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Ecography is currently experiencing a very exciting time. The number of submissions is rising steadily (31% over the last two years alone) and we have been able to publish more and more excellent papers every year. This success has resulted in a substantial increase in the journal's impact factor, currently reaching 3.340 and *Ecography* papers are being identified as essential readings by the scientific community (e.g. Elith et al. 2006, Witt and Malaikal-Witt 2007, Dormann et al. 2007, Soininen et al. 2007, Araújo et al. 2008). We are constantly working to improve the quality of the papers we publish to enhance the relevance of the journal to our broad readership and keep it abreast of developments within the scientific community. In this issue, we are broadening the journal's profile by launching *Software Notes*, a section specifically tailored for reports on relevant software in the field of ecology. The first paper in this section, *RangeModel: tools for exploring and assessing geometric constraints on species richness (the mid-domain effect) along transects,* (Colwell 2008) appears in this issue. We look forward to seeing many submissions to the section in the near future.

Software Notes are brief, typically not exceeding 4 printed pages. The aim of the section is to provide readers with concise reports describing software of general interest to the readership of *Ecography*, and to offer authors of software a first choice outlet for their work. *Software Notes* are peer-reviewed, citable in a standard format, and their impact as measured by number of citations is, therefore, assessed on an equal footing with traditional journal papers. *Ecography* has a tradition of strong manuscript promotion and will now extend this to include software within its field. Manuscripts in this section will be given high priority in the publication process.

> Software Notes *announce new software or software already in use but not previously published in a peer-reviewed journal for the study of spatial and temporal patterns in ecology.* Software Notes *should provide a summary of the software that describes its benefits and potential application(s).* Software Notes *are published with high priority and the section is intended as an outlet for the very best software tools in spatio-temporal ecology. Products that are available only on a commercial basis will not be considered.*

Papers for *Software Notes* should fall within the general profile of *Ecography* and should be written according the following instructions:

> *Abstracts for* Software Notes *have a 100 word length limitation. Papers in this section have a 2500 word length limitation for all text, excluding tables and legends. Submitted notes should be subdivided only into an abstract, main text, acknowledgements, and references.* Software Notes *may include a maximum of three tables/figures. They should provide the basic rationale behind the software, its basic functions, and sample usage, output, and interpretation. A link to a persistent website where the software may be downloaded or used must be provided.* Software Notes *are not intended to replace proper user documentation, and the user's manual along with test datasets should be available from the software website. The section particularly welcomes user-friendly approaches.*

To ensure that software websites referred to in *Software Notes* will be accessible for years to come, the journal requires authors to establish a persistent internet address (PURL) for the software published in the journal. A step-by-step guide explaining how to do this is provided at the journal's PURL page <http://www.oikos.ekol.lu.se/ecoPURL.html>.

We look forward to what *Ecography* will become in 2008. Taken together, the journal's sections provide comprehensive coverage of today's leading research within our field. Because it is our firm belief that this year will see *Software Notes* establish itself as an essential part of the journal, it is with great pleasure we invite you to submit your best research to this, or to any of our other sections.

References

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