

Special Issue

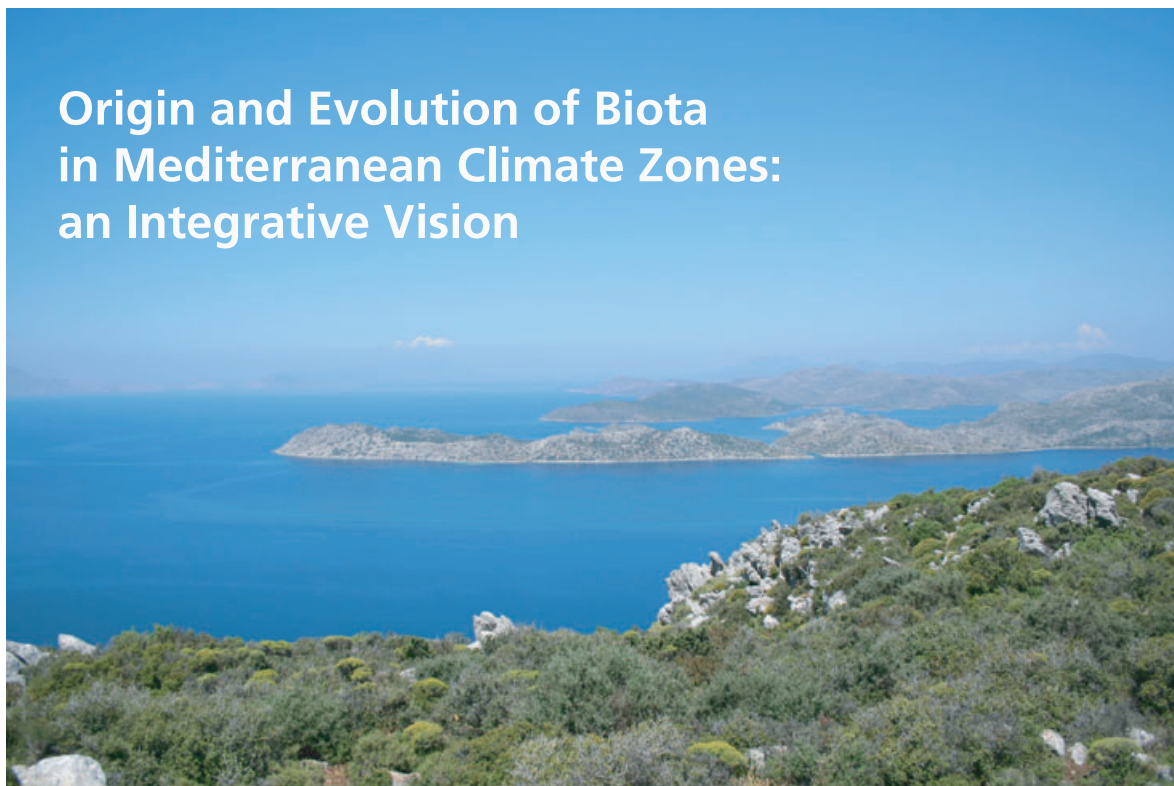
Origin and Evolution of Biota in Mediterranean Climate Zones: an Integrative Vision

The 15 articles in this Special Issue stem from a conference convened by Elena Conti at the Institute of Systematic Botany of the University of Zurich, entitled '*Origin and Evolution of Biota in Mediterranean Climate Zones: an Integrative Vision*', held on 14–15 July 2007. The Swiss National Science Foundation, the Science Dean's Office of the University of Zurich and the bioGENESIS core project of DIVERSITAS provided generous financial support for the meeting.

The conference was structured in four main sections: Methods, Macroevolution, Microevolution, and Ecology. By integrating evidence across multiple disciplines, including evolutionary biology, systematics, ecology, palaeontology, palaeoclimatology and palaeogeology, the speakers provided a uniquely multi-faceted perspective on the evolutionary processes that generated the exceptional species diversity of mediterranean-type climate zones. Twenty-five internationally renowned scientists presented invited talks, and students from all over the world contributed 53 posters on their research. The conference was attended by more than 150 participants from 18 countries in Europe, the Americas and Australia. The website <http://www.systbot.unizh.ch/static/mediterranean> provides detailed information about the congress, including the programme, abstracts, PDF files of selected presentations, and a photo gallery.

The papers in this Special Issue were subject to a standard peer review process and the contribution of the journal's reviewers and of the subject editors, John Birks, José María Fernández-Palacios, Christine Maggs, Pauline Ladiges, John Lambshead, Jens-Christian Svenning, Peter Linder, Jorge Crisci and Malte Ebach, are acknowledged with thanks.

Elena Conti and Robert J. Whittaker (convening editors), 30 March 2009



View of a typical Mediterranean environment, showing the Marmaris peninsula and Aegean Sea, 15 May 2006. Photograph: Guilhem Mansion.