

Zoom in to identify plants

Estimates of the diversity of plants change as the sampling area changes in size, concludes an international team that includes WUR scientists. Small areas, for example in the steppes of Eastern Europe and the Alps, can have a relatively high degree of biodiversity.

The true biodiversity can only be seen when species are counted in a lot of small sample areas. This method has advantages in the African tropics too. Species are spread over great distances and are not

always recorded when only one sampling area is studied.

That is why it was long thought that the African tropics do not have such an abundance of species as other tropical areas.

The team analysed a dataset with around 170,000 vegetation measurements in all the planet's climate zones. The conclusions were published in an article in *Nature Communications*.

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