

Dear Community,

greetings from now to NOW. Autumn has come and the world is still in this strange new mode, it looks like for long. But at least for NOW all is well.

I was delaying this letter hoping to announce NOW DOI. We are now really close to getting a permanent DOI, but not quite yet there. Very soon, hopefully. The challenge is the changing nature of the data. After many discussions with many experts it is now very likely that there will be a single DOI for NOW that will also allow to accommodate versioning (tied to the download dates). Stay tuned, more on this soon.

The last months were very active for the database in data editing. Many coordinators made edits or reported issues. It's wonderful to see the database so alive. So if you are using NOW data at large and haven't downloaded the latest version in the last half a year or so, it may be a good time take a newer version. The major curatorial efforts in the last half a year or so:

- The taxonomy of small mammals has been extensively curated and updated, many taxonomic names were synonymized (by Lars van den Hoek Ostende, Melike Bilgin, Isaac Casanovas-Vilar in consultation with many NOW coordinators responsible for particular groups), subfamilies added. This is still actively ongoing.
- Fields of Basin and Subbasin have been introduced to the database, they can be found at the bottom of the front page for each locality. Basin information was pre-filled, where possible, from ArcGIS data, but now onwards basin information remains editable and referenceable in a regular, please edit if necessary. (People involved: Wilma Wessels, Anu Kaakinen, Kari Lintulaakso, Mike Mechenich, myself and others.)
- The Vallès-Penedès localities have been tied to regional time zones and ages of localities updated to more precise (Isaac Casanovas-Vilar, Kari Lintulaakso and others).
- Ages and faunal lists of around 20 Miocene localities in China have been updated (Liu Liping, Anu Kaakinen, myself and others).
- More time unit bounds were updated, we have now updated the bounds of GCS ages, OIS ages, North American Mammalian units, as well as the European Mammalian units of Paleogene.
- We did scans for non-conservative species lists at localities to find where identified taxa and indet. of the same higher taxonomic affiliations were listed at the same localities without any additional information. After further investigation around 2000 of such entries were removed.
- We also did systematic search for potentially duplicate localities entered under slightly varying names. Around 20 of such cases have been merged or removed, mainly in Europe, several cases still remain to be curated and merged.
- Many case-by-case edits have been made in Europe, Africa, South America and Asia, in North America as well, in the last months by many coordinators, thanks to all.

Last but not least, warm welcome to two new members of the Advisory Board: Luca Pandolfi, the coordinator of Italy, and Chiara Angelone, the coordinator of Lagomorphs.

If you are contributing to the NOW anniversary volume next year, you must have received the news that the submission deadline has been extended until the end of his year. I still very much hope that we can meet in person in the anniversary meeting next year. If not, we'll improvise.

More soon. All be well,
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