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Short Communication

Congress of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology during Covid-19 Crisis

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INTRODUCTION

Stephen Stearns founded the European Society for Evolutionary Biology on August 28, 1987, in Basel, Switzerland, to provide a European focus to the Society for the Study of Evolution, which was primarily based in the United States. ESEB seeks to promote the study of organic evolution by encouraging exchange and communication within the evolution community, combating inequalities within the community, educating the public about evolution and why it is important, and lobbying policymakers to support evolutionary research and education. The list of 40 symposia at our upcoming ESEB congress in Prague reflects the breadth of our members' interests, as it ranges from sex chromosome evolution, evolutionary ecology of mating systems, cognitive evolution, and eco-evolutionary dynamics in invasive species to molecular evolution and antibiotic resistance evolution for senior researchers are all awards given by ESEB to promote careers and highlight the research of evolutionary biologists.

Description

After two years of online conferences and meetings, I'm mostly looking forward to seeing everyone in person and interacting with them not only through presentations with related discussions, but also by having coffee, drinks, and dinner together and randomly meeting each other in the hallways, as collaborations frequently begin in these informal settings. Furthermore, live meetings allow me to hear talks that I would not normally listen to online. For example, at the most recent live ESEB meeting, I was getting tired of moving between rooms when I heard an incredible talk on tRNA evolution that I would have missed otherwise, which led to a new collaboration. Climate change and human impact have a significant impact on almost all life on the planet, both on land and in water. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns, as well as light, acoustic, and chemical pollution, all have an impact on interactions between individuals within populations and species in all ecosystems. In turn, species interactions and distributions have an impact on ecosystems.

Crops and grazing land, for example, now cover more than 30% of all land on Earth, while intensive agricultural practises and overgrazing are major causes of desertification. Evolutionary biologists can help policy and management plans to mitigate overexploitation and desertification by analysing how genetic diversity within species affects various factors such as drought resistance or virus susceptibility, and how interactions between species affect food webs aboveground and belowground over time. Finally, we are currently in the midst of the sixth mass extinction event on Earth. Why is evolutionary biology so important in mitigating the crisis?

The pandemic has revealed that the way we conduct science is evolving. Indeed, we are currently adapting to this new reality. During this transition, we must first take care of our mental and physical health, assist one another, and adopt new practises to maintain our capacity to focus and promote resilience in our research practise. We've gone from a completely in-person model to almost entirely remote in a very short period of time. However, as part of this process, we adopted new practises that have the potential to serve as the foundation for a more international, collaborative, and Open Science model supported by technological advancements. "What do we want to keep for the future, and how?" is the question here [1-4].

Conclusion

The COVID19 crisis provides an opportunity for researchers and institutions to transition to a new hybrid model that integrates remote and in-person workflows, leveraging newly developed skills. It also provides us with numerous opportunities to address long-standing issues in academia, such as a lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion. To take the final steps and capitalise on the momentum, we must not only act individually, but also with the commitment and support of our institutions and research agencies. If we are successful in turning this new workstyle into routines, it could serve as a model for academic community reinvention. We should not pass up the chance to use many of the eight insights for conducting science as a foundation for designing the community in which we want to work.

Acknowledgment

None

Conflict of Interest

None

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