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Conference Abstract

# Mobilizing legacy data to eLTER: Mapping data resources and identifying community needs and preferences

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## Abstract

The legacy data mobilization for eLTER standard observations (SOs) initiative was launched in November 2024. This initiative aimed to map and ingest untapped data resources of six selected SOs across the continent into the eLTER Digital Asset Registry (eLTER DAR). The data mobilization also focused on profiling the data providers, their preferences, skills, and experiences when dealing with heterogeneous environmental data. To do so, all data providers had to fill out an Expression of Interest Form (EIF) detailing the data to be mobilized as well as their preferred practices and tools when managing datasets, and the current solutions employed for data storage. A total of 54 unique applications were received, with data providers from 13 different countries. Data providers were willing to mobilize data mostly from SOs related to meteorology, vegetation composition, and soil inventory geological characterization, which were present in more than 65% of the applications, while the SOs related to the aquatic

habitats were offered less often, with surface water algae (20% of the applications), and the physical chemical characteristics standing waters (27% of the applications). Analysis of the collected responses revealed that data contributors have a diverse range of experience levels, indicating a mixture of novice and seasoned contributors within the community. Most of the applicants do not have experience providing data to Research Infrastructures, with a few having experience with other RIs (e.g., ICOS and ICP Integrated Monitoring). The preferred tools for data management did not vary much among applicants, with most of the data providers relying on tabular data processing on Excel. Our findings highlight the necessity for tailored support to data providers and the need to develop flexible data ingestion tools to ingest eLTER data. The findings emphasize the importance of understanding the diverse experiences of data contributors and the necessity of developing user-friendly tools and resources that take account of their needs and provide training across the eLTER community. The insights gained from this study can serve as a foundation for future initiatives aimed at improving data management practices and enhancing the overall quality of ecosystem research across European RIs.

## Keywords

data stewardship; data management; Europe; long-term; environment

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## Conflicts of interest

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.