



Lichens as Bioindicators of Global Change Drivers

Guest Editors:

Dr. Pradeep K. Divakar

Departamento de Farmacología,
Farmacognosia y Botánica,
Facultad de Farmacia,
Universidad Complutense de
Madrid, 28040 Madrid, Spain

Dr. Lourdes Morillas

Centre for Ecology, Evolution and
Environmental Changes,
Faculdade de Ciências,
Universidade de Lisboa, Campo
Grande, Bloco C2, 1749-016
Lisbon, Portugal

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Message from the Guest Editors

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of ecosystems worldwide being affected by environmental stressors, likely as a consequence of global change.

Such alterations can have a strong impact on lichens, which are one of the most sensitive organisms to the environmental alterations, as their physiology is strongly linked to the atmospheric humidity. Moreover, they lack mechanisms to control their water and nutrient contents. For this reason, they are considered valuable ecological indicators of environmental factors such as climate change or air pollution, providing meaningful ecological systems to model and foresee the response of other less-sensitive organisms in the ecosystem. Soil lichens can have a large impact on key underground dynamics (e.g., nitrogen, carbon, and water cycling), and therefore changes in lichen communities could deeply affect other forest processes. This Research Topic seeks to improve our understanding of how lichens can contribute to disentangling the potential effects of global change, not only on lichen communities but also on key ecosystem processes, which is required for the establishment of environmental policies.





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Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. David S. Perlin

Hackensack Meridian Health
Center for Discovery and
Innovation, 111 Ideation Way,
Nutley, NJ 07110, USA

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Journal of Fungi Editorial Office
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