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Collembolan trait patterns with climate modifications along a European gradient: the VULCAN case study

Jonathan Bonfanti^a, Jérôme Cortet^a, Mickaël Hedde^b, Sophie Joimel^b, Paul Henning Krogh^c, Henning Petersen^d

a. Centre d'Ecologie Fonctionnelle et Evolutive - CEFE UMR 5175, Montpellier, France
 b. UMR ECOSYS, INRA, AgroParisTech, Université Paris-Saclay, Thiverval-Grignon, France
 c. Aarhus University, Department of Bioscience, Silkeborg, Denmark
 d. Natural History Museum, Mols Laboratory, Ebeltoft, Denmark



Introduction

What are the links between collembolan functional traits and climatic gradients at a large scale?

Gradients as temperature are known to play a role in collembolan communities sorting. For example, in the VULCAN project, long-term adaptations have been shown in the taxonomic structure of collembolan communities (Fig. 1).

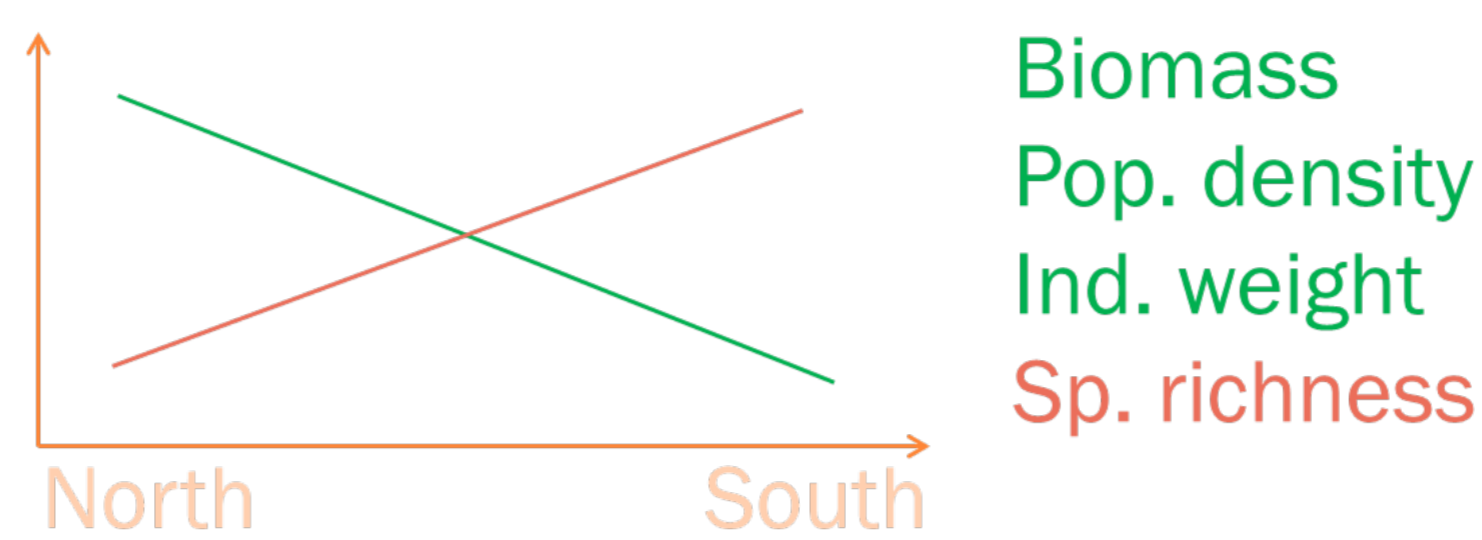
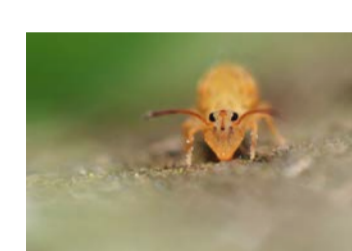


Fig. 1 - Latitudinal cline in taxonomic structure of collembolan communities (from Petersen 2011).

Work hypothesis

- ❑ We shall be able to establish functional profiles in collembolan communities along a North to South climatic gradient.
- ❑ At a large scale, climatic filtering will drive functional profiles characteristics.
- ❑ In the most constrained areas, functional profiles will converge and functional richness will decrease.



Methods

The VULCAN sites

- Shrublands
- Fauna samples include plant leaves, soil surface and soil
- 61 collembolan species
- North/South opposition in climate and in soil characteristics

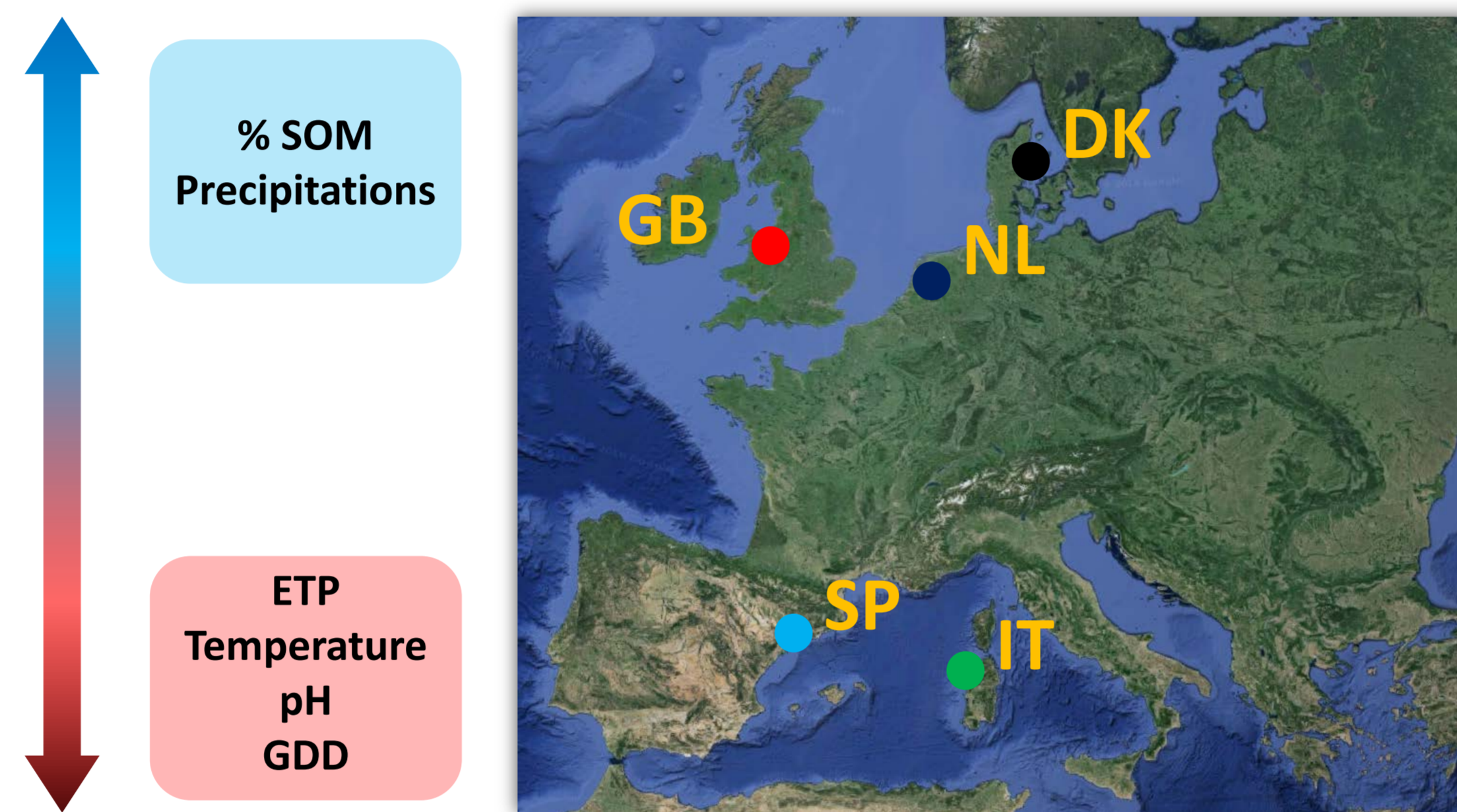


Fig. 2 - Location and main characteristics of the five VULCAN sites (from Beier *et al.*, 2009).

The trait-based analysis

2 collembola traits databases were used:

- BETSI.cesab.org
- SoilBioStore.au.dk

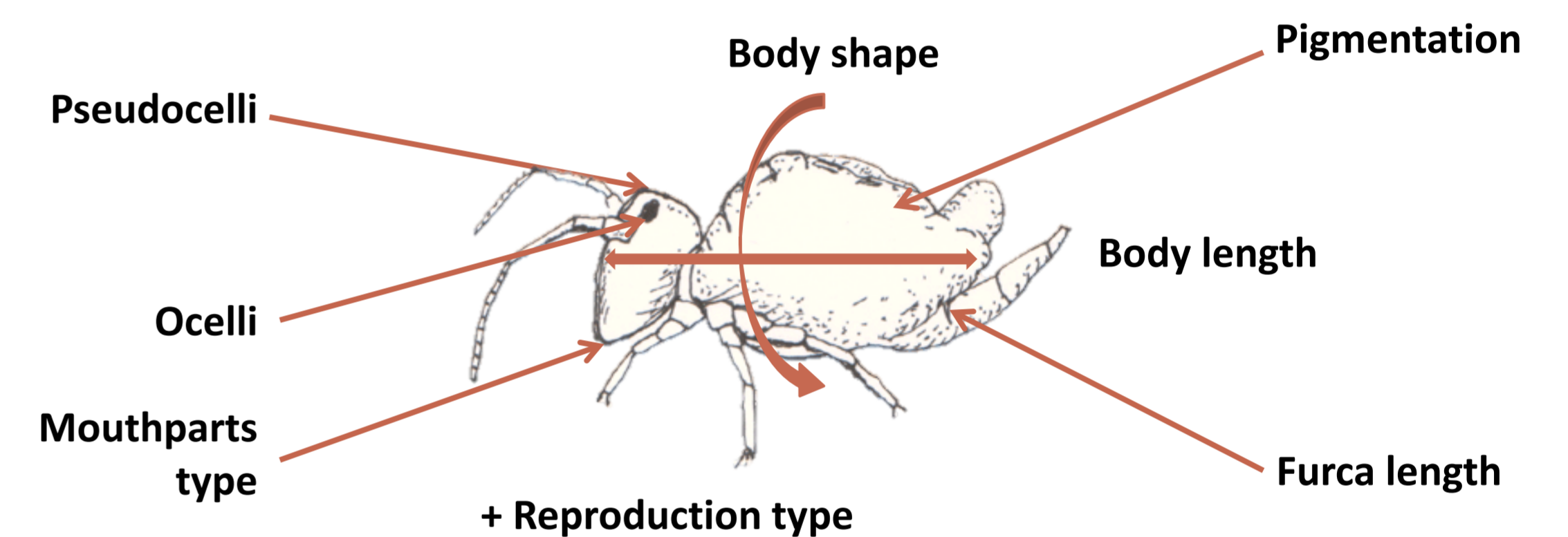


Fig. 3 - Traits collected from the databases and used in the analysis.



Results

Fig. 4 - Principal Component Analysis (PCA) representing Community Weighted Mean (CWM) of each trait and functional indices calculated for each community (n=25).

Axis 1 = 31.7% ; axis 2 = 25.5%

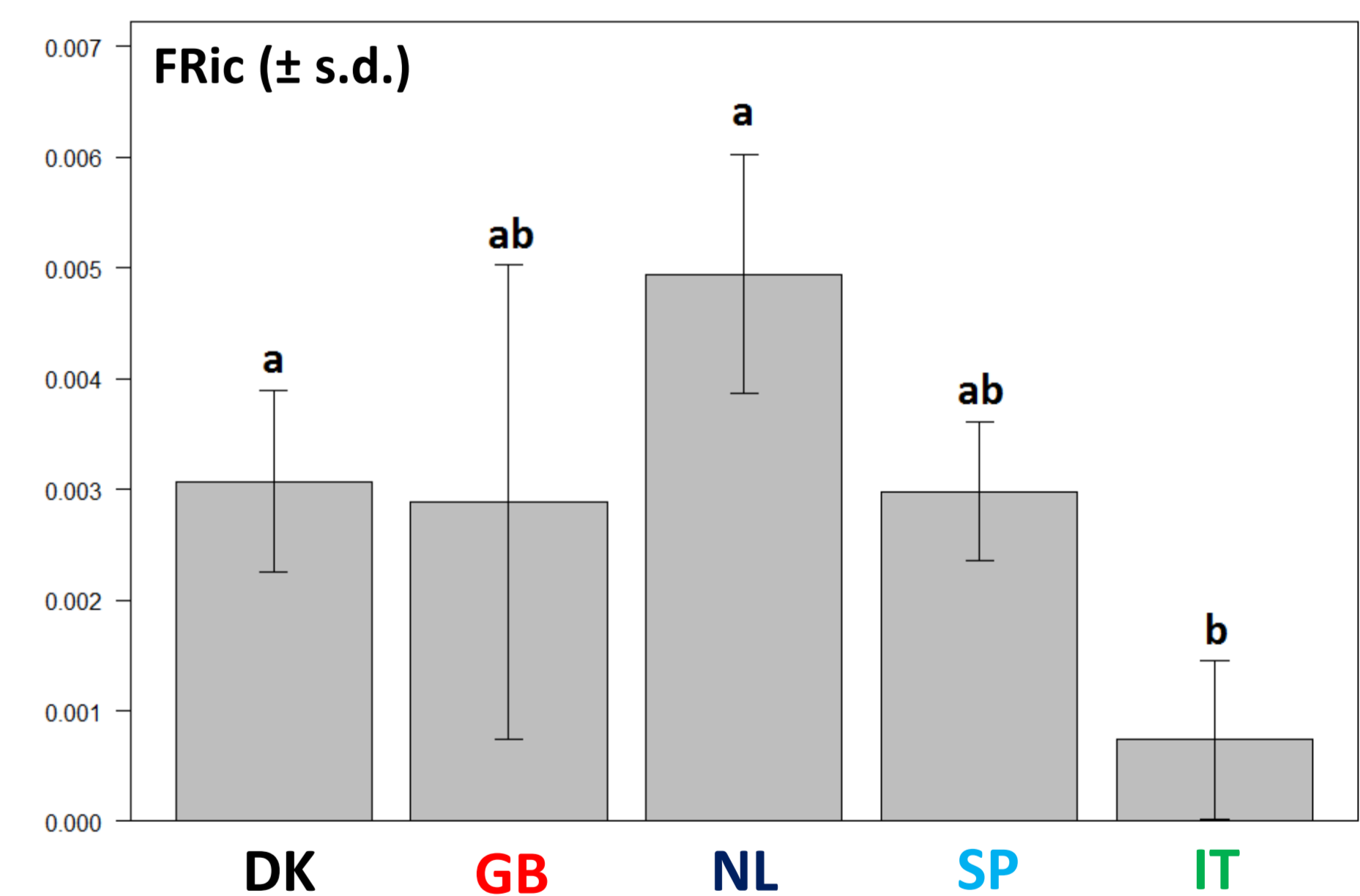
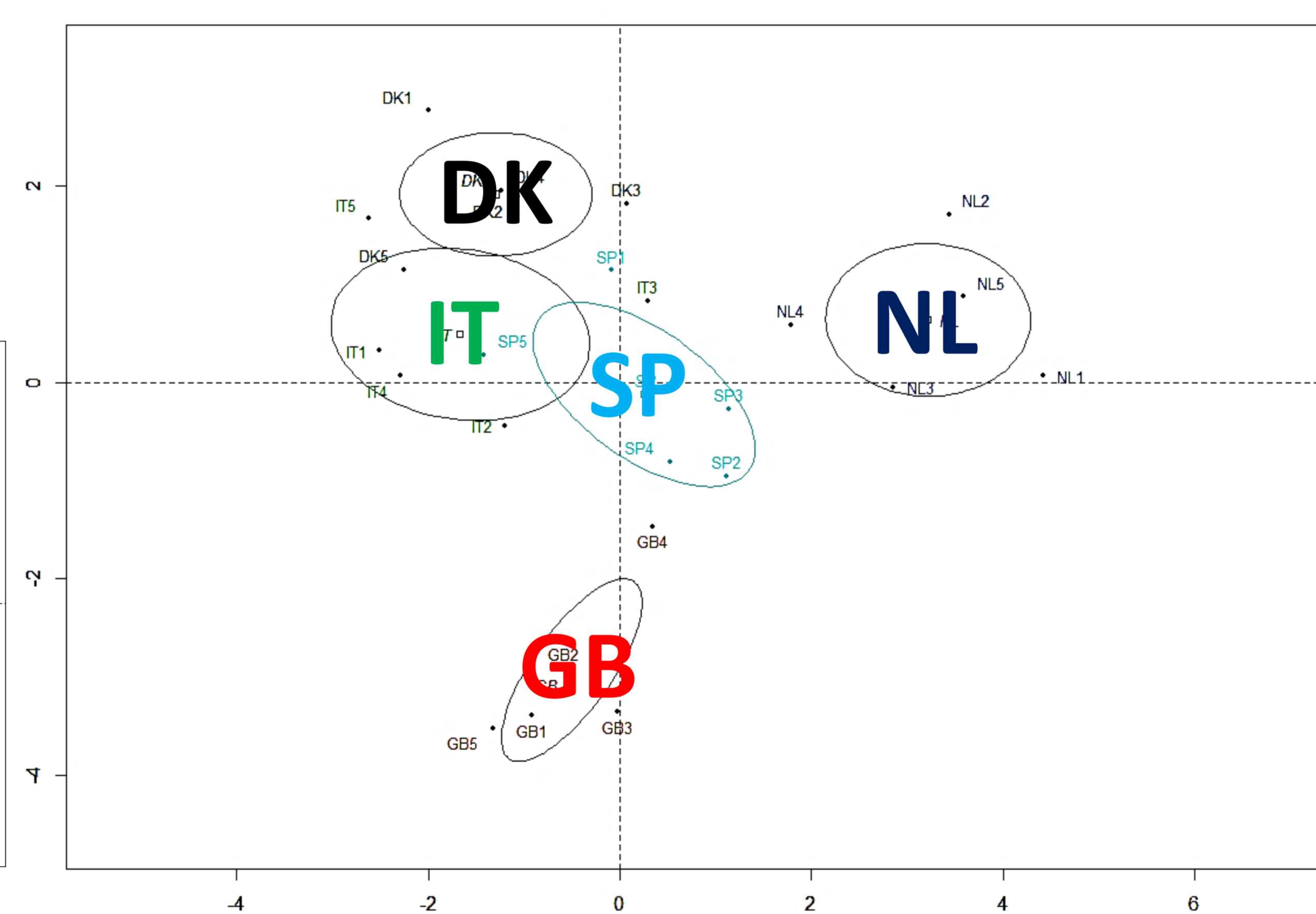
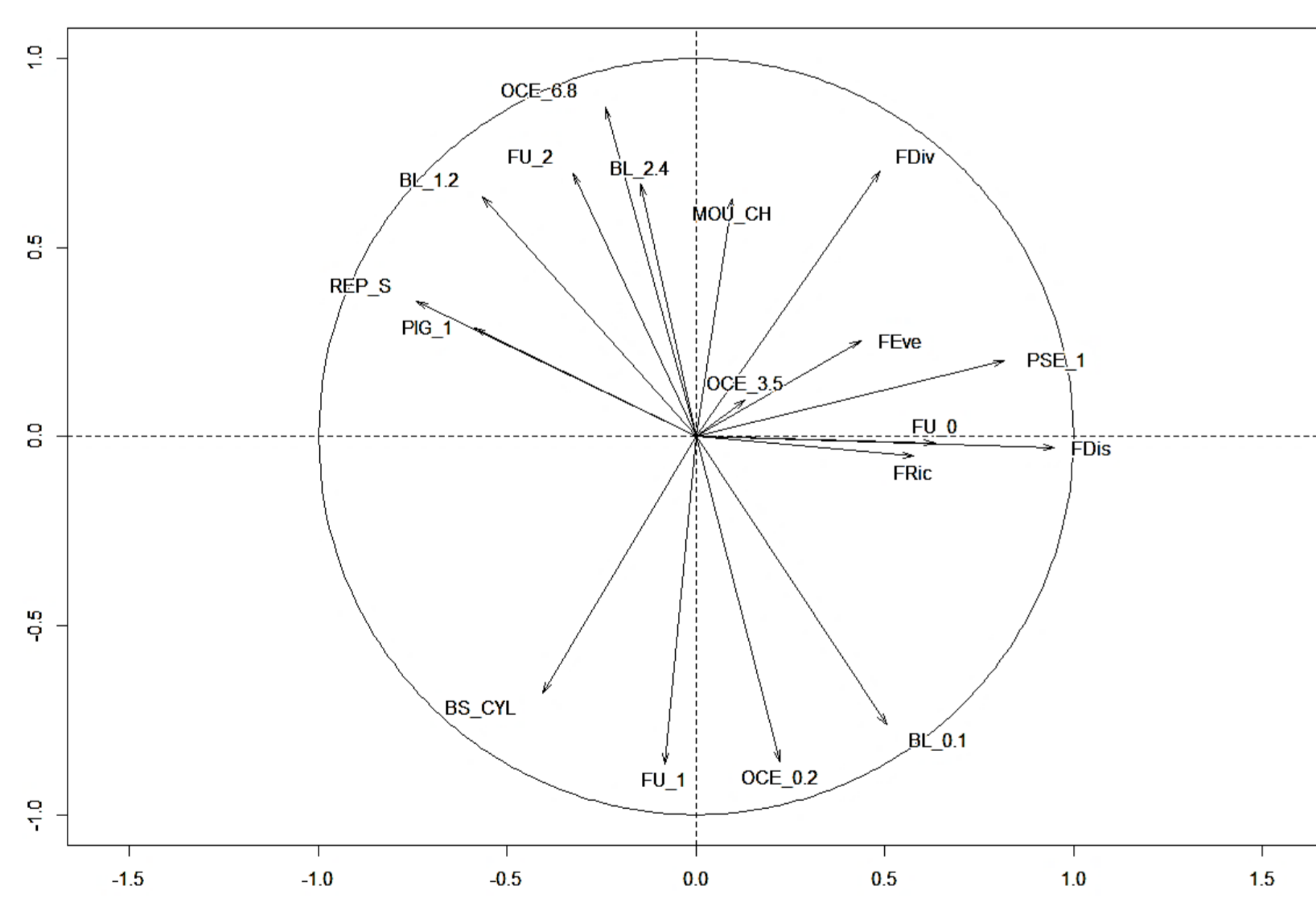
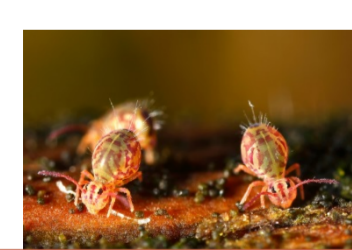


Fig. 5 - Mean value (± s.d.) of the Functional Richness (FRic) for each VULCAN site, ordered from North (left) to South (right). Significance level = 5%



Conclusions and prospects

- Highlighting different functional profiles was possible for each site at a community level.
- The North/South opposition remains unclear, and we observe a distortion of the functional profiles distances regarding to geographical distances.
- As expected, the more constrained sites (SP and IT) present the closest functional profiles, and FRic tends to decrease in these areas.
- Southern sites appear as subsets of northern-sites functional potentialities.
- Ongoing work: Exploring the trait shifts through collembola soil vertical distribution ; linking these results with vegetation traits.

Aknowledgments

- To the VULCAN project holders, for data accessibility
- To the BETSI database contributors, and the Tebis network (www.reseau-tebis.fr)
- To the SoilBioStore.au.dk database contributors

Contact

jonathan.bonfanti@univ-montp3.fr