

Madrid 14th of November 2023

Dear Dr. Goymer
Chief Editor, *Nature Ecology & Evolution*

We are excited to submit our manuscript titled **“Geographic patterns of living tetrapod diversity reveal the signature of global diversification dynamics”**, for consideration as an Article in *Nature Ecology & Evolution*.

The study of patterns of biodiversity constitutes the core of macroevolutionary research. Species richness patterns of many groups of the tree of life have been widely reported for decades, but in recent years we are seeing an increasing interest in the phylogenetic component of those patterns (phylogenetic diversity), given the importance of knowing the species relatedness to decipher the evolutionary processes that have shaped today's biodiversity. Furthermore, the phylogenetic dimension of diversity patterns has crucial implications for conservation studies, since preserving the evolutionary history (and not only richness hotspots) has become a priority to face the challenges imposed by the ongoing loss of biodiversity at a global scale.

In this work, we report patterns of a richness-corrected phylogenetic diversity metric (residual PD) for amphibians, squamates, birds, and mammals. Although these have been independently studied in the past, here we use recently published global distribution and phylogenetic data and, importantly, we interpret them in a common and comparative framework. This allows us to uncover particular regions and continents where patterns are congruent or different across tetrapod clades. This, in turn, enables a comprehensive search for the evolutionary and ecological causes underlying the patterns observed. We explicitly explore the relationship between residual PD levels and multiple factors: recent speciation rates, evolutionary time, and different climatic and environmental variables in the regions identified as extreme in residual PD. Our results reveal an important effect of recent speciation rates in the patterns we report, and further suggest that other factors, such as extinction dynamics and life history traits, might have also played a determinant role in shaping the distribution of species relatedness across the globe. Therefore, we consider our work as the basis of future research in this direction.

We are confident that the results of this paper, as well as its methodological and conceptual perspectives, are of great relevance for the community of evolutionary biologists and macroecologists. Moreover, the implications of this work go beyond the study of evolutionary processes, reaching an especial interest for those dedicated to study and design conservation strategies. In summary, we believe our work is a perfect fit for *Nature Ecology and Evolution*.

We have had no prior discussion with any *Nature Ecology and Evolution* editors about this manuscript. As potential reviewers we suggest Erin Saupé (University of Oxford, UK), Sara Varela (University of Vigo, Spain), and Daniel Rabosky (University of Michigan, USA). The three of them have a broad experience analyzing and interpreting global biodiversity patterns and are international references in the field of macroecology.

All authors have agreed to the content of the manuscript and its conclusions, and the paper is not under consideration elsewhere (please note that it has been recently posted in the preprint server *BioRxiv*: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.11.03.565445>).

Sincerely,



Héctor Tejero-Cicuéndez

"Juan de la Cierva" postdoctoral researcher
Department of Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution
Complutense University of Madrid (UCM)
C/ José Antonio Novais 12
28040 Madrid
hetejero@ucm.es