Madrid, December 14, 2023

Dear Dr. North

Editor-in-Chief, *Current Biology*

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 *Current Biology*.

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 have seen 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. These have been independently studied in the past, but here we use recently published global distribution and phylogenetic data and, importantly, we interpret them in a common and comparative framework to uncover particular regions and continents where patterns are congruent or different across tetrapod clades, an endeavor that has not been made so far to our knowledge. This 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 their levels of species relatedness. Our results reveal an important effect of recent speciation rates in the patterns we report, and further suggest that other factors, such as clade-specific extinction dynamics and life history traits, might have also played a determinant role in shaping this diversity pattern across the globe. Therefore, we consider that our work has the potential to open research avenues delving into these evolutionary and ecological patterns and processes.

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

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,

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