Dear editor,

Please find attached the manuscript entitled “**Historic collections as a tool for assessing the global pollinator crisis”** by Bartomeus, Stavert, Ward, and Aguado to be considered for publication in Philosophical transactions.

In this manuscript we highlight the use of historical information to serve as a baseline for identifying pollinator declines. We provide a synthesis of how researchers have used historical data to identify long-term changes in biodiversity, species abundances, morphology and pollination services and we show that despite recent advances, information on the status and trends of most pollinators is absent. Inportantly, we highlight opportunities and limitations to progress the assessment of pollinator declines globally and demonstrate different approaches to analysing museum collection data using two contrasting case studies from distinct geographical regions (New Zealand and Spain) for which long-term pollinator declines have never been assessed.

The manuscript is not being considered for publication elsewhere while it is being

considered for publication in this journal.

On behalf of all authors,

Ignasi Bartomeus.

Media summary:

There is a great concern about a potential global pollination crisis, but we lack robust data to infer the extent of this crisis. We propose here the use of historical collections vouchered in museums to gain robust evidence that allow scientists to unveil the magnitude of pollinators decline.