



Tad Dallas
Department of Biological Sciences
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
tdallas@mailbox.sc.edu

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Dear *Ecography* editorial board,

Please find the enclosed manuscript “***insectDisease***: programmatic access to the *Ecological Database of the World’s Insect Pathogens*”, which we re-submit for consideration as a research article.

Curated databases of species interactions are instrumental to exploring and understanding the spatial distribution of species and their biotic interactions. In the process of conducting such projects, data development and curation efforts may give rise to a data product with utility beyond the scope of the original work, but which becomes inaccessible over time. We present one such example, the “Ecological Database of World’s Insect Pathogens”. The R data package and manuscript text have benefitted from the comments of two reviewers and editor Dr. Michael Borregaard. These comments centered on the package structure and the presentation of the data. Specifically, the data required processing, but we were unaware of the current standard practice of having a **data-raw** folder and a processing script. We have incorporated this, and made more data checks – including the incorporation of unit tests in the package – to handle odd date issues, remove bad unicode characters, and provide some signal of potential error as these data will be augmented in the future with more records. The comments from all reviewers seemed to indicate that substantial revision was necessary, and we believe we have made substantial modifications to both manuscript text and R package structure. We thank the reviewers and the editor for their critiques.

I (the lead author, as I do not mean to speak for the co-authors on this point) am honestly curious in continuing this conversation, as there is a lot of nuance here. For instance, I thought having the documentation as plain text (.Rd) files in the ‘man’ folder would still qualify as FAIR since it is readable without having to install the package. This is a more minor point to my larger curiosity about the shifting landscape of package development, and how the tools for making packages seem to enforce a rigidity in dev and toolsets (e.g., pkgdown, etc.) outside of ‘devtools’ (and even ‘devtools’ is less a single package and more of a collection of packages now with a set of 19+ dependencies). What will this mean to future developers and the rate at which packages become deprecated?

We believe this article will be of interest to a broad range of ecologists interested in pest management, disease, species interactions, and more. In advance, we appreciate your consideration and assistance. Please don’t hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,
Tad Dallas