

Lijbert Brussaard: Traits and trait associations in biological communities as indicators for (changes in) ecosystem functioning and services. EcoFINDERS Traits workshop, Flörsheim, Germany, 18-19 February 2013. (Oral presentations):

For insight in responses of biota to environmental influences and subsequent effects on ecosystem functioning and services, insight is needed within broad taxonomic groups in trait associations at the species and community level that, e.g., predispose slow-growing, long-lived plants to nutrient-poor soil conditions.

Trait associations also exist *across* taxonomic groups, such as in food webs. Such associations may, e.g., lead to the so-called Home Field Advantage of litter disappearance. They also exist in chemical communication between species, both in trophic and non-trophic interactions. And they exist between taxonomically related and non-related species and their habitat characteristics, e.g. biotic legacy effects or legacies in soil structure.

However, it is also known that the *dissimilarity* of traits and trait associations is associated with ecological functioning in terms of the kinds and rates of processes that occur.

So, how can we contribute to the advancement of trait-based ecology and at the same time focus on traits and trait associations that are indicative for (changes in) soil functioning and ecosystem services in?