Monitoring rodent populations as bioindicators of global change

Small mammals in general, and rodents in particular, are key elements of ecosystem functioning. However, monitoring small mammal (and rodent) biodiversity is hampered by the lack of "universal" sampling protocols (and bioindicators), that preclude the application of standardised monitoring programs worldwide.

The symposium will try to unravel the factors that preclude the application of international monitoring schemes that are also yet well implemented for other focal groups (birds and butterflies). Furthermore, the symposium will evaluate the available information about the role that global change may be having on rodent abundance and its potential consequences (cascading effects or socio-economic consequences).

Some questions to answer:

- What are the problems associated to rodent monitoring?
- What are the species needed to monitor? Rare-endangered *versus* Common species
- What are the methods? Direct (live-trapping) *versus* indirect methods
- What are the key factors for establishing robust monitoring programs?
- Can we establish standardised rodent monitoring protocols at the international level?
- What do we currently know about the effects of global change (climate and land use change) on rodent populations?
- Can we use rodent bioindicators of environmental change?
- Potential cascading effects on ecosystems and socio-economic consequences of the effect of global change on rodent populations.

The ultimate goal of the symposium is to establish a monitoring protocol, or at least establishing guidelines, for developing monitoring schemes anywhere.

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