



CESAB
CENTRE FOR THE SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS
OF BIODIVERSITY

ISLETS

Island Leaf Ecophysiological Trait Synthesis

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Islands are home to a unique biodiversity, with numerous endemic species and traits that differentiate them from continental species. **This biodiversity is one of the most threatened on Earth, and invasive species are abundant on islands.**

Insular environments often have fewer species than continents, and species interaction networks are thus more simple. It is generally predicted that insular plants are therefore less competitive than continental ones, rendering them particularly vulnerable to invasions. **However, few studies have directly tested this hypothesis with competition experiments or species demographic analyses.** An alternative approach to test this prediction is through a comparison of functional traits that directly link to plant performance and competitive ability.

The ISLETS project will bring together an open access functional trait database, focusing on traits involved in resource use in island plants globally. This database will complement other databases that are already in place for continental species and will thus allow for new comparisons to improve our understanding of the unique evolution that occurs on islands. Moreover, functional trait diversity of island plants will enable new tests of the prediction that island plants are weak competitors, shedding new light on the widespread success of invasive species on islands.

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CESAB (CEntre for the Synthesis and Analysis of Biodiversity) is FRB’s flagship program and an internationally renowned research center whose objective is to implement innovative work to synthesize and analyze existing data sets in biodiversity research.

