



Lichens as Bioindicators of Global Change Drivers

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Message from the Guest Editors

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of ecosystems worldwide being affected by environmental stressors, likely as a consequence of global change.

Such alterations can have a strong impact on lichens, which are one of the most sensitive organisms to the environmental alterations, as their physiology is strongly linked to the atmospheric humidity. Moreover, they lack mechanisms to control their water and nutrient contents. For this reason, they are considered valuable ecological indicators of environmental factors such as climate change or air pollution, providing meaningful ecological systems to model and foresee the response of other less-sensitive organisms in the ecosystem. Soil lichens can have a large impact on key underground dynamics (e.g., nitrogen, carbon, and water cycling), and therefore changes in lichen communities could deeply affect other forest processes. This Research Topic seeks to improve our understanding of how lichens can contribute to disentangling the potential effects of global change, not only on lichen communities but also on key ecosystem processes, which is required for the establishment of environmental policies.





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