

You are here: [Home](#) > [UFRGS](#) > [News and Information](#) > UFRGS' Professor is the first researcher in South America to receive an honorary membership by the

IAVS

UFRGS' Professor is the first researcher in South America to receive an honorary membership by the IAVS

This is the highest award that the International Association for Vegetation Science can give to an individual member to recognize sustained contributions of extraordinary merit to the field

First published: 24/07/2020

Valério De Patta Pillar, Professor of the [Department of Ecology](#) at UFRGS' [Institute of Biosciences](#), is the first researcher in South America to receive an honorary membership by the *International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS)*.

The IAVS is a worldwide scientific association that gathers scientists interested in plant communities (vegetation) ecology, which has been the focus of Pillar's research for decades. The title is the highest award that the International Association for Vegetation Science can give to an individual member to recognize sustained contributions of extraordinary merit to the Association or to the field of vegetation science.

According to Pillar, his research contributes to the advancement of this field, especially regarding the development of methods for the analysis of plant communities and other types of organisms. "I have also contributed to scientific publications about biodiversity conservation in non-forest ecosystems, such as the South Brazilian Campos (grasslands)," he explains.



Pampa Biome (Rio Grande do Sul). Photo: Valério Pillar CC BY-SA 2.0

Besides that, Pillar has been actively involved with the IAVS since he was a doctoral student, in 1991, organizing scientific events and peer-reviewing. His partnership with the Association represents for the Brazilian scientific research in Ecology a collaborative network of worldwide researchers. The collaborative research themes cover the South Brazilian environmental history, the vegetation dynamic under climatic disturbances and land-use stress, the functional analysis of communities, the mechanisms underlying biodiversity community organization, biodiversity conservation etc.

"I collaborate with many researchers from UFRGS and other Brazilian universities who are active members of the IAVS in research projects. I also have a longtime collaboration with researchers from other countries, mainly from Germany and Italy," Pillar points out.

In the last decades, there has been a considerable increase in the quantity and quality of scientific articles in the field of ecology written by researchers associated with Brazilian institutions, which includes a significative contribution from those who study plant communities and their interactions with environmental factors and other types of organisms. "To understand the scope of this contribution, authors associated with Brazilian institutions published only a slightly smaller number of articles in the IAVS journals in comparison to those who are associated with German, American or Chinese institutions," says Pillar, highlighting that the Association is important not only to professors, but to students and young researchers in the field. "The community acts as a reference for the scientific development in plant community ecology, through scientific journals, annual symposiums and scientific excursions that facilitate the exchange of ideas on theories and applications of the science," he adds.

Since the award's creation in 1988, 17 people have received the honorary member title from the IAVS. Pillar is flattered that he is part of the list: "It's the first time that the title is bestowed on someone from South America."

The award ceremony would occur on July 2020, during the IAVS annual symposium, in Vladivostok (Russia), but was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The award ceremony was re-scheduled to take place in Madrid, in the 2021 symposium.

READ MORE

The International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS) is a worldwide union of scientists and others interested in theoretical and practical studies of vegetation: its composition and structure, history, classification, distribution, ecology, dynamics, management and uses in the landscape.

The main goals of the IAVS are to facilitate personal contacts among vegetation scientists all over the world and to promote research in all aspects of vegetation science and its applications. For more information, visit <http://iavs.org/Home.aspx>.

Valério De Patta Pillar is a Full Professor of the [Department of Ecology](#) at UFRGS' [Institute of Biosciences](#), CNPq research grant recipient (PQ-1A) and editor in chief of the *Journal of Vegetation Science* and *Applied Vegetation Science*. He holds a college degree in Agronomy from the Federal University of Santa Maria, a master's degree in Zootechnics (Forage plants) from UFRGS and a doctoral degree in Plant Sciences (Quantitative Ecology) from the University of Western Ontario. Pillar has experience in Community Ecology and Quantitative Ecology, mainly on phenotypic and phylogenetic patterns in community assembly, biodiversity and ecosystem processes, grassland dynamics, management, conservation, fire and grazing disturbance, paleoecology, global change, methods of multivariate analysis, permutation tests and other resampling methods.

Curriculum available at <http://lattes.cnpq.br/0395378007681283>

Translated into English by Betina Silva Rodrigues, under the supervision and translation revision of Elizamari R. Becker (PhD) – IL/UFRGS.

