

REPORT

Taxonomic training & access to collections in Belgium

NOTICE

The present questionnaire must arrive with the Belgian National Focal Point to the Global Taxonomy Initiative within one month of the official closure of the capacity building visits. Electronic submission on the general e-mail address of the Belgian GTI NFP (cbd-gti@naturalsciences.be) is strongly encouraged. If electronic submission should however be impossible, paper copies may be sent by fax or ordinary mail. The Belgian GTI NFP will acknowledge receipt of all project reports.

If grantees have **relevant pictures** to illustrate their capacity building visit, these may be annexed to the report. The Belgian National Focal Point might use some of these pictures in one of its reporting activities, but only after the copyright holder has given his permission.

Contact and further information

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PART I – CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Family name:	Pham
First name(s):	Hong Thai
Nationality:	Vietnam
Date of arrival and departure in / from Belgium	16 November/19 December
Number of training days:	30
Type of visit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainly training in taxonomy and collection management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainly access to collections <input type="checkbox"/> Other, <i>specify</i>
Location of training:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels <input type="checkbox"/> Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren <input type="checkbox"/> National Botanic Garden of Belgium, Meise <input type="checkbox"/> Other, <i>specify</i>

PART II - GENERAL INFORMATION

Describe concisely how you have learned about the Belgian GTI Project	I have learned about the Belgian GTI Project via Dr. Patrick Grootaert and Mr Jérôme Constant at the Department of Entomology, The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences.
Describe concisely how you have learned about this specific call for proposals	I have learned about this specific call for proposals via Marie-Lucie Susini, PhD, Biodiversity programme officer, Belgian National Focal Point to the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), Development cooperation and biodiversity team, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences by email. Its new call for proposal in regard to "taxonomic training and access to collections in Belgium".
If this was your first study visit financed via the Belgian GTI National Focal Point, describe concisely why you needed capacity building in taxonomy and collection management	
If this was not your first study visit financed via the Belgian GTI National Focal Point, describe concisely why you needed further support	Continuing to examine cicada materials not only from Vietnam but also from South East Asia countries that is deposited at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels (RBINS). It helps me a lot to complete the draft of an identification book of the Cicadas from Vietnam. We will publish this book in the series "ABC Taxa".

<p>Describe concisely what support (e.g. training, access to collections,...) you have received and how this training can be related to taxonomy and /or collection management</p>	<p>I have received the trained and the support for my research from Dr. Patrick Grootaert and Mr Jérôme Constant. They have allowed me to use a workspace, optical equipment, and access to the laboratory facilities of the Museum. I have learned from them many kinds of taxonomic works such as: building and illustration of identification keys; standardization of descriptions and of genitalia illustrations; techniques of dissection of the genitalia; techniques of illustration etc. By which, now I can do most of my cicada work independently. I also learn a lot about collection management (arrangement, sorting, mounting, deparatization...) and this is very important as we are currently building a reference collection at IEBR. Especially in this topic, the more I learn makes me realize that I still have a lot to learn.</p>
<p>Describe concisely how your gained capacity will help you in your professional duties</p>	<p>The proposed project was to produce a book on the Cicadidae of Vietnam and adjacent countries. It will contain a precise description and illustrations of the methods of collecting, mounting, dissecting etc of the Cicadidae. Those methods could easily be transposed to other families of Cicadoromorphs and Homoptera generally with little modification. The improvement of my taxonomic skills will make my work better and faster, and my better knowledge of collection management will greatly support my decisions concerning IEBR entomological collections.</p>
<p>Describe concisely how your gained capacity will be implemented in your institution</p>	<p>Institutional : the presence/building of identification capacities on cicadas and planthoppers and of an important reference insect collection will be of great interest for the institute, notably because it will lead to the deposition of type specimens in IEBR collections</p>
<p>Describe concisely what other support you eventually would need</p>	<p>The development of the reference collections in IEBR, together with the improvement of the identification and taxonomic capacities of the local staff will facilitate the study of the entomofauna. Those could also be used by researchers from close third countries like Laos or Cambodia. Our concern now is that, as the collection gets bigger and bigger, we need support to engage some technical staff (curators and technicians). Technical work is currently done by the researchers who mainly care for the groups they work on.</p>
<p>Describe concisely what infrastructural and human resources you and your institution eventually still need to become fully functional</p>	<p>The objective is to develop in IEBR a modern reference collection of national, regional and international importance, using the best international standards, and to provide material allowing state-of-the-art mounting and study of the specimens. We need better collections rooms (the ones we have are already nearly full, and technical staff to care for mounting, preliminary sorting of the specimens and arrangement of the specimens identified by the researchers.</p>
<p>Describe concisely how you think the Belgian GTI National Focal Point could further construct capacity for you and your institution</p>	<p>I know that I still can improve my skills in taxonomy and collection management. We have also recently engaged 2 new colleagues who could greatly benefit from formation in Vietnam via the GTI project of Mr Jérôme Constant, and also from formation at RBINS to improve their capacities in collection management.</p>

PART III – TAXON SPECIFIC INFORMATION

What is your taxon of interest	Arthropoda/Insecta/Hemiptera/Cicadidae/
Describe concisely the different methodologies for collecting your taxon.	<p>1) Aerial net: The aerial net had a handle made by meta-land its length could be changed from 2 to 7m depending on a specimen's perching position.</p> <p>2) Light trap: The light trap is designed to collect nocturnal insects. Almost all the cicadas are nocturnal in the Cicadidae. The light trap is powered by an electric generator, running two mercury vapour lights, each of them with an output capacity of 250w, and two fluorescent tubes each of 15w, and illuminating a white clothe measuring 3 x 4 m.</p>
Describe concisely how to best preserve collected specimens of your taxon for taxonomic purposes	<p>All specimens collected will be dried and mounted on stainless steel pins. They will be kept in wooden boxes, and protected from museum beetles and other insects by naphthalene, and keep in a room with low humidity (less than 50%).</p> <p>A freezer (that is provide by GTI) also used to kill insect pests when necessary, but it is too small to receive drawers.</p> <p>Whenever possible we keep one specimen per species or one leg for DNA study purpose.</p>
Describe concisely how you intend to make your taxonomic data available to other colleagues	<p>- Labeling the specimens using international standards (i.e. in English, with geographical coordinates whenever possible); arranging the specimens in the collections and databasing them so that they are easily accessible; sending lists of taxa (or photographs of curated specimens) to specialists around the world to encourage international collaboration to improve the collection; sending specimens needed by relevant specialists for further identification (some of which will represent new species). That material will be sent back correctly identified and included in the reference collection.</p>
Describe how your taxonomic work helps improving the status of biodiversity in your country	<p>Discoveries indicate that many additional cicada species await discovery in Vietnam, but that much more field work is needed to fully document the diversity of the region. Because many species of Vietnamese cicadas seem highly endemic, some may be very prone to extinction by deforestation. Therefore, more information is needed to determine the distributions of species so that conservation efforts can focus on the most vulnerable species. Moreover, because cicada diversity mirrors biodiversity overall, and is relatively easy to monitor, cicadas are potentially useful for programs aimed at monitoring the responses of biodiversity to changes in land-management practices.</p>

<p>Describe how your project could help reduce poverty in your country</p>	<p>The building of taxonomic capacities is the first step allowing any study of fauna, including pests and invasive species. Only good knowledge of the fauna will allow detection of events such as the introduction of pest species and that could lead to appropriate reaction in order to avoid major problems.</p>
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**Belgian National Focal Point to the
Global Taxonomy Initiative**