

Hosting of second Workshop on Biological Soil Crusts

Convenors: Fernando T. Maestre Gil and Leopoldo García Sancho (Spain)

Place: Residencia La Cristalera, Miraflores de la Sierra, Madrid, Spain. This is a beautiful setting in the mountains located 70 km north of Madrid. It is accessible with public transportation (bus) from the Madrid city center, which is easily accessible from the Barajas airport with bus, taxi and metro. The residence offers excellent accommodation and food service at a very reasonable price (today's price is over 60 € per person/day, including three meals and a room).

For information (in Spanish) and Pictures of the residence go to:

<http://www.lacristalera.com/>

For information of the environment and the surroundings (in Spanish), go to:

<http://www.mirafloresdelasierra.net/>

Potential dates: the best dates would be between mid April and mid May. Later may be too hot, and earlier may be quite cold!

Program: We plan a 3-day workshop, with two full days of talks and a full day excursion. The talks would consist of plenary talks (2-3 depending on the funds available) and contributed talks, in a similar manner as the first workshop carried out in Germany this year.

For the excursion, we would visit the Aranjuez experimental station in the morning, where we are currently doing some global change experiments involving BSCs, and the historic city of Aranjuez in the afternoon, where we can visit the Royal Palace (see <http://www.patrimonionacional.es/Home/Palacios-Reales/Palacio-Real-de-Aranjuez.aspx> for more info).

For pictures of the Aranjuez research station see:

<http://cid->

[7c7378054d754e55.skydrive.live.com/play.aspx/.Public/Sitios%20de%20estudio?ref=1](http://cid-7c7378054d754e55.skydrive.live.com/play.aspx/.Public/Sitios%20de%20estudio?ref=1)

Some papers derived from the BSC research that is being carried out at the Aranjuez Research station are:

Castillo-Monroy, A. P., F. T. Maestre, M. Delgado-Baquerizo & A. Gallardo. 2010. Biological soil crusts modulate nitrogen availability in semi-arid ecosystems: Insights from a Mediterranean grassland. *Plant and Soil* 333: 21-34.

Eldridge, D., M. A. Bowker, F. T. Maestre, P. Alonso, R. L. Mau, J. Papadopoulos & A. Escudero. 2010. Interactive effects of three ecosystem engineers on infiltration in a semi-arid Mediterranean grassland. *Ecosystems* 13: 499-510.

Maestre, F. T., M. A. Bowker, C. Escolar, M. D. Puche, S. Soliveres, S. Mouro, P. García-Palacios, A. P. Castillo-Monroy, I. Martínez & A. Escudero. Do biotic interactions modulate ecosystem functioning along abiotic stress gradients? Insights from semi-arid Mediterranean plant and biological soil crust communities. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 365: 2057-2070.

Delgado-Baquerizo, M., A. P. Castillo, F. T. Maestre & A. Gallardo. 2010. Changes in the dominance of N forms within a semi-arid ecosystem. *Soil Biology & Biochemistry* 42: 376-378.