

**Биогеография почвенных животных:
от первичного накопления данных к глобальному анализу**

К.Б. Гонгальский

Институт проблем экологии и эволюции им. А.Н. Северцова РАН, Москва,
Московский государственный университет, Москва,
gongalsky@gmail.com

[К.В. Gongalsky. The biogeography of soil animals: from initial accumulation of data to a global synthesis]

Почвы являются одним из основных резервуаров биоразнообразия. Почвенная биота организуется в сложные пищевые сети, которые стимулируют активный круговорот биогенных и микроэлементов, и таким образом контролируют многочисленные экосистемные функции почвы. Однако в силу слабой изученности отдельных блоков почвенных пищевых сетей далеко не всегда возможна корректная оценка её функциональной роли в экосистемах. Глобальные климатические изменения могут привести к существенным изменениям объёма выполняемых экосистемных функций почвенной биотой на территории России. Необходимо иметь количественные данные, чтобы предсказывать угрозы и управлять связанными с ними рисками. При этом география почвенной биоты в последние десятилетия привлекает к себе всё возрастающее внимание. Одновременно необходимы анализ и синтез имеющихся экологических и фаунистических знаний о почвенных организмах со сведениями о физико-географических условиях, в которых они обитают.

На основе личных и литературных материалов разработано несколько баз данных по распространению почвенных животных на территории России. Объединение их с глобальными базами данных даёт возможность получать результаты для крупных территорий вплоть до всего Земного шара. В частности, в соавторстве с учеными из Немецкого центра интегративных исследований биоразнообразия (iDiv), Лейпцигского университета и многих других организаций собрана самая большая в мире база данных о дождевых червях, которая охватила 6928 точек в 57 странах (Phillips et al., 2019).

Показано, что в умеренных широтах локальное разнообразие дождевых червей выше, чем в тропиках (Phillips et al., 2019). Глобальное изменение климата может привести к значительным изменениям в сообществах дождевых червей во всем мире, угрожая многим функциям, которые они выполняют. Модели почвенного биоразнообразия не соответствуют тем, которые наблюдаются для наземных организмов. Наибольшее разнообразие дождевых червей было обнаружено в Европе, на северо-востоке США и в Новой Зеландии. Аналогичные закономерности были обнаружены для численности

(количество особей на площадь) и биомассы (масса на единицу площади) дождевых червей, также демонстрируя самые высокие значения в умеренных регионах (Phillips et al., 2019).

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BIOGEOGRAPHY

Global distribution of earthworm diversity

Helen R. P. Phillips^{1,2*}, Carlos A. Guerra^{1,3}, Marie L. C. Bartz⁴, Maria J. I. Briones⁵, George Brown⁶, Thomas W. Crowther⁷, Olga Ferlian^{1,2}, Konstantin B. Gongalsky^{8,9}, Johan van den Hoogen⁷, Julia Krebs^{1,2}, Alberto Orgiazzi¹⁰, Devin Routh⁷, Benjamin Schwarz¹¹, Elizabeth M. Bach^{12,13}, Joanne Bennett^{1,3}, Ulrich Brose^{1,14}, Thibaud Decaëns¹⁵, Birgitta König-Ries^{1,16}, Michel Loreau¹⁷, Jérôme Mathieu¹⁸, Christian Mulder¹⁹, Wim H. van der Putten^{20,21}, Kelly S. Ramirez²⁰, Matthias C. Rillig^{22,23}, David Russell²⁴, Michiel Rutgers²⁵, Madhav P. Thakur²⁰, Franciska T. de Vries²⁶, Diana H. Wall^{12,13}, David A. Wardle²⁷, Miwa Arai²⁸, Fredrick O. Ayuke²⁹, Geoff H. Baker³⁰, Robin Beauséjour³¹, José C. Bedano³², Klaus Birkhofer³³, Eric Blanchart³⁴, Bernd Blossey³⁵, Thomas Bolger^{36,37}, Robert L. Bradley³¹, Mac A. Callahan³⁸, Yvan Capowiez³⁹, Mark E. Caulfield⁴⁰, Amy Choi⁴¹, Felicity V. Crotty^{42,43}, Andrea Dávalos^{35,44}, Dario J. Diaz Cosin⁴⁵, Anahí Dominguez³², Andrés Esteban Duhour⁴⁶, Nick van Eekeren⁴⁷, Christoph Emmerling⁴⁸, Liliana B. Falco⁴⁹, Rosa Fernández⁵⁰, Steven J. Fonte⁵¹, Carlos Fragoso⁵², André L. C. Franco¹², Martine Fugère³¹, Abegail T. Fusilero^{53,54}, Shaieste Gholami⁵⁵, Michael J. Gundale⁵⁶, Mónica Gutiérrez López⁴⁵, Davorka K. Hackenberger⁵⁷, Luis M. Hernández⁵⁸, Takuo Hishi⁵⁹, Andrew R. Holdsworth⁶⁰, Martin Holmstrup⁶¹, Kristine N. Høpfensperger⁶², Esperanza Huerta Lwanga^{63,64}, Veikko Huhta⁶⁵, Tunsisa T. Hurisso^{51,66}, Basil V. Iannone III⁶⁷, Madalina Iordache⁶⁸, Monika Joschko⁶⁹, Nobuhiro Kaneko⁷⁰, Radoslava Kanianska⁷¹, Aidan M. Keith⁷², Courtland A. Kelly⁵¹, Maria L. Kernecker⁷³, Jonatan Klaminder⁷⁴, Armand W. Koné⁷⁵, Yahya Kooch⁷⁶, Sanna T. Kukkonen⁷⁷, H. Lalhanzara⁷⁸, Daniel R. Lammell^{23,79}, Iurii M. Lebedev^{8,9}, Yiqing Li⁸⁰, Juan B. Jesus Lidon⁴⁵, Noa K. Lincoln⁸¹, Scott R. Loss⁸², Raphael Marichal⁸³, Radim Matula⁸⁴, Jan Hendrik Moos^{85,86}, Gerardo Moreno⁸⁷, Alejandro Morón-Ríos⁸⁸, Bart Muys⁸⁹, Johan Neiryck⁹⁰, Lindsey Norgrove⁹¹, Marta Novo⁴⁵, Visa Nuutinen⁹², Victoria Nuzzo⁹³, Mujeeb Rahman⁹⁴, Johan Pansu^{95,96}, Shishir Paudel⁹², Guénola Pérès⁹⁷, Lorenzo Pérez-Camacho⁹⁸, Raúl Piñeiro⁹⁹, Jean-François Ponge¹⁰⁰, Muhammad Imtiaz Rashid^{101,102}, Salvador Rebollo⁹⁸, Javier Rodeiro-Iglesias¹⁰³, Miguel Á. Rodríguez¹⁰⁴, Alexander M. Roth^{105,106}, Guillaume X. Rousseau^{58,107}, Anna Rozen¹⁰⁸, Ehsan Sayad⁵⁵, Loes van Schaik¹⁰⁹, Bryant C. Scharenbroch¹¹⁰, Michael Schirrmann¹¹¹, Olaf Schmidt^{37,112}, Boris Schröder^{22,113}, Julia Seeber^{114,115}, Maxim P. Shashkov^{116,117}, Jaswinder Singh¹¹⁸, Sandy M. Smith¹¹⁹, Michael Steinwandter¹¹⁵, José A. Talavera¹²⁰, Dolores Trigo⁴⁵, Jiro Tsukamoto¹²¹, Anne W. de Valença¹²², Steven J. Vanek⁵¹, Iñigo Virto¹²³, Adrian A. Wackett¹²⁴, Matthew W. Warren¹²⁵, Nathaniel H. Wehr¹²⁶, Joann K. Whalen¹²⁷, Michael B. Wironen¹²⁸, Volkmar Wolters¹²⁹, Irina V. Zenkova¹³⁰, Weixin Zhang¹³¹, Erin K. Cameron^{132,133†}, Nico Eisenhauer^{1,2†}

Soil organisms, including earthworms, are a key component of terrestrial ecosystems. However, little is known about their diversity, their distribution, and the threats affecting them. We compiled a global dataset of sampled earthworm communities from 6928 sites in 57 countries as a basis for predicting patterns in earthworm diversity, abundance, and biomass. We found that local species richness and abundance typically peaked at higher latitudes, displaying patterns opposite to those observed in aboveground organisms. However, high species dissimilarity across tropical locations may cause diversity across the entirety of the tropics to be higher than elsewhere. Climate variables were found to be more important in shaping earthworm communities than soil properties or habitat cover. These findings suggest that climate change may have serious implications for earthworm communities and for the functions they provide.

Soils harbor high biodiversity and are responsible for a wide range of ecosystem functions and services upon which terrestrial life depends (1). Despite calls for large-scale biogeographic studies of soil organisms (2), global biodiversity patterns remain relatively unknown, with most efforts focused on soil microbes (3–5). Consequently, the drivers of soil biodiversity, particularly soil fauna, remain unknown at the global scale.

Furthermore, our ecological understanding of global biodiversity patterns [e.g., latitudinal diversity gradients (6)] is largely based on the distribution of aboveground taxa. Yet many soil organisms have shown global diversity patterns that differ from above-

ground organisms (3, 7–9), although the patterns often depend on the size of the soil organism (10).

Here, we analyzed global patterns in earthworm diversity, total abundance, and total biomass (hereafter “community metrics”). Earthworms are considered ecosystem engineers (11) in many habitats and also provide a variety of vital ecosystem functions and services (12). The provisioning of ecosystem functions by earthworms likely depends on the abundance, biomass, and ecological group of the earthworm species (13, 14). Consequently, understanding global patterns in community metrics for earthworms is critical for predicting how changes in their communities may alter ecosystem functioning.

Small-scale field studies have shown that soil properties such as pH and soil carbon influence earthworm diversity (11, 15, 16). For example, lower pH values constrain the diversity of earthworms by reducing calcium availability (17), and soil carbon provides resources that sustain earthworm diversity and population sizes (11). Alongside many interacting soil properties (15), a variety of other drivers can shape earthworm diversity, such as climate and habitat cover (11, 18, 19). However, to date, no framework has integrated a comprehensive set of environmental drivers of earthworm communities to identify the most important ones at a global scale.

Previous reviews suggested that earthworms may have high diversity across the tropics as a result of high endemism (10). However, this high regional diversity may not be captured by local-scale metrics. Alternatively, in the temperate region, local diversity may be higher (20) but may include fewer endemic species (10). We anticipate that earthworm community metrics (particularly diversity) will not follow global patterns seen aboveground, and instead, as seen across Europe (15), will increase with latitude. This finding would be consistent with previous studies at regional scales, which showed that the species richness of earthworms increases with latitude (19). Because of the relationship among earthworm communities, habitat cover, and soil properties on local scales, we expect soil properties (e.g., pH and soil organic carbon) to be key environmental drivers of earthworm communities.

Here, we present global maps predicting local diversity (number of species), abundance, and biomass. (We use “local” in the sense of site-level: a location of one or more samples that adequately captured the earthworm community.) We collated 180 datasets from the literature and unpublished field studies (164 and 16, respectively) to create a dataset spanning 57 countries (all continents except Antarctica) and 6928 sites (Fig. 1A). We explored spatial patterns of earthworm communities and determined the environmental drivers that shape earthworm biodiversity. We then used the relationships between earthworm community metrics and environmental drivers (table S1) to predict local earthworm communities across the globe.

Three generalized linear mixed-effects models were constructed, one for each of the three community metrics: species richness (calculated within a site), abundance per m², and biomass per m². Each model contained 12 environmental variables as main effects (table S2), which were grouped into six themes; “soil,” “precipitation,” “temperature,” “water retention,” “habitat cover,” and “elevation” [habitat cover and some soil variables were measured in the field; the remaining variables were extracted from global data layers

based on the geographic coordinates of the sites (24)]. Within each theme, each model contained interactions between the variables. After model simplification, all models retained most of the original variables, but some interactions were removed (table S3).

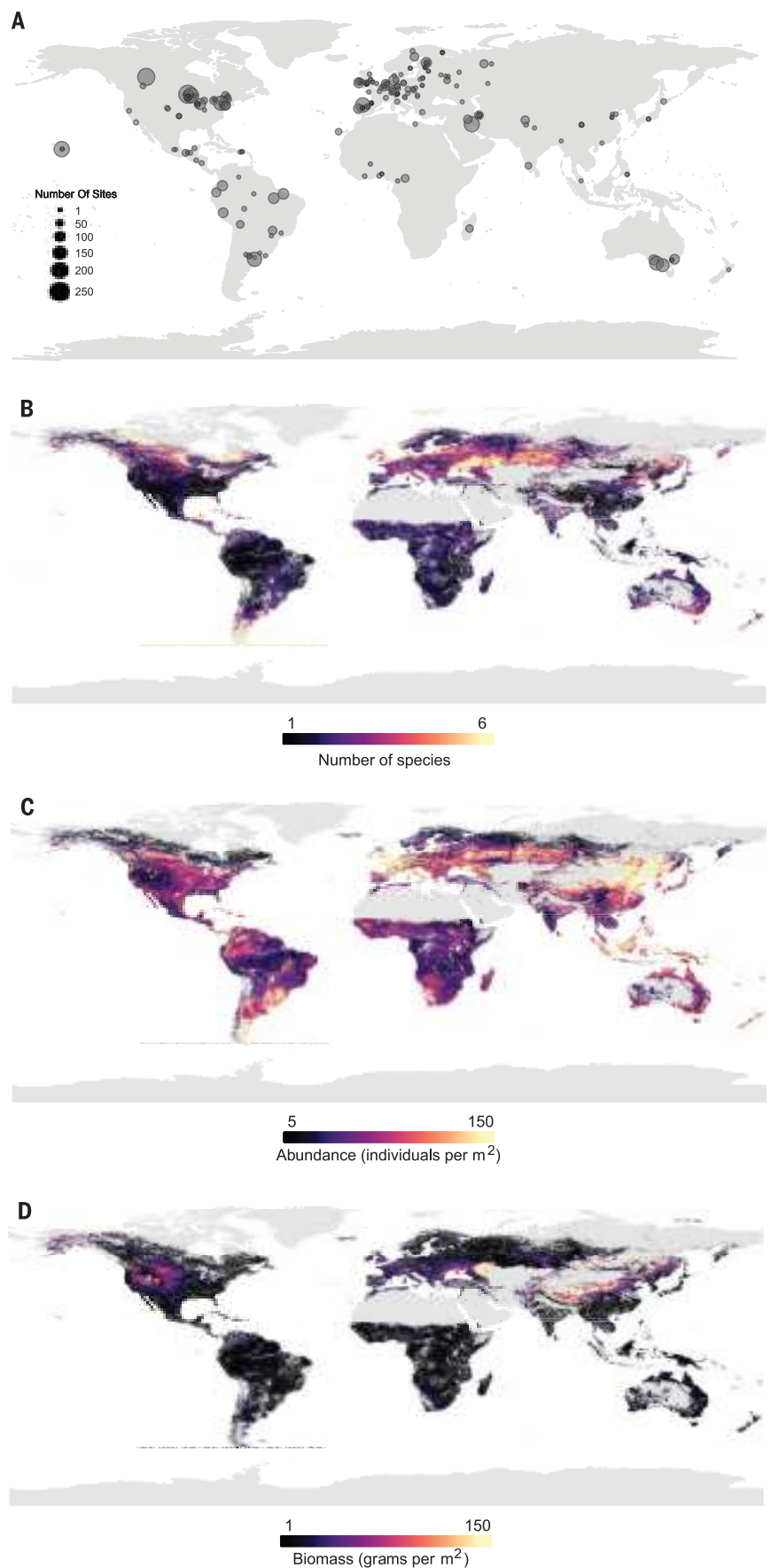
Consistent with previous results (20), local earthworm diversity predictions based on global environmental data layers resulted in estimates of one to four species per site across most of the terrestrial surface (Fig. 1B) (mean, 2.42 species; SD, 2.19). Most of the boreal and

subarctic regions were predicted to have low values of species richness, which is in line with aboveground biodiversity patterns (21, 22). However, low local diversity also occurred in subtropical and tropical areas, such as Brazil, India, and Indonesia, in contrast to commonly

¹German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig, 04103 Leipzig, Germany. ²Institute of Biology, Leipzig University, 04103 Leipzig, Germany. ³Institute of Biology, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, 06108 Halle (Saale), Germany. ⁴Universidade Positivo, Curitiba, PR 81280-330, Brazil. ⁵Departamento de Ecología y Biología Animal, Universidad de Vigo, 36310 Vigo, Spain. ⁶Embrapa Forestry, Colombo, PR 83411-000, Brazil. ⁷Crowther Lab, Department of Environmental Systems Science, Institute of Integrative Biology, ETH Zürich, 8092 Zürich, Switzerland. ⁸A. N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow 119071, Russia. ⁹M. V. Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow 119991, Russia. ¹⁰European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy. ¹¹Biometry and Environmental System Analysis, University of Freiburg, 79106 Freiburg, Germany. ¹²Department of Biology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA. ¹³Global Soil Biodiversity Initiative and School of Global Environmental Sustainability, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA. ¹⁴Institute of Biodiversity, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, 07743 Jena, Germany. ¹⁵CEFE, UMR 5175, CNRS–Univ Montpellier–Univ Paul–Valéry–EPHE–SupAgro Montpellier–INRA–IRD, 34293 Montpellier Cedex 5, France. ¹⁶Institute of Computer Science, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, 07743 Jena, Germany. ¹⁷Centre for Biodiversity Theory and Modeling, Theoretical and Experimental Ecology Station, CNRS, 09200 Moulis, France. ¹⁸Sorbonne Université, CNRS, UPEC, Paris 7, INRA, IRD, Institut d'Ecologie et des Sciences de l'Environnement de Paris, F-75005 Paris, France. ¹⁹Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences, University of Catania, 95124 Catania, Italy. ²⁰Department of Terrestrial Ecology, Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW), 6700 AB Wageningen, Netherlands. ²¹Laboratory of Nematology, Department of Plant Sciences, Wageningen University and Research, 6708 PB Wageningen, Netherlands. ²²Berlin-Brandenburg Institute of Advanced Biodiversity Research (BBIB), 14195 Berlin, Germany. ²³Institute of Biology, Freie Universität Berlin, 14195 Berlin, Germany. ²⁴Department of Soil Zoology, Senckenberg Museum for Natural History Görlitz, 02826 Görlitz, Germany. ²⁵National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Bilthoven, Netherlands. ²⁶Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics, University of Amsterdam, 1012 WX Amsterdam, Netherlands. ²⁷Asian School of the Environment, Nanyang Technological University, 639798 Singapore. ²⁸Institute for Agro-Environmental Sciences, National Agriculture and Food Research Organization, Tsukuba 305-8604, Japan. ²⁹Department of Land Resource Management and Agricultural Technology (LARMAT), College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, University of Nairobi, Nairobi 00625, Kenya. ³⁰CSIRO Health and Biosecurity, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia. ³¹Département de Biologie, Université de Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke J1K 2R1, Canada. ³²Geology Department, FCEQyN, ICBIA-CONICET (National Scientific and Technical Research Council), National University of Río Cuarto, X5804 BYA Río Cuarto, Argentina. ³³Department of Ecology, Brandenburg University of Technology, 03046 Cottbus, Germany. ³⁴Eco&Sols, University of Montpellier, IRD, CIRAD, INRA, Montpellier SupAgro, 34060 Montpellier, France. ³⁵Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, USA. ³⁶School of Biology and Environmental Science, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. ³⁷UCD Earth Institute, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. ³⁸USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Athens, GA 30602, USA. ³⁹UMR 1114 "EMMAH", INRA, Site Agroparc, 84914 Avignon, France. ⁴⁰Farming Systems Ecology, Wageningen University and Research, 6700 AK Wageningen, Netherlands. ⁴¹Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3B3, Canada. ⁴²Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth SY23 3EE, UK. ⁴³School of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester GL7 6JS, UK. ⁴⁴Department of Biological Sciences, SUNY Cortland, Cortland, NY 13045, USA. ⁴⁵Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution, Faculty of Biology, Complutense University of Madrid, 28040 Madrid, Spain. ⁴⁶Laboratorio de Ecología, Instituto de Ecología y Desarrollo Sustentable, Universidad Nacional de Luján, 6700 Luján, Argentina. ⁴⁷Louis Bolk Institute, 3981 AJ Bunnik, Netherlands. ⁴⁸Department of Soil Science, Faculty of Regional and Environmental Sciences, University of Trier, Campus II, 54286 Trier, Germany. ⁴⁹Ciencias Básicas, Instituto de Ecología y Desarrollo Sustentable–INEDES, Universidad Nacional de Luján, 6700 Luján, Argentina. ⁵⁰Institute of Evolutionary Biology (CSIC–Universitat Pompeu Fabra), 08003 Barcelona, Spain. ⁵¹Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA. ⁵²Biodiversity and Systematic Network, Instituto de Ecología A.C., Xalapa 91070, Mexico. ⁵³Department of Biological Science and Environmental Studies, University of the Philippines–Mindanao, Barangay Mintal, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. ⁵⁴Laboratory of Environmental Toxicology and Aquatic Ecology, Environmental Toxicology Unit (GhEnToxLab), Ghent University (UGent), Campus Coupure, Ghent, Belgium. ⁵⁵Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran. ⁵⁶Forest Ecology and Management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, 90183 Umeå, Sweden. ⁵⁷Department of Biology, J. J. Strossmayer University of Osijek, 31000 Osijek, Croatia. ⁵⁸Agricultural Engineering, Postgraduate Program in Agroecology, Maranhão State University, 65055-310 São Luís, Brazil. ⁵⁹Faculty of Agriculture, Kyushu University, 949 Ohkawauchi, Shiiba 883-0402, Japan. ⁶⁰Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, St. Paul, MN 55155, USA. ⁶¹Department of Bioscience, Aarhus University, 8600 Silkeborg, Denmark. ⁶²Biological Sciences, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY 41099, USA. ⁶³Agricultura Sociedad y Ambiente, Colegio de la Frontera Sur, Ciudad Industrial, Lerma, Campeche 24500, Mexico. ⁶⁴Soil Physics and Land Management Degradation, Wageningen University and Research, 6708 PB Wageningen, Netherlands. ⁶⁵Department of Biological and Environmental Science, University of Jyväskylä, 40014 Jyväskylä, Finland. ⁶⁶College of Agriculture, Environmental and Human Sciences, Lincoln University of Missouri, Jefferson City, MO 65101, USA. ⁶⁷School of Forest Resources and Conservation, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611, USA. ⁶⁸Sustainable Development and Environment Engineering, Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael the 1st of Romania," 300645 Timisoara, Romania. ⁶⁹Experimental Infrastructure Platform, Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF), 15374 Müncheberg, Germany. ⁷⁰Faculty of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Fukushima University, Kanayagawa 1, Fukushima City, Japan. ⁷¹Department of Environmental Management, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. ⁷²Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Bailrigg, Lancaster LA1 4AP, UK. ⁷³Land Use and Governance, Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF), 15374 Müncheberg, Germany. ⁷⁴Department of Ecology and Environmental Science, Climate Impacts Research Centre, Umeå University, 90187 Umeå, Sweden. ⁷⁵UR Gestion Durable des Sols, UFR Sciences de la Nature, Université Nangui Abrogoua, 02 BP 801 Abidjan 02, Côte d'Ivoire. ⁷⁶Faculty of Natural Resources and Marine Sciences, Tarbiat Modares University, 46417-76489, Noor, Mazandaran, Iran. ⁷⁷Production Systems, Horticulture Technologies, Natural Resources Institute Finland, 40500 Jyväskylä, Finland. ⁷⁸Department of Zoology, Pachhunga University College, Aizawl 796001, India. ⁷⁹Soil Science, ESALQ-USP, Universidade de São Paulo, Piracicaba 13418, Brazil. ⁸⁰College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management, University of Hawaii, Hilo, HI 96720, USA. ⁸¹Tropical Plant and Soil Sciences, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Mānoa, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA. ⁸²Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, USA. ⁸³UR Systèmes de pérennes, CIRAD, Univ Montpellier, 34398 Montpellier, France. ⁸⁴Department of Forest Ecology, Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, 165 21 Prague, Czech Republic. ⁸⁵Department of Soil and Environment, Forest Research Institute of Baden-Wuerttemberg, 79100 Freiburg, Germany. ⁸⁶Thuenen-Institute of Organic Farming, 23847 Westerau, Germany. ⁸⁷Forestry School–INDEHESA, University of Extremadura, 10600 Plasencia, Spain. ⁸⁸Conservación de la Biodiversidad, El Colegio de la Frontera Sur, 24500 Campeche, Mexico. ⁸⁹Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, KU Leuven, 3001 Leuven, Belgium. ⁹⁰Research Institute for Nature and Forest, 9500 Geeraardsbergen, Belgium. ⁹¹School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences, Bern University of Applied Sciences, 3052 Zollikofen, Switzerland. ⁹²Soil Ecosystems, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), 31600 Jokioinen, Finland. ⁹³Natural Area Consultants, 1 West Hill School Road, Richford, NY 13835, USA. ⁹⁴Department of Zoology, Pocker Sahib Memorial Orphanage College, Tirurangudi, Malappuram, Kerala, India. ⁹⁵CSIRO Ocean and Atmosphere, Lucas Heights, NSW 2234, Australia. ⁹⁶UMR7144 Adaptation et Diversité en Milieu Marin, Station Biologique de Roscoff, CNRS–Sorbonne Université, 29688 Roscoff, France. ⁹⁷UMR SAS, INRA, Agrocampus Ouest, 35000 Rennes, France. ⁹⁸Ecology and Forest Restoration Group, Department of Life Sciences, University of Alcalá, 28801 Alcalá De Henares, Spain. ⁹⁹Computing, ESEI, Vigo, Edif. Politécnico–Campus As Lagoas, 32004 Ourense, Spain. ¹⁰⁰Adaptations du Vivant, CNRS UMR 7179, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, 91800 Brunoy, France. ¹⁰¹Centre of Excellence in Environmental Studies, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah 21589, Saudi Arabia. ¹⁰²Environmental Sciences, COMSATS University Islamabad, Sub-campus Vehari, Vehari 61100, Pakistan. ¹⁰³Departamento de Informática, Escuela Superior de Ingeniería Informática, Universidad de Vigo, 36310 Vigo, Spain. ¹⁰⁴Group of Global Change Ecology and Evolution (GloCEE), Department of Life Sciences, University of Alcalá, 28805 Alcalá de Henares, Spain. ¹⁰⁵Department of Forest Resources, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55101, USA. ¹⁰⁶Friends of the Mississippi River, 101 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, MN 55108, USA. ¹⁰⁷Postgraduate Program in Biodiversity and Conservation, Federal University of Maranhão, 65080-805 São Luís, Brazil. ¹⁰⁸Institute of Environmental Sciences, Jagiellonian University, 30-087 Kraków, Poland. ¹⁰⁹Institute of Ecology, Technical University of Berlin, 10587 Berlin, Germany. ¹¹⁰College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, WI 54481, USA. ¹¹¹Engineering for Crop Production, Leibniz Institute for Agricultural Engineering and Bioeconomy (ATB), 14469 Potsdam, Germany. ¹¹²UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science, University College Dublin, Belfield, Ireland. ¹¹³Landscape Ecology and Environmental Systems Analysis, Institute of Geoecology, Technische Universität Braunschweig, 38106 Braunschweig, Germany. ¹¹⁴Department of Ecology, University of Innsbruck, 6020 Innsbruck, Austria. ¹¹⁵Institute for Alpine Environment, Eurac Research, 39100 Bozen/Bolzano, Italy. ¹¹⁶Laboratory of Ecosystem Modeling, Institute of Physicochemical and Biological Problems in Soil Sciences, Russian Academy of Science, Pushchino 142290, Russia. ¹¹⁷Laboratory of Computational Ecology, Institute of Mathematical Problems of Biology–Branch of Keldysh Institute of Applied Mathematics of Russian Academy of Science, Pushchino 142290, Russia. ¹¹⁸Post Graduate Department of Zoology, Khalsa College Amritsar, Amritsar 143002, India. ¹¹⁹John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3B3, Canada. ¹²⁰Department of Animal Biology, University of La Laguna, 38200 La Laguna, Spain. ¹²¹Faculty of Agriculture, Kochi University, Monobe Otsu 200, Nankoku 783-8502, Japan. ¹²²Food and Agriculture, WWF–Netherlands, 3708 JB Zeist, Netherlands. ¹²³Dpto. Ciencias, IS-FOOD, Universidad Pública de Navarra, Edificio Olivos–Campus Arrosadia, 31006 Pamplona, Spain. ¹²⁴Soil, Water and Climate, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108, USA. ¹²⁵Earth Innovation Institute, 98 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111, USA. ¹²⁶Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management, University of Hawaii at Mānoa, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA. ¹²⁷Natural Resource Sciences, McGill University, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue H9X 3V9, Canada. ¹²⁸The Nature Conservancy, Arlington, VA 22203, USA. ¹²⁹Department of Animal Ecology, Justus Liebig University, 35392 Giessen, Germany. ¹³⁰Laboratory of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Kola Science Centre, Institute of the North Industrial Ecology Problems, Apatity 184211, Russia. ¹³¹Key Laboratory of Geospatial Technology for the Middle and Lower Yellow River Regions (Henan University), Ministry of Education, College of Environment and Planning, Henan University, Kaifeng 475004, China. ¹³²Department of Environmental Science, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. ¹³³Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Helsinki, FI 00014 Helsinki, Finland.

*Corresponding author. Email: helen.phillips@divid.de †These authors contributed equally to this work.

Fig. 1. Global distribution of earthworm diversity. (A) Black dots represent the center of a “study” used in at least one of the three models (species richness, total abundance, and total biomass). The size of the dot corresponds to the number of sites within the study. Opaqueness is for visualization purposes only. (B to D) The globally predicted values of (B) species richness (within site), (C) total abundance, and (D) total biomass. Yellow indicates high diversity; dark purple, low diversity. Gray areas are habitat cover categories that lacked samples.



observed aboveground patterns, such as the latitudinal gradient in plant diversity (22). This pattern could be due to different relationships with climate variables. For example, although plant diversity increases with potential evapotranspiration (PET) (22), earthworm diversity tended to decrease with increasing PET (table S3). In addition, soil properties, which are typically not included in models of aboveground diversity, can play a role in determining earthworm communities (11, 15, 23). For instance, litter availability and soil nutrient content are important regulators of earthworm diversity, with oligotrophic forest soils having more epigeic species and eutrophic soils more endogeics (23). Furthermore, tropical regions

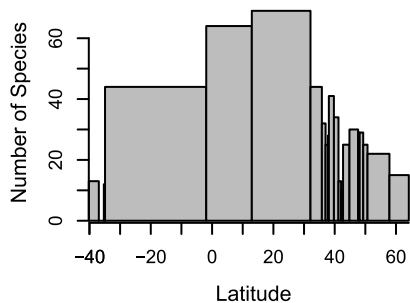


Fig. 2. The number of unique species within each latitudinal zone, when the number of sites within each zone is comparable. The width of the bar shows the latitude range of the sites/zones.

with higher decomposition rates have fewer soil organic resources and lower local earthworm diversity (Fig. 1B and table S3), dominated by endogeic species, which have specific digestion systems that allow them to feed on low-quality soil organic matter (11, 14, 20).

High local species richness was found at mid-latitudes, such as the southern tip of South America, the southern regions of Australia and New Zealand, Europe (particularly north of the Black Sea), and the northeastern United States. Although this pattern contrasts with latitudinal diversity patterns found in many aboveground organisms (6, 24), it is consistent with patterns found in some belowground organisms [ectomycorrhizal fungi (3), bacteria (5)], but not all [arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (25), oribatid mites (26)]. Such mismatches between above- and belowground biodiversity have been predicted (1, 7) but not shown across the globe for soil fauna at the local scale.

The patterns seen here could in part be a result of glaciation in the last ice age, as well as human activities. Temperate regions (mid- to high latitudes) that were previously glaciated were likely recolonized by earthworm species with high dispersal capabilities and large geographic ranges (19) and through human-mediated dispersal ["anthropochorous" earthworms (16)]. Thus, temperate communities could have high local diversity, as seen here, but those species would be widely dis-

tributed, resulting in lower regional diversity relative to local diversity. In the tropics, which did not experience glaciation, the opposite may be true. Specific locations may have individual species that are highly endemic, but these species are not widely distributed (table S4). This high local endemism would result in low local diversity (as found here) and high regional diversity [as suggested by (10)] relative to that low local diversity. When the numbers of unique species within latitudinal zones that had equal numbers of sites were calculated (i.e., a regional richness that accounted for sampling effort), there appeared to be a regional latitudinal diversity gradient (Fig. 2). Even with a sampling bias (table S4), regional richness in the tropics was greater than in the temperate regions, despite low local diversity. These results should be interpreted with caution, given the latitude span of the tropical zones. However, the underlying data suggest that endemism of earthworms and β -diversity within the tropics (27) may be considerably higher than within the well-sampled temperate region (table S4). Therefore, it is likely that the tropics harbor more species overall.

The predicted total abundance of the local community of earthworms typically ranged between 5 and 150 individuals per m^2 across the globe, in line with other estimates (28) (Fig. 1C; mean, 77.89 individuals per m^2 ; SD, 98.94). There was a slight tendency for areas of higher total abundance to be in temperate areas, such as Europe (particularly the UK, France, and Italy), New Zealand, and part of the Pampas and surrounding region (South America), rather than the tropics. Lower total abundance occurred in many of the tropical and subtropical regions, such as Brazil, central Africa, and parts of India. Given the positive relationship between total abundance and ecosystem function (29), in regions with lower earthworm abundance, such functions may be reduced or carried out by other soil taxa (1).

The predicted total biomass of the local earthworm community (adults and juveniles) across the globe showed extreme values (>2 kg) in 0.3% of pixels, but biomass typically ranged (97% of pixels) between 1 g and 150 g per m^2 [Fig. 1D; median, 6.69; mean, 2772.8; SD, 1,312,782; see (14) for additional discussion of extreme values]. The areas of high total biomass were concentrated in the Eurasian Steppe and some regions of North America. The majority of the globe showed low total biomass. In northern North America, where there are no native earthworms (13), high density and, in some regions, higher biomass of earthworms likely reflect the earthworm invasion of these regions. The small invasive European earthworm species encounter an enormous unused resource pool, which leads to high population sizes (30). On the basis of previous suggestions (28), we expected that

Table 1. Model validation results. Cells in boldface show the "best" value when comparing between the main models (a mixture of sampled soil properties and SoilGrids data) and models containing only SoilGrids data. Values shown are mean square error [MSE; calculated for all predicted data ("Total") and for tertiles ("Low," "Mid," "High")] following 10-fold cross-validation of the main models and models containing only SoilGrids data, as well as R^2 of the main models and SoilGrids-only models.

	Total	Low	Mid	High
MSE: Main models				
Species richness	1.376	0.917	0.812	3.561
Abundance	17977.42	1720.75	2521.25	48751.51
Biomass	3220.29	264.56	441.25	8783.77
MSE: SoilGrids models				
Species richness	1.385	0.887	0.793	3.716
Abundance	18775.81	1735.11	2516.13	51156.76
Biomass	3068.00	199.91	461.88	8380.81
		Marginal		Conditional
R^2: Main models				
Species richness		0.132		0.748
Abundance		0.176		0.626
Biomass		0.201		0.612
R^2: SoilGrids models				
Species richness		0.142		0.745
Abundance		0.234		0.643
Biomass		0.242		0.650

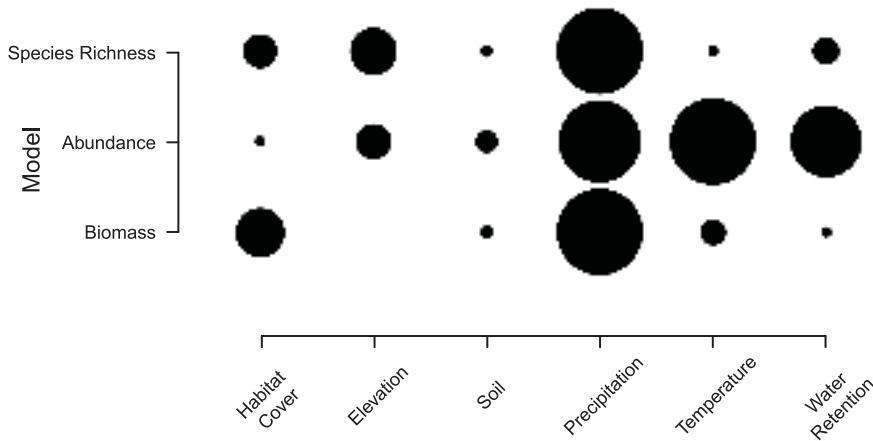


Fig. 3. The importance of the six variable themes from the three biodiversity models. Rows show the results of each model (top, species richness; middle, abundance; bottom, biomass). Columns represent the variable themes that are present in the simplified biodiversity model. The most important variable group has the largest circle. Within each row, the circle size of the other variable themes is proportional to the relative change in importance. The circle size should only be compared within a row.

earthworms would decrease in body size toward the poles, showing low biomass relative to the total abundance in temperate or boreal regions. In contrast, in tropical regions (e.g., Brazil and Indonesia) that are dominated by giant earthworms that normally occur at low densities and low species richness (31), we expected high biomass but low abundance. However, these patterns were not found. This could be due to the relatively small number of sample points for the biomass model ($n = 3296$) compared to the diversity ($n = 5416$) and total abundance models ($n = 6358$), reducing the predictive ability of the model (fig. S1C), most notably in large regions of Asia and in areas of Africa, particularly the boundaries of the Sahara Desert and the southern regions (which coincides with sites where samples are lacking). Additionally, the difficulty in consistently capturing such large earthworms in every sample may increase data variability, reducing the ability of the model to predict.

Overall, the three community metric models performed well in cross-validation (figs. S3 and S4) with relatively high R^2 values [Table 1; see (14) for further details and caveats]. But given the nature of such analyses, models and maps should only be used to explore broad patterns in earthworm communities and not at the fine scale, especially in relation to conservation practices (32).

For all three community metric models, climatic variables were the most important drivers (the “precipitation” theme being the most important for both species richness and total biomass models, and “temperature” for the total abundance model; Fig. 3). The importance of climatic variables in shaping diversity and distribution patterns at large

scales is consistent with many aboveground taxa [e.g., plants (22), reptiles, amphibians, and mammals (32)] and belowground taxa [bacteria and fungi (3, 5), nematodes (33)]. This suggests that climate-related methods and data, which are typically used by macroecologists to estimate aboveground biodiversity, may also be suitable for estimating earthworm communities. However, the strong link between climatic variables and earthworm community metrics is cause for concern, as climate will continue to change due to anthropogenic activities over the coming decades (34). Our findings further highlight that changes in temperature and precipitation are likely to influence earthworm diversity (35) and distributions (15), with implications for the functions that they provide (12). Shifts in distributions may be particularly problematic in the case of invasive earthworms, such as in areas of North America, where they can considerably change the ecosystem (13). However, a change in climate will most likely affect abundance and biomass of the earthworm communities before it affects diversity, as shifts in the latter depend on dispersal capabilities, which are relatively low in earthworms.

We expected that soil properties would be the most important driver of earthworm communities, but this was not the case (Fig. 3), likely because of the scale of the study. First, the importance of drivers could change at different spatial scales. Climate is driving patterns at global scales, but within climatic regions (or at the local scale), other variables may become more important (36). Thus, one or more soil properties may be the most important drivers of earthworm communities within each of the primary studies, rather than

across them all. Second, for soil properties, the mismatch in scale between community metrics and the soil properties taken from global layers [for sites where sampled soil properties were missing (14)] potentially reduced the apparent importance of the theme. Habitat cover influenced the earthworm community (fig. S5, A and B), especially the composition of the three ecological groups (epigeics, endogeics, and anecics) (fig. S6) (14). Across larger scales, climate influences both habitat cover and soil properties, all of which affect earthworm communities. Being able to account for this indirect effect with appropriate methods and data may alter the perceived importance of soil properties and habitat cover [e.g., with pathway analysis (37) and standardized data]. However, our habitat cover variable did not directly consider local management (such as land use or intensity).

Our findings suggest that climate change might have substantial effects on earthworm communities and the functioning of ecosystems; any climate change-induced alteration in earthworm communities is likely to have cascading effects on other species in these ecosystems (13, 28). Despite earthworm communities being controlled by environmental drivers similar to those that affect aboveground communities (22, 37), these relationships result in different patterns of diversity. We highlight the need to integrate belowground organisms into biodiversity research, despite differences in the scale of sampling, if we are to fully understand large-scale patterns of biodiversity and their underlying drivers (7, 8, 38), especially if processes underlying macroecological patterns differ between aboveground and belowground diversity (38). The inclusion of soil taxa may alter the distribution of biodiversity hotspots and conservation priorities. For example, protected areas (7) may not be protecting earthworms (7), despite their importance as ecosystem function providers (12) and soil ecosystem engineers for other organisms (11). By modeling both realms, aboveground/belowground comparisons are possible, potentially allowing a clearer view of the biodiversity distribution of whole ecosystems.

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SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

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Materials and Methods
Supplementary Text
Figs. S1 to S6
Tables S1 to S4
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Global distribution of earthworm diversity

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Earthworm distribution in global soils

Earthworms are key components of soil ecological communities, performing vital functions in decomposition and nutrient cycling through ecosystems. Using data from more than 7000 sites, Phillips *et al.* developed global maps of the distribution of earthworm diversity, abundance, and biomass (see the Perspective by Fierer). The patterns differ from those typically found in aboveground taxa; there are peaks of diversity and abundance in the mid-latitude regions and peaks of biomass in the tropics. Climate variables strongly influence these patterns, and changes are likely to have cascading effects on other soil organisms and wider ecosystem functions.

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