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Biodiversity and Functionality of Plankton Communities

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Message from the Guest Editors

The diversity of both plankton components, as well as phyto- and zooplankton, reflect the existing conditions but also affect the processes of the whole aquatic ecosystem. Biodiversity can be typically assessed in terms of taxonomic diversity but numerous research data show that functional diversity, that refers to various functional traits in the plankton community, is often a more sensitive predictor of ecosystem functioning.

Various types of plankton assemblage have an impact on ecosystem functioning, particularly on productivity and ecosystem stability. The application of plankton diversity and functionality can be used for the assessment of water quality, climate change-induced alterations, the evaluation of organic contamination or the impact of human-originated transformations in the catchment area, as well as food web interactions and its importance in the natural and experimental environment. It can also be applied in ecological modelling, and in the evaluation and monitoring of restored ecosystems.

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