

## Growing the FLUXNET Community: The Young Scientists Network

*Sebastian Wolf, Laurie Koteen, Matthias J. Zeeman*

The time devoted to training for a career in science is a challenging and inspiring period for all who pursue it. During that period, students and postdocs learn sophisticated measurement, modelling and data analysis techniques that are crucial for becoming a scientist. However, there are additional training and resources that may not be available within the confines of each research group or university, and which may be better-accessed through contact with the global community of scientists in a similar stage of their career. This includes the ability to discuss questions regarding research, career and fund-

ing opportunities.

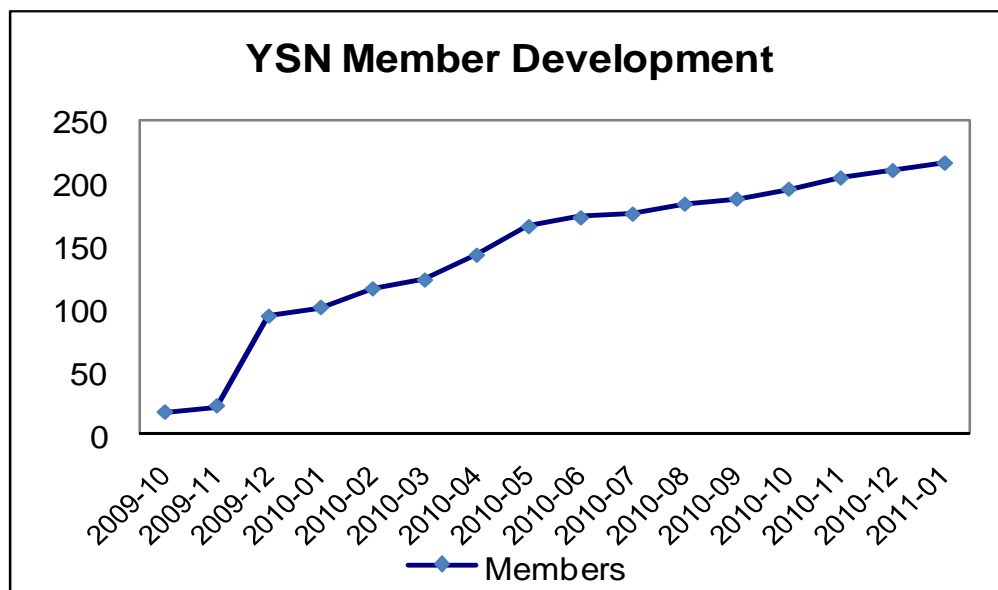
The Young Scientist Network (YSN) provides a platform for information sharing within the FLUXNET community and consists of a mailing list ([young-scientist@george.lbl.gov](mailto:young-scientist@george.lbl.gov)) and an interactive Website ([www.fluxdata.org/YoungScientist](http://www.fluxdata.org/YoungScientist); login required) with a forum for questions, wiki, calendar of events and a shared document section containing information on how to write research papers and important publications.

Since the update and reorganization of the YSN in summer 2009 (see October 2009 issue of FluxLetter, Vol. 2, No. 3) its membership has been con-

tinually growing (Fig. 1). By January 2011, the YSN had 216 members from 25 countries and from all regional networks (Fig. 2a). More than half of the members are Ph.D. students (55%) followed by Post-docs (30%) and M.Sc. students (9%; Fig. 2b).

In order to receive feedback from the community on how the network can be improved and on how to inspire more active involvement and interactions of the YSN members, a survey was conducted in November 2010 by the YSN organizers (SW, LK, MZ). About 25% of the members participated in the survey and following are the main results:

- Word of mouth from colleagues is the main 'point of entry' to the YSN (40%), followed by visitation to the FLUXNET website, mailing list and supervisors.
- The mailing list is the main component used by members of the YSN.
- Job postings via the mailing list are very helpful and some of the respondents indicated that they had found their current position through YSN postings. Redundancies of job postings with other mailing list are frequent for members that are well networked already (many Post-docs), but not for the majority of the YSN members.
- Awareness regarding the interactive website is limited and needs to be improved. Only 58% of the community have registered for an account to the website so far.
- Social meetings (such as at AGU and EGU) are considered useful but have been used



**Figure 1:** Growth of the Young Scientist Network since it began in October 2009.



## Growing the FLUXNET Community: The Young Scientists Network

*Sebastian Wolf, Laurie Koteen, Matthias J. Zeeman*

only to a very limited extent so far.

- Only 13% of the respondents had actively contributed to the YSN to date (*i.e.* sending emails to the mailing list or uploading documents to the website) but many of the respondents (76%) indicated that they would like to contribute more actively to the YSN in the future.
- The organizers should keep the YSN going, try to initiate discussions on scientific topics and share information about recent publications of relevance to the community.

(Note: detailed results of the survey are available at the interactive website)

The organizers have discussed the survey results in a meeting at the recent AGU Fall Meeting in San Francisco and are currently working to implement improvements.

Outside of organizers initiatives, the active participation of the YSN members is crucial for our community and thus we would like to encourage YSN members to become more involved by asking questions to initiate discussions, more frequent use of the website & mailing list, by informing your colleagues about relevant workshops, conferences, and publica-

tions, and by sharing your experiences regarding funding and career opportunities with other young scientists.

To contact the YSN organizers, please write an email to: [young-scientist-owner@george.lbl.gov](mailto:young-scientist-owner@george.lbl.gov). Further information on the YSN can be found at the FLUXNET Website: [www.fluxnet.ornl.gov](http://www.fluxnet.ornl.gov)

### Acknowledgements

We are thankful to Deb Agarwal (LBNL Berkeley), Robert Cook (ORNL) and Rodrigo Vargas (CICESE) for their invaluable, continued support of the FLUXNET YSN.

### Contact:

Sebastian Wolf

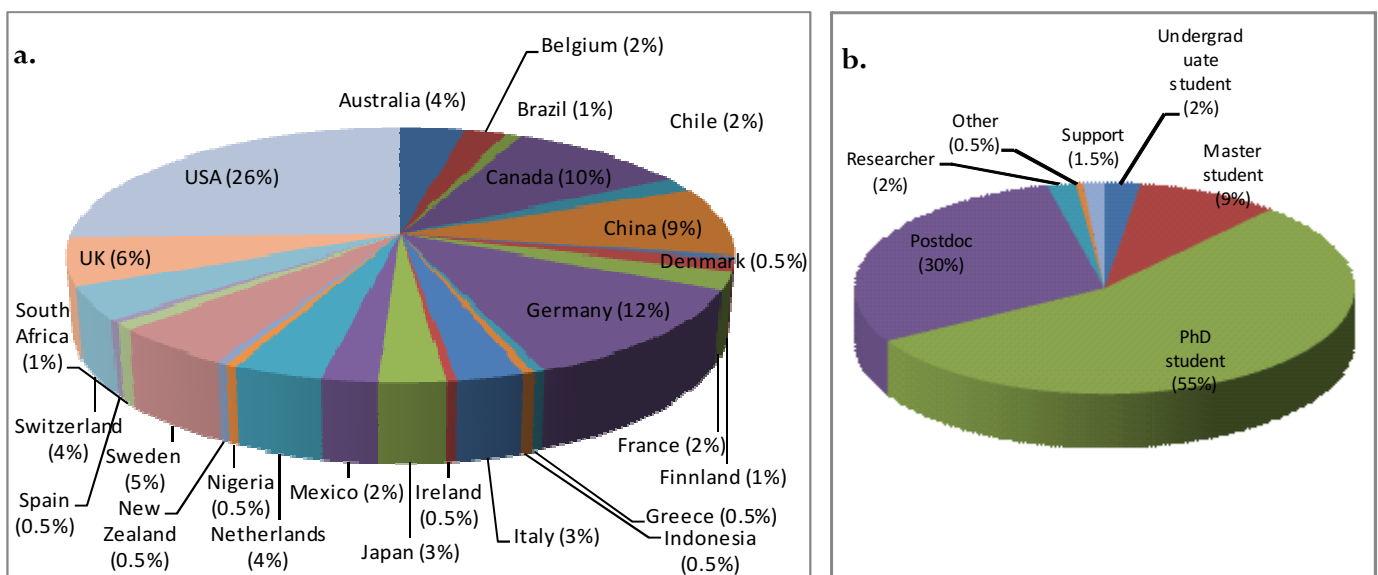
ETH Zurich, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Switzerland ([sewolf@ethz.ch](mailto:sewolf@ethz.ch))

Laurie Koteen

Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management, University of California, Berkeley, USA ([lkoteen@berkeley.edu](mailto:lkoteen@berkeley.edu))

Matthias J. Zeeman

Biomicroeteorology Group College of Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences Oregon State University ([mjzeeman@coas.oregonstate.edu](mailto:mjzeeman@coas.oregonstate.edu))



**Figure 2:** YSN membership by country (a) and student/work status (b)