DEVELOPING AND DISSEMINATING THE FIELD OF ECOLOGICAL FORECASTING

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Ongoing environmental change on scales from local to global pose predictive challenges in fields ranging from climate change to water quality. In fields like meteorology, predictive forecasts are old-news and we consequently have a set of tools to integrate heterogenous data and process models. These tools have not been widely adopted by those making predictions for ecological systems and there may be two reasons for this: First, the culture and training in the array of fields relevant to predictive ecology pose challenges to the dissemination of modern analytical approaches. Second, it’s possible that the challenges in ecological predictions don’t map clearly onto those of fields like meteorology, where uncertainty in initial conditions dominates the forecast. Our new ”Ecological Forecasting Initiative” attempts to address these issues to develop relevant and effective tools and training to accellerate best practices in ecological forecasting.