

The revisions to this article strengthen its effectiveness as a bearer of welcome news for analysts of macroevolution: the GeoBiodiversity DataBase (GBDB) is moving forward again after it appeared to lose impetus during a management turnover. More a prospectus or status report than a research report, the article serves the purpose of alerting potential users to updates planned for the database and its web portal. These plans are now more clearly connected to market research – a survey of users. The GBDB does not need a separate data-description paper; this is a database-description paper. As before, I assume, the database can be downloaded as an Excel flat file. The flat file is surely less versatile than the GBDB. The new portal to the GBDB website is already accessible and most of its features are functional.

The revisions are a good faith response to the on-line reviews. The authors have eliminated some tangential matters and clarified terms that had puzzled reviewers. Their revised manuscript focuses more effectively on the current database and softens implied criticisms of its initial design. The reference list is now a richer account of previous analyses of macroevolution that the GBDB data had made possible

The manuscript might seem a little long for its rather straightforward message, but the retrospective parts could be of value to readers who are not yet familiar with the GBDB and the way its structure and geographic scope complement the earlier established PaleoBiology DataBase (PBDB). This reviewer had had attended workshops with the founders of the GBDB. Many potential readers may not have had this advantage.

If the editorial decision is to publish the manuscript, I trust there is sufficient staff support for thorough copy editing. There remain those almost inevitable grammatical glitches that arise between the Chinese and English languages. In most cases the meaning is not lost; the glitches are just a distraction. In a few cases the author's intent might be obscured, at the sentence level, but not for the larger status report. I would prefer "status report" in the title instead of "retrospects and prospects," which seems at odds with the authors' response that "this manuscript is not a review." This is a small point, however.