

Video Transcript - Biocube in Fynbos Shrubland, South Africa

Liittschwager: This is the Fynbos, which is a type of plant community in South Africa. Here we are on top of Table Mountain which is above Cape Town, and we spent several days trying to find a 12-inch square on the surface with the highest number of different species of plants. [00:00:30] And then we worked for a few days, just watching, you know, ants and other insects move through it during the day and the night. (Hammering to build the base to hold Biocube sample.)

Liittschwager: Many of the plant species we found in the cube occur no [00:01:00] where else in the world. There is a very high rate of endemism, meaning that they only live there in that Fynbos plant community. But before taking it back, we wanted to do a picture that showed the exact scope, shape, and size of the sample really was. [00:01:30] So we suspended it above the exact place that it was taken from, and used the cube, and we put it right over the soil sample. [00:02:00] And then we wanted to take the sample back to the Botany Department at the University of Cape Town, and look down into the soil, and see how many different creatures lived in that layer.

Liittschwager: (Music and images of plants and insects, ending with a montage of the specimens.)