

Task Group on Data Fitness for Use in Agrobiodiversity

The discovery, access and adequate use of primary biodiversity data is critical for informed decision making to achieve sustainable use of agrobiodiversity resources, secure their availability in the future, and address many of the world's key challenges such as feeding a growing human population, and developing a more productive and sustainable agriculture under the scenario of climatic change. It is estimated that various institutions collectively house several billion specimens of more than a million species and cultivated varieties, genetic samples and other important evidence of patterns and trends in global biodiversity. Only a fraction of this vast databank of species information and genetic material is freely and digitally available, and the continuous efforts to use the digitally available information on agrobiodiversity have resulted in a growing - but dispersed - body of scientific tools and literature assisting better understanding of the changing environments and providing the foundation for decision making based on data and scientific evidence.

As part of a broader global strategy on fitness for use of biodiversity data, GBIF is convening a Task Group on Data Fitness for Use in Agrobiodiversity (DFFU-A) to help improve the fit of data related to agrobiodiversity to the variety of important uses required and requested by this community of research and policy. This focus on Agrobiodiversity data results from a long-lasting collaboration with Bioversity International, which is a global research-for-development organization. Bioversity research delivers scientific evidence, management practices and policy options to use and safeguard agricultural and tree biodiversity to attain global food and nutrition security.

DFFU-A will capture the best available experiences, document limitations in existing GBIF services, and suggest improvements in the functionality of GBIF.org for domain-specific needs. Its activities will be informed by ongoing work in GBIF to improve the functionality of its data services by enabling users to filter for relevant data fit for particular purposes, based on pre-defined profiles.

The Task Group is established with three **objectives**:

1. Based on domain specific data use experience, to make recommendations on improving data availability and data use, data mobilization, data and metadata publishing, and data processing. The Task Group is expected to deliver a vision of the ideal data serving the needs of the agrobiodiversity community, as well as past, current and expected data modifications, cleaning steps, analyses and visualization needs,
2. To document best practices from ongoing initiatives using agrobiodiversity related data, and to collect the information on repeatable tools and data management solutions by consulting with ongoing agrobiodiversity and related initiatives, and the broader biodiversity data community, e.g. through GBIF Community Site and TDWG, in order to bring together the different stakeholders, and catalyse activities around use of agrobiodiversity data.
3. Based on information from GBIF Secretariat about current developments relating to quality and fitness for use, to make recommendations on GBIF.org improvements, and to provide guidance in the development of training and outreach materials to help data users to build upon the currently available resources and to share the new developments.

Mandate

1. Develop a schedule and activities for the Task Group
2. Liaise with other experts and define the data use priorities essential for the agrobiodiversity community
3. Liaise with on-going initiatives and projects to document best practices initiatives using agrobiodiversity related data
4. Liaise with potential donor organisations that might be interested in funding data fitness for agrobiodiversity uses
5. Consult with and encourage agrobiodiversity stakeholders to document and share the repeatable tools and data management solutions
6. Provide guidance in the development of training and outreach materials to help data users to build upon the currently available resources and to share the new developments
7. Consult widely and determine key questions that need to be addressed for the community specific data use needs on data availability and data use improvements, data mobilization, data and metadata publishing, and data processing at institutional, national, regional, and global levels
8. Develop the recommendations for the GBIF portal improvements

Outputs

The main deliverable will be a set of practical guidelines and recommendations around the issues defined under the Terms of Reference presented in the form of a report to the Executive Secretary of GBIF, on or before October 1, 2015.

Timeline

The Task Group will operate for a period of six months, and is expected to begin in April 2015 after the members have been confirmed by the Executive Committee. A first report will be presented to GBIF Secretariat by 1 August 2015 and circulated among the attendees of the 22nd GBIF Governing Board meeting. The final report will be delivered to GBIF S by 1 October 2015, after which the Task Group shall be dissolved. The final report will be presented to the 23rd GBIF Governing Board in September/October 2016.

<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Activity</i>
March 2015	GBIF EC approves candidate members of the Task Group. Candidate members invited.
April 2015	Establishment of the Task Group. Wireframes for the reports, identification of the priority directions. Initial teleconference. Communication and writing tasks distributed among the Task Group members.
May 2015	Initial inputs from Task Group members collated. Key stakeholders, GBIF, TDWG and agro community invited to contribute: consultation open.
July 2015	Comments / inputs from key stakeholders and broader community collated into the first (intermediate) report. Teleconference meeting of the Task Group to collectively draft first round report
August 1, 2015	First report presented to GBIF S and forwarded to GB 22.

September 2015	Consultation closed. Revise report based on inputs. Face-to-face meeting of the Task Group to write up the final report.
October 1, 2015	Deliver final report

Mode of operation

The Task Group will deliver its recommendations to the GBIF Governing Board through the Secretariat. The Task Group will be coordinated by, and report through, the Programme Officer for Content Analysis and Use at the GBIF Secretariat. The Task Group shall mostly operate remotely through email and associated collaborative tools such as wiki, Skype and conference calls; and hold at least one face-to-face meeting, covering the cost of travel and accommodation and other essential costs using funds available from the GBIF Secretariat as defined in the approved GBIF Work Programme 2014-1016, in particular to consolidate and write its report. The task force may also use other events of interest to hold additional meetings.

Task Group membership

The Task Group shall be comprised of **6 members** reflecting a global representation. The members are invited based on the priority list of candidates offered by the GBIF S and the Chair of the Task Group for the approval by the GBIF Executive Committee. The Task Group is expected to consult widely within the community of agrobiodiversity community and GBIF community, including GBIF stakeholders and the GBIF Secretariat will provide support for this consultation in the form of mailing lists, discussion groups, etc. It is intended to be the nucleus team that will consult widely with other experts, institutions, initiatives & projects. The Task Group is chaired by **Dr Elizabeth Arnaud**, Bioversity International.

GBIF S contact

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