

2nd GBIF-Africa Regional Meeting



13 and 14 September 2011

Pretoria National Botanical Garden

Purpose of the meeting

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- 1) Co-ordinate African priorities in preparation for GBIF 18
- 2) Finalize the coordination mechanism concept document
- 3) Develop an implementation plan to take forward the Regional Action Plan

Activities since GBIF17

Following the GBIF17 meeting, two key meetings were coordinated by the South African Biodiversity Information Facility (SABIF). This includes a **task team meeting** (29-30th March) to drive the development of a concept document to establish the Africa Coordinating Mechanism. The 2nd GBIF-Africa regional meeting was subsequently held from the 13th - 14th September, in Pretoria, SANBI.

Some key activities in the Nodes in 2011

Kenya: A training and stakeholder workshop was held by KenBIF (June). A number of country representatives were invited including node managers from Finland, Spain, Tanzania and South Africa, who acted as facilitators and exposed Kenyan participants to GBIF. Facilitators shared their experiences on Node establishment, and their country experiences of Biodiversity Informatics.

Benin: A second national meeting took place (25 - 26th August), along with a side event devoted to a training session on data geo referencing and application in GIS, GBIF portal and the presentation of GBIF-Benin data etc. A second side event dealt with exchanges of information with data holders to obtain their agreement to provide data to GBIF-Benin. Participants agreed to provide their data to GBIF-Benin.

Cameroon: 2nd national meeting on Biodiversity Data mobilization and publication (April) was held by CAMBIF, with 52 participants and 15 organisations. Data on plants and insects was published via the IPT.

South Africa: A georeferencing workshop was held in April, to grow local and regional capacity to digitise and georeference high quality biodiversity data for use in research, policy and management. Training team was lead by John Wieczorek, University of California, Berkeley.

Forward Strategy / activities planned

A key outcome of the first GBIF-Africa meeting was the development of the Africa Regional Strategic Plan. Significant headway was made in initiating the implementation of this strategic plan. This was done by identifying three priority areas, aligned with the GBIF workplan 2012/13, which will be addressed over the next 2 years.

1. Data publishing strategy and action:

- Develop a roadmap of what is required to develop a data publishing strategy and action plan, incorporating a content gap analysis at the node level and ensuring there are incentives to cite and publish data.

- Russel to lead supported by Brenda and Hulda. They will report progress at the next general meeting.
2. Capacity Building:
- Africa nodes have benefited from GBIF mentoring initiatives and need to develop a case for ensuring adequate mentoring is incorporated in future plans. Potential partnerships with Denmark, Finland, Netherlands and Sweden to be explored at GBIF 18.
 - Existing capacity building initiatives to be aligned.
 - Explore formalizing Biodiversity Informatics at universities and link with GBIF around curriculum development.
 - Innocent to lead, supported by Jean, Francis and Pierre.
3. Strategic Regional Engagement:
- Africa to make the case for regional engagement. GBIF 18 is an opportunity to organize events with Node Managers, Africa Heads of Delegation and potential funders.
 - Long term strategy should build ties with related initiatives; incorporate fundraising and improved profiling of biodiversity and development links.
 - Fatima to lead, supported by Selwyn, Stella, Francis, Baba and Gaston.

Messages (issues, comments, encouragement, questions) to us and to other GBIF bodies (Secretariat, GB, Nodes, Science Committee)

- The value of the regional approach has been **highly commended** by the GBIF-Africa community, especially the ability to more easily align the country, regional and global activities and priorities. Working at this scale will certainly enable Africa to make collective progress.
- One of the challenges however, is the funding model employed by GBIF to ensure further regional engagement. To date, the SABIF has hosted two workshops, including one task team meeting. In the first instance, although receiving GBIF support, the Node needed to substantially co-fund the initiative. The second was fully supported by the South African Node. Regional engagement is critical to have a coordinated approach to biodiversity informatics, for its relevance in science and policy, however this is not sustainable for one node to be supporting the activities of the region with less investment by GBIF. The recommendation from the Africa regional community is that there should be a more equitable funding model from GBIF side that takes into account the challenges experienced by the Africa community with regards to participating in these events, such as expensive airfares due to large geographic distance between nodes and low airline connectivity resulting in more expensive travel. Also, current support from government is limited due to alternate country priorities.

Participants to the 2nd GBIF-Africa Meeting

Nr	Country	Organisation	Name	Surname
1	Albertine Rift	ARCOS	Zachary Kimutai	Maritim
2	Benin	Université d'Abomey-Calavi	Jean	Cossi Ganglo
3	Burkina Faso	SP/CONEDD	Norbert	Sidibe
4	Cameroon	National Herbarium Cameroon	Gaston	Achoundong
5	Denmark	GBIF	Vishwas	Chavan
6	Ghana	University of Ghana	Alex	Asase
7	Guinea	Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable Rép.de Guinée	Saïdou	Doumbouya
8	Kenya	National Museums of Kenya	Francis	Oguya
9	Kenya	IUCN	Stella	Simiyu
10	Madagascar	Centre National de Recherches sur l'Environnement	Jaona	Ranaivo
11	Mauritania	Mauritanian Biodiversity Information Facility	Baba Anina Ould Moulaye	Mohamed
12	South Africa	SANBI	Tania	Abrahamse
13	South Africa	EWT	Brenda	Daly
14	South Africa	SANBI	Hyleen	Ferguson
15	South Africa	ICLEI	Russel	Galt
16	South Africa	SANBI	Paula	Hathorn
17	South Africa	ARC_PPRI	Riana	Jacobs
18	South Africa	DST	Leluma	Matooane
19	South Africa	SANBI	Carmel	Mbizvo
20	South Africa	DST	Kgoale	Mphahlele
21	South Africa	SAFRINET	Mariette	Truter
22	South Africa	SANBI	Selwyn	Willoughby
23	South Africa	SANBI	Fatima	Parker-Allie
24	Tanzania	Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology	Hulda	Gideon
25	Togo	Université de Lomé	Pierre	Radji
26	Tunisia	BioNET-NAFRINET Regional Coordinator	Mohamed	Kchouk
27	Uganda	Uganda National Council for Science and Technology	Innocent	Akampurira

Apologies from:

Equatorial Guinea, ICIPE, Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic.