GBIF Regional Nodes
Preparatory Survey for the 8th European Nodes Meeting

Introduction

The survey below is targeted towards GBIF Participant Nodes for sharing updates on activities as input to and assist with the formulation of actions at the European Nodes sub-Committee meeting 19-21 April 2016 in Lisbon, Portugal.

Node Managers are requested to fill out the survey before the regional meeting so it can be analysed, and send filled out surveys to Anne-Sophie Archambeau (archambeau@gbif.fr) and Anders Telenius (Anders.Telenius@nrm.se) no later than Tuesday the 5th of April..

Where relevant, please refer to the content of the country page and or country report at GBIF.org. Please reuse the answer you have provided to a question in last year's survey if there have not been any changes.

Preliminary question
Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Part 1: About your Node
This part is about the activities at the national or organizational level and the ability to sustain and start new activities.

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?
This refers to the status of human resources (description of current staff, voluntary or paid effort), the technical infrastructure and the financial resources (presence of budget and timeframe), and if there are any issues in relation to turnover or continuity.

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?
Please elaborate on the themes, main stakeholders, time-span, and funding sources of these main projects.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?
This question relates to strengths and weaknesses of your node that are under your direct control.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node? *This relates to opportunities you could be using, and threats that are occurring outside your direct control (e.g. competition or opportunity for collaboration with other initiatives, changes in government/organisation policies).*

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region
This part is about ongoing international collaborations between Nodes & partners, and about the possibility to create new collaborations and agree on the main focus of joint efforts within the region.

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?
Please refer to all the international/regional projects you are involved in (also outside the GBIF community).

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?
This question refers to what kind of skills, (technical) knowledge, advice, tools, materials, etc. you could offer to other Nodes?

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?
For example in terms of international collaborations, knowledge transfer/capacity enhancement, and expansion of GBIF.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?
Please describe what you would like to see happening, and what has been working well in the region so far in your opinion.

ANDORRA

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?
Yes

Part 1: About your Node
Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?
At this moment, the Node Manager is working only at partial time. We have a small budget that comes from the CENMA. We have the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Andorra.
Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?
We are in a good relation with the different departments of the Government of Andorra and we collect all the biodiversity datasets because we are the only publishers in the GBIF-Andorra.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?
Since the end of the last year we have been updating the dates from Andorra in the international website of GBIF. We have increased a 30%.of our data.
In the future, if it is possible, we would like to make a new website from Andorra to show our data.
Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?
The strengths of our node is that we know all partners and we can collect all biodiversity data. The weakness is that we don't have a complete team with different roles.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?
The first threat is that we don't have enough budgets to continue growing.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?
At this moment we are not working in any common project of GBIF. However, we are a Biodiversity and Geology Research Center so we are working in different European projects, for example, in flora, butterflies, birds…

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

This year we received some help from the Spanish Node with the purpose to update the data from Andorra in the international portal of GBIF. Also, they taught us the procedures to make this in the future by ourselves.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?
Of course we are open to help everybody, however at this moment we don't have any capacity to help the others because our lack of technical knowledge. We only can provide knowledge for cartography and data biodiversity from Andorra.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?
We expect to receive some technical support to increase our knowledge to improve the quality of our data.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?
We think that is very important to continue growing, increasing the knowledge of the abundance and distribution of the global taxa in the International portal of GBIF. Also it is very important to try to involve new countries that can contribute with more information and datasets.

BELGIUM
<u>Preliminary question</u>

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?
Yes.

<u>Part 1: About your Node</u>

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?
Belgian Node was established in 2001 and is currently part of the Belgian Biodiversity Platform funded by the Belgian Sciences Policy(Belspo). Belspo is facing a severe restructuring and might disappear by 2018. The Belgian Biodiversity Platform which consists of 10 people: 7 scientists and 3 IT experts of which GBIF activities cover about 3FTE. Our budget is re-evaluated every 4 years, current budget runs 2013-2017. An external evaluation is running with expected results this summer.

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

Belgian BIF consists of a variety of academic and research institutions, ONGs and regional environment monitoring institutes. They all publish data through GBIF either directly our through the Belgian Node.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

We are revamping our **Belgian Data portal** based on CKAN, open source software. With regional monitoring institutes we are working on **Invasive Alien Species** assessment and European reporting.

We supported spin-off projects namely **AntaBIS** on Antarctic and **SAFRED** on fresh water. We organize and support **communities of practice** on Ecosystem Services, IAS and Biodiversity & Health.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strengths: The Platform is a decentralized structure implemented in two federal institutions and two regional institutions. We do have a stable team of multi-disciplinary scientists and IT experts. We are well known in theScientific/Academic community.

Weaknesses: We should increase the involvement of some stakeholders: Environment Ministry, Citizen science initiatives.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities: Being located at the heart of European Union.
Threats: Belgium Policy is under constant evolution driving federal competences to federated entities.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

The Platform is also the national focal point for **IPBES**. We are part of the **Eklipse** H2020 project. As partner of the **BiodivERsA** network we are hosting their website and CRIS database.

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

We coordinate the 'Encounter Bay' Capacity Enhancement project on ALA technology documentation. We are partners of two BID project call proposals. We are also submitting several capacity enhancement 2016 proposals.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?
We have strong expertise on IAS for which we recently developed and implement Harmonia+, a first-line risk assessment protocol of potentially invasive alien species. We have strong and stable IT team with good expertise in databases, GIS and web development.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?
Exchange of expertise on improving data quality, translations and MOOC...

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?
More collaboration around EU legislation such as Birds/Habitats directives, Water Framework directive, Inspire directive, and the new EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive AlienSpecies...This include a stronger involvement in EU reporting data flows and development of regional use-cases of GBIF data with EU policy relevance.

DENMARK
<u>Preliminary question</u>
Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?
No, DanBIF is in a financially uncertain period, which is still not resolved.
It is not only a matter of finances for travelling but also human resources to do this. See also Q5.

<u>Part 1: About your Node</u>
Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?
DanBIF staff currently is only the node manager. DanBIF currently reduced to activity at natural history museum of Denmark, rather than actual secretariat. Capacity only to focus solely on data mobilization. Maintenance of IPT secured. Situation being pursued to find stable solution, but not found yet – see further elaboration in Q5.
Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?
Very good when there is need.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

Mobilising the datasets in our dataset pipeline, according to our work plan (in Danish). This includes data from: The Natural History Museum of Denmark; A large citizen science and several Atlas projects in Denmark; Research-, Management and conservation -based data, incl. sample/site based data.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strength: Experience, Very good contact with the data owners in Denmark and success in building a national checklist. Willingness of dataproviders when approached directly.

Weakness: lack of resources, lack of general national feeling of obligation to contribute data to GBIF without the node pulling the strings. Data providers expect the node to do almost all the work in final preparation of data for GBIF. Part of this is our own fault, will investigate how to change that attitude. Too few people /resources to work beyond the borders of Denmark, i.e. interacting with the European Nodes regions. Too few people to engage more in helping people use GBIF-data; Limited ability to plan future work that includes obligations to external partners, because of uncertainty in continued funding.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities rather blurred with the current situation.

Threats: Recently hit by three-fold bad luck: 1) national infrastructure for biodiversity (incl. GBIF-node) turned down by new government. 2) Current funding contract ending by end of 2015 3) New government deciding that universities in general should save a LOT of money resulting in cutting staff by approx.10% all over - this affected DanBIF staff.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

None, though funded by EU BON two days a week for work on DINA/Specify project – data moblisation

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

Unfortunately not.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

Currently none, regrettably.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Currently don't know.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Currently don't know.

FINLANDE
Preliminary question

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Yes

<u>Part 1: About your Node</u>

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

There is no separate budget for GBIF activities, it is fused to the Finnish Museum of Natural History core funds. The ict-team had 5 permanent staff and currently 4 project workers. There will be high risk of discontinuation after the project ends. FinBIF/Museum has agreed to maintain the infrastructure with existing staff but now the core budget has been cut 20% and also the current node managers' contract was terminated (included in the 5 permanent staff).

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

In the implementation level there is a strong will to collaborate, but currently FinBIF makes one-on-one agreements with databases that wish to join (FinBIF data agregation). I would have wished we could have had a consortium agreement and also collaboration around developing a national data policy. This was not OK for the HoD, who tends to see others as potential competitors and not collaborators.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

FinBIF data infrastructure for decision making. The main stakeholders are Finnish Environment Services (SYKE) and Finnish Natural Resources Center. Financing comes from the ministry of Finances.

Implementation of the EU IAS directive into FinBIF data structure. The main stakeholders are Finnish Environment Services (SYKE) and Finnish Natural Resources Center. Funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strengts: Highly qualified staff, technical collaboration with CSC the center for scientific computing, long tradition and network of citizen scientist, digitizing facility, collection management and observation databases.

Weaknesses: communication with the national BD community, communication with research data users

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities: Better collaboration nationally and especially in Nordic-Baltic region could materialize in funded projects (for example Nordic research council)

Threaths: failure to bring together other biodiversity initiatives (like LTER and LifeWatch) nationally because they see us as competitors

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

I'm currently working with a funding proposal to Nordic research council, trying to pool competencies and develop shared tools and services for Nordic-Baltic biodiversity research

IAS collaboration with EASIN needs to be established

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

Workshop for writing the proposal to Nordic research council in Oslo, where Swedish and Norvegian Nodes were present togeather with Danish and Swedish LifeWatch partners.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

Currently very little. Data sharing cross-borders for specific themes for example IAS would be nice.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Project proposals, sharing of check-lists, data processing work-flows and tools, BDI curriculum and teaching collaboration...

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Concrete project proposals that would aid non-gbif countries to join

France

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

yes

Part 1: About your Node
Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

The GBIF France node is well established (since 2006, under the ministry of research) and integrated in the MNHN- Direction of Collection in Paris. There will be a special GBIF France day the 10 of June 2016 for the 10 years of the node.

The funding of the French GBIF node is via the ANR project: e-Recolnat and planned until the end of 2016. We don't know yet for the years after but we are exploring several possibilities, and we have the support from the people in charge of GBIF in the Ministry of Research.

Node staff: 2 Part time coordinators (<20%) : coordinator and Head of Delegation and scientific coordinator

4 full time positions: 1 node manager, 2 IT engineers and 1 Data engineer (help to the providers)

But lots of turnover due to non permanent positions.

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

GBIF France is better known now at national level and we are working with all the biggest nationals organisations that deal with biodiversity. We are present in their committees.

However the landscape is quite complex and there is sometimes overlapping between the different institutions and it is difficult to harmonise all of this.

There are positive aspects: we try to harmonise the data flux at national level and share the work to help all types of publishers.

But also negative one: due to lack of funding, it creates competitivity.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

- The **SEP2D** project has been accepted (to continue SEP-CEPDEC efforts) and just begins.

Sud Expert Plantes Développement Durable (SEP2D, 22 countries in Africa, the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia) aims at helping developing countries better know, preserve and use their biodiversity. The first phase was more focused on basic topics; the new phase (2015-2019) will turn to applied issues in biodiversity management, conservation and sustainable use, and to the interface between research and action, with a focus on partnerships with the private sector, around four main themes, which cover the key issues regarding plants conservation and sustainable use: (1) forestry / REDD+, (2) mining, (3) cosmetics and pharmacy, and (4) agriculture.

=> GBIF France will only work on a small aspect of the project: trainings and help of data connexion.

- The **implementation of the ALA portal** at national level and for the GBIF community. We began last year and we continue the work with the implementation of the spatial portal.

 - At national level, we contribute to the **e-Recolnat** project: the aim is to develop digitization, access and use of specimen data, and to the development of "**Les Herbonautes**", crowdsourcing project on herbarium labels transcription.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strength:

- ◦ Development of a strong cooperation with other biodiversity data related structures at national level.
- ◦ **SEP2D** project launched

Weaknesses

- ◦ **Complexity** of the landscape: => difficulty to follow all the national reorganisations and their political aspects (exemple: creation of a new "Agency for Biodiversity"). GBIF France is a small entity and it is difficult to find its place but we are working on.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities: There will be the 10 years of GBIF France, we would like to show the benefit of GBIF during a special day.

Threats

- **Future funding** for the node after 2016
- **Non-permanent positions** = difficulty to maintain the staff, loss of knowledge

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

Not directly inside the EU project but following the advice of GBIF Spain, and due to the fact that we had to change our servers, we contacted France grilles which take part of the EGI project at European level. We now have our servers on virtual machines and it is free.

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

- Project Encounter bay with Belgium, Spain and Portugal on ALA documentation.
- Interactions with GBIF-Germany for the Europeana project and the ALA data portal installation at the BGBM
- Mentoring France-Madagascar

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

- Contribution and cooperation around the implementation of ALA portal at European level

Development of tools:

- "simple-harvest" tool for indexation (available in GBIFLab)

- "SAGG" for Statistics and Analyses of Gaps on GBIF. This tool provides statistics and new data visualization to evaluate the biases in the results of the requests.

- training material that can be translate

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

- Best practices and Return of experience, collaboration in EU projects
- Going on with the strengthening of the community, the project around the ALE implementation is a good way of working together
- Communication on European meetings about biodiversity and knowing who goes where.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

strengthen the capacity of the European Nodes community to build relevant and strong

projects and take advantage of the best opportunities in EU funding.

We should try to involved more countries; lack of countries is directly correlated with lack of data.

Content: raising the number of data and trying to fill the gaps must stay a priority

GERMANY
Preliminary question

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Yes – Jörg Holetschek

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

Well institutionalised with 9 sub-nodes for certain thematic/taxonomic groups (e.g. insects);

~20 people at the different institutions, most of them on permanent positions paid by the respective institution (not GBIF-DE).

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

If projects are being funded, collaborations are going on. Otherwise, communication is only on the most basic level.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

Edaphobase: Soil zoology network: BGBM and Senckenberg Natural History Museum Görlitz; funded by federal ministry for research and science, 2011-18

GFBio: German Federation for the curation of Biological Data; 19 partners; 2013-18, funded by the German Research Foundation

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

+ thematically specialised staff in each node
+ many institutions involved lead to many projects and project spin-offs
- coordination involves a lot of people

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

+ Thematically oriented nodes lead to several special interest networks with specialised portals
   (e.g. for algae & protists, German botany, German Virtual Herbarium, GeoCASe)
- No direct funding for GBIF-DE (only by supporting institutions)

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

GGBN (Global Genome Biodiversity Network), AnnoSys (generic Annotation System), BioCASe Provider Software, World Flora Online project, Europeana (OpenUp!, the Natural History Aggregator), Names registration for algae

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

With GBIF-France for the Europeana project and the ALA data portal installation at the BGBM

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

GGBN (Data standard + portal), AnnoSys (software), BioCASe Provider Software (software + helpdesk/support), B-HIT (Harvesting software), OpenUp! Natural History Aggregator (for feeding biodiversity data into Europeana), BioCASe Monitor

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Collective initiatives on digitisation and for shared floras/faunas

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Concerted efforts to fill major data gaps in Europe. Combine strength of individual European GBIF nodes for a multi-language portal of European biodiversity. Concerted efforts for EU funding applications. Support European institutions in countries that are not yet a GBIF node to share their data via GBIF.

Edited by Gabi Dröge und Jörg Holetschek

IRELAND

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?
The Irish Node operates under a 5 year Service-Level Agreement, which is up for re tendering at the end of 2017. This provides funding to employ six full time staff, covers office running costs, IT support and a small operational budget.

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners? Collaboration with national organisation is generally positive, however, it does vary depending on the organisations. Generally, the longer established organisation are slow to avail of the data management and information services provided by the National Node, whereas the newer organisations are more open to collaboration. However, this divide is changing slowly.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

1. **Promoting citizen science recording networks**

Promoting more active recording and surveying of biological diversity. The node has developed on-line tools to provide services for recorders to submit and manage their data, while contributing their data to national initiatives. Active recording of some taxonomic groups, eg, mammals, butterflies, bees, dragonflies, vascular plants is also being promoted, supported by a programme of species surveying and identification workshops. In addition, the Node is actively managing two national monitoring programmes; on butterflies and bumblebees, and is hosting a special week-long Island BioBlitz, involving 5 of Ireland's off-shore islands.

Stakeholders: voluntary and professional recording community.

Funded through staff time from core budget. Ongoing

2. **Development of National Biodiversity Indicators**

The Node has responsibility for development and presentation of a suite of National Biodiversity Indicators for Ireland. This has involved agreeing the suite of indicators, compiling data on the indicators and to make this information available on a special website http://indicators.biodiversityireland.ie/

Stakeholder: National Parks and Wildlife Service (Statutory Nature Conservation Agency) and other public bodies.

Funded through staff time from core budget. Ongoing

3. Development of a National Sampling Framework

One of the systemic weaknesses with citizen science recording is that it is often unstructured and unsystematic, thus difficult to us for assessments or trends analysis. The Node is developing a bioclimatic map of Ireland, and an on-line survey management system tool to assist the roll out of national surveys. This National Sampling Framework is a shared-service for partner organisations with which to design and implement a more robust survey design.

Stakeholder: Partner scientific bodies and Non-governmental organisations.

Funded through Data Centre's core budget. Delivery date: April 2016

4. Overseeing implementation of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

In late 2015, the Irish Node published the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020 – a call to action to help make Ireland a more pollinator friendly island. The national Plan is endorsed by 61 partner organisations and identifies 84 actions which partners have agreed to help implement. The Irish Node has just appointed a Pollinator Officer to oversee implementation of this national plan.

Stakeholders: Partner public and Non-governmental organisations

Funded as an 'additional project'. Funding for 1 year (until Feb 2017) but with possibility of extension for three years (end 2019).

5. Invasive Species information and data provision.

The Node continues to manage data and information on Invasive Species in Ireland, and contributing information to both EU and other international information portals and systems. Since the start of 2016 the Node has increased responsibilities for assisting Ireland's statutory Nature Conservation Agency, National Parks and Wildlife Service, in implementation of the new EU Invasive Species Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species.

Stakeholders: National Parks and Wildlife Service (Statutory Nature Conservation Agency).

Funded as an additional project by National Parks and Wildlife Service. Commitment until end of 2018.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strength: The governance structure for the Data Centre provides maximum flexibility for delivery of the work programme, while retaining oversight and very beneficial buy in for key partner organisations.

Weakness: The Node operates as a service-level agreement, delivered by the private sector. This is an unusual structure for delivery of public services, and can be an obstacle to collaborative projects with some public bodies.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunity: to provide a clearer and stronger data provision role within the statutory planning & development process
Threat: changes to the funding and functions of the Node's commissioning body.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?
- Invasive Species information and data provision to EASIN & IUCN.
- European level vegetation data collaborations
- European Red List of Habitats
- Provision of bumblebee data to the Climatic Risk and Distribution Atlas of European Bumblebees
- Provision of Crop Wild Relative data to EURISCO portal
- Provision of butterfly monitoring scheme data to the EU TRUSTEE project and EEA Grassland Butterfly Index

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?
No.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?
Experiences of contributing to the science-policy interface. Building citizen science networks and development of supports to build capacity across the sector.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Knowledge exchange on experiences, best practice, tools development, perhaps based on thematic areas.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

More co-ordinated data and information mobilisation to assist delivery of EU policy needs, eg on Invasive Species.

ISRAEL

1. Questionnaire

2. *Preliminary question*

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year?

No, but Ofer (our Head of delegation) will come

1. *Part 1: About your Node*

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

The node is quite young however our biodiversity information site (BIOGIS) is quite old (10 years)

Q2: Can you briefly describe your node Staff?
   a. 1.   Head of delegation, 2. Academic advisor (professor at the Hebrew U) 3. Node manager, 4. Programmer, 5. GIS expert,

Q3: What are the top 3 projects you are working on?

   Upgrading the site design and UI

   Expanding the data base

   Developing tools to analyze the data online

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Well established, good connection with nature authorities in Israel and the science community

Weaknesses - We need more staff

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities - The government and public understanding of the importance of local and international GBIF

Threats- none

1. Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the top 3 broader projects you are involved in?

Working with urban planner in order to bring to their attention the importance of using biodiversity data

Working with high school teens

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations with other GBIF Nodes this year?

Not yet

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

BioGIS (our website)

Q9: What do you expect from other European Nodes?

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Edited by: Royi Zidon

Preliminary question

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Yes

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

The node consists of a node manager (part time job parallel to his PostDoc) and a programmer (part time job parallel to his PhD) and some technical support from the GIS unit in the university.

The salaries are university scholarships and are not settled as "position".   We were lucky and the turnover rate is not big – however we are afraid on future continuity because of the academic progress of the staff (we hope that our programmer will not finish his PhD soon so that he can continue with us ☺).

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

This is not always easy. One important partner is reluctant to share data (only partly).
There is a great need to invest more in strengthening the network.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?
1. Establishing the renwewed national portal –The project started because of feedback on user unfriendly features of the national portal. A UX expert hired for the project a year ago enabled a big progress. The new website is ready for testing and we hope that it will be ready for public release in the coming 4 months. Funding was available thanks to additional temporary support of the national node.
2. Establishing a hosting environment for publishing – we expect to finish it by the end of 2016.
3. New Red Site for threatened plant species was developed in the Israel Nature and Parks Authority – the website is active and flourishing. Currently it is not connected to the node – but next stage will be to integrate it with the node.
4. Work on assessment for threatened birds in Israel. A web based platform was established and distribution data is integrated into the system. Target: release in the end of 2016.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?
Strengths:
Strong development team with good spirit of collaboration.
An advanced national portal with powerful analysis tools
Weaknesses:
Network is not well established.
Data flow between partners and node is not advanced enough.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities:
• The renewed national portal will advance awareness to biodiversity data and encourage data use.
• Integration of new sources of information (diversity of initiatives) and improving data flow to the node will strengthen the functioning of the node.
Threats:
• Diversity of initiatives – that will encourage weakening competition rather than fruitful collaboration
• Lack of continuity of working staff.
• Fund availability

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

Unfortunately, none.

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

Yes. We got helpful advice from the Belgian node about establishing a hosting environment.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

Our goal is to provide our strong analysis tools as services that could be used by the community.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

We would like to learn from the experience of other nodes and share ideas. Unfortunately, currently we lack connections to our close neighboring countries. We hope that European Nodes can serve as a bridge for communication and collaboration and wish for more peaceful times to allow better regional cooperation also in biodiversity data.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

We are new to the European GBIF region – with low involvement. So it is hard for me to assess. The cooperation and knowledge exchange in the international level have proven important. Adoption of Biodiversity informatics tools that are used by other nodes is fruitful. The information fair in the GB22 nodes meeting was really fruitful and interesting. Operative working groups can enhance the networking.

NORWAY

Preliminary question

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Yes, GBIF Norway will attend with Node manager Dag Endresen, database manager Christian Svindseth, node member Wouter Koch, and member of the GBIF science committee Anders Finstad.

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

The Norwegian Research Council represents Norway in GBIF as the head of delegation since 2004, and provides the funding for the national GBIF node. The Norwegian GBIF node was established in 2005 and is now in the final year of the 3rd funding period: (1) 2005-2008, 3 years; (2) 2009-2011, 3 years; (3) 2012-2016, 5 years. The funding for the node was in the past gradually increased at the start of each new period, and is also index regulated at the expected inflation rate. The current total budget for node activities in 2016 is 2.7 MNOK or approximately 286.000 Euro. The Norwegian GBIF node has 1,5 positions for dedicated staff time. However, the node has a very valuable collaboration agreement with the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Center (Artsdatabanken.no) with formalized sharing of responsibilities and tasks. However, the limitation of 1,5 dedicated staff positions at the node remains the main challenge to fulfill the expected deliverables and results for an operational GBIF node. The activity level and expected deliverables from the node is steadily increasing, but the available dedicated staff resources remain the same!

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

The active and sustainable collaboration with data publishers in Norway is steadily improving. Progress towards integration of GBIF-mobilized data for practical use in research and national decision-making processes is very important for the perceived importance among the data publishers of maintaining an effective data flow of updated records.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

1. Maintaining data flow and publication of updated Norwegian datasets in GBIF.

2. Mobilization of identified new Norwegian data sets not yet published in GBIF.
3. Data validation routines with feedback to the data owner of flagged issues related to suspicious localities and coordinates; taxon names not following the national checklist; temporal issues, etc.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strengths: GBIF Norway has excellent backing from and partnership with a strong and collaborative national network for biodiversity information. Good national understanding and support for the GBIF mandate of free and open access to biodiversity information worldwide. National partners and data owners are within their own time-limitations in principle always positive to sharing biodiversity data open and freely.

Weakness: (1) Lack of resources at the node to meet the increasing demand and requests for support regarding scientific use of GBIF-mobilized biodiversity data. (2) Insufficient staff resources for active contact to stimulate mobilization of identified Norwegian datasets not yet published in GBIF. (3) Lack of a formalized culture for including data management plans, archiving and publishing in project based nationally funded biodiversity activities. (4) Because of the increased activity level on data publication and expected deliverables on maintaining updated data publication flow, without adjusted budgets at the node, the node priorities is further narrowed in on data mobilization.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

Opportunities: Further progress on automatisation of tasks at the node and delegation of technical tasks (such as institutional IPT installations and preparations of unstructured raw data) to other national partner institutes in Norway might perhaps release some of the needed staff resources at the node for coordination, data quality routines and capacity to deliver on requests for support on scientific use of GBIF-mediated data.

Threats: Increasing activity level and expected results to be delivered from the node under the very same budget limitations will lead to a more narrow focus on core activities related to maintaining data mobilization flow. Limited capacity to maintain a growing data network might eventually result in an increased delay in the publication of unstructured new datasets delivered to the node. We will need to delegate more of the work with data preparations and conversion to Darwin Core to the data publishers. We might need to start refusing unstructured datasets – which currently make up the majority of at least the new datasets.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

* GBIF Norway is part of a prototype Norwegian LifeWatch activity coordinated from the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA.no).

* The UiO Natural History Museum, hosting the Norwegian GBIF-node, is a partner in CETAF.
* The European GBIF nodes submitted a EU COST project application that was unsuccessful, but could be improved and resubmitted.

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

The Nordic GBIF nodes maintain contact and try to coordinate activities to some degree. The regional European GBIF node meetings provide a useful tool for coordination, however the potential for a more coordinated regional network and sharing of responsibilities could be utilized better.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

1. Collaboration on technical solutions and/or algorithms for data validation.
2. GBIF Norway can contact and support Norwegian institutes for targeted data mobilization of biodiversity data not yet published to the GBIF network, when the demand for such Norwegian datasets are identified by nodes in other countries.
3. Technical solutions for transcribing label information from images of herbarium material.
4. Technical solutions to support the scientific use of GBIF-mediated data including API and programming with R.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Collaboration on technical tasks and administrative responsibilities such as data validation and data mobilisation. Moving towards actual delegation of common responsibilities between EU nodes.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Common targets for (joint) data mobilization with focus on identified demand for data types, species groups, or similar. Mobilizing data that are in demand is the primary purpose of nodes. Collaborative technical solutions for data validation or other tasks that all nodes have. Delegation of responsibilities could release staff time to start addressing other demanded tasks. Common goals and activities for supporting scientific use of GBIF-mobilized data. Assisting scientists with programmatic solutions for accessing GBIF-mobilized data and combing occurrence or names checklist data with data from other sources such as climate or environment data, phenotypic data, molecular data, etc. Extending supported data types to further improve support for measurement data, species interactions, multimedia, genetic data, etc.

Dag Endresen, GBIF Norway

Portugal

Questionnaire

Preliminary question

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year?

Yes

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

The node is hosted by ISA. The funding sources of the Node are, in a shared costs model, the host institution (Instituto Superior de Agronomia, ISA) and the national agency for science and research in Portugal ([Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia](#), FCT). This is under a framework set by a protocol signed by both institutions ending December 2016.

Q2: Can you briefly describe your node Staff?

Only one person, the Node Manager, in full time.

Q3: What are the top 3 projects you are working on?

GBIF_PALOP – Promote GBIF in the African Portuguese speaking countries through documentation and seminars

– translation of manuals and documentation to portuguese;

– organization of workshops in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau

Encounter Bay (ALA Node portal internationalization)

– Translation of ALA platform to Portuguese

– Creation of a technical manual

– translation of manuals to Portuguese

CoopBioPlat - A cooperative framework for building a common platform to serve biodiversity information at national level

– national implementation of ALA

– establishment of a MoU for the establishment of a transnational cooperation framework in biodiversity information platforms

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strengths

Good institutional support by the funding agency and the host institution.

Good relationship with main stakeholders.

The node is recognised as a key partner in biodiversity information initiatives.

Weakeness

Lack of human resources.

Opportunities

The implementation of the national RI PORBIOTA

Threaths

Delay in funding and implementation of national RI

The lack of human and other resources by main stakeholders, namelly institutions holding natural history collections.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

H2020 EGI-Engage, at WP6, Competence Centre Lifewatch, through the Portuguese contribution to the RI, PORBIOTA;

Implementation of ALA ("Atlas of Living Australia") as national portals, through projects Encounter BAY and CoopBioPlat.

Belgium, France, Spain. - Encounter Bay

GBIF Spain, GBIF Argentina, SiBBr, CRBio (Costa Rica), GBIF France – CoopBioPlat (ERANet LAC Pilot Coordination Action)

Practice in the implementation of ALA in a cloud environment.

Networking in preparing multi-partnership access to international funds, namely H2020. exchange of best practices and tools.Most experiences nodes should provide leadership.

The network of european GBIF nodes is very strong, as adknowledged in the COST review report. The collaboration should be based on funded projects, that will ensure commitment to tasks.

Spain

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Yes

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

We are six people working at GBIF.ES plus a Node Manager who deals just with administrative matters. The organization has just changed since Francisco Pando left two months ago.

The budget is around 250.000€ per year but money always arrives late so we must apply for an extension of the time limit. This has bad implications for staff contracts, we usually have 4-5 months length contracts.

5 servers at IFCA (images server, mysql server, data portal, indexing databases, elearning)

1 server at CTI hosting the web page and another that was the mirrror of old data.gbif.org

6 Local servers for development and backups.

Spain does not pay the GBIF membership since 2011.

There are always issues in relation to continuity. We hope that with the new manager things would turn easier.

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

The relation with national institutions that share data via GBIF is pretty good and close. We offer technical support and training workshops with very good acceptance. We develop software on collection management and data validation, we have fluent communication with users of these applications.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

Data portal based on ALA

Documentation on the data portal

Species information portal

Plinian Core Work Group at TDWG

Image hosting and publishing

Collections management software development

Data validation software development

Study the real use of our Software applications

Bioinformatics workshops

New web for GBIF Spain

New elearning platform

Standardize the names of all institutions/projects/databases hosted that collaborate with GBIF spain

Natusfera: platform for citizen science based on iNaturalist

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Data portal based on ALA

Training

Software of Collections and Projects management

Software of Data Validation

Human resources

Financial problems and administrative problems

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

No government nowadays. A change in national government could offer new expectations about science and research in Spain. The actual policy generate a very unstable situation.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

CoopBioPlat: collaborative project with GBIF Nodes of Argentina (SNDB), Brazil (SiBBr), Costa Rica (CRBio), France, Portugal and Spain to reach an institutional agreement to

cooperate on biodiversity data portals (national, based on ALA); and demonstrate technical cooperation and progress in that area.

Iberoamerican Infrastructure for Biodiversity Information I3B: as a strategic platform for collaboration and scientific communication. Its purpose is to contribute significantly to make the relevant biodiversity information not only available to the scientific community, but useful for the management and sustainable development of LatinAmerica. It is a network within CYTED. It has just finished

Plinian Core Work Group. Partners for the development of Plinian Core Standard are InBio from Costa Rica, University of Granada (UG, Spain), the Alexander von Humboldt Institute (IAvH , Colombia), the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (Conabio, Mexico) and the University of Sao Paulo (USP, Brazil). A "Plinian Core Task Group" within TDWG "Interest Group on species Information" in being proposed.

Preparing a propsal within the Capacity Enhancement Support Programme with SiB Colombia

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

France, Portugal within the CoopBioplat Project

Belgium, France, Portugal and Spain:ALA Node Portal Internationalization

We have supported Andorra publishing data

We helped France and Portugal to implement their elearning platform which is located in our server.

We transcribe some of our courses in order that Portugal could translate the content to Portuguese

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

Software on Collection management (Elysia) and technical support (training, helpdesk, etc.). Only in Spanish and Portuguese

Software on Data Validation (Darwin Test) and technical support (training, helpdesk, etc.). In Spanish, English and Portuguese

Technical knowledge on national data portals as well as a guide on how to use it

Reuse our elearning platform (although we are going to implement a new one, no more Atutor)

Training courses

Advice on data publication, use of IPT, licenses, ...

Image hosting and advice

Informatics facility with 25 pcs for meetings, working groups, workshops. etc

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Communication between the nodes. Get familiar with the strengths of other European Nodes and have benefit from them: european training, share working plans of European Nodes...

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Can't say much about this as I am just getting familiar with the European family :)

Sweden

<u>Preliminary question</u>

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? If not, can you explain why?

Yes.

<u>Part 1: About your Node</u>

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node?

Node´s funding at present safe for 2016 (but GBIF membership fee safe 2016-2020!). Node´s funding 2017 onwards pending.

Q2: How do you experience the collaboration with the national/organisational network of partners?

Necessary collaboration(s) mostly works well. HoD at funding agency (Swedish Research Council) works OK; provider´s network fine but, alas, expected collaboration

on national Biodiversity Informatics infrastructure (SeIBER) recently broke down because of supposedly collaborating initiative´s in-fighting behavoiur.

Q3: What are the main projects you are working on?

Collaboration with providers and others in proposed national BI research infrastructure (SeIBER):

1. withing the **Swedish Museum of Natural History** a) the long-standing DINA project (web-based open source collection management system including public presentation of species´ information), b) the likewise permanent CGI (the Centre for Genetic Identification), c) the persistent Molecular Systematics lab, d) the SweBOL bar-coding project, and

2. outside the museum with

   - the **Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences** hosting a) the permanent Species Information Centre, b) Swedish LifeWatch, c) WRAM (Wireless Remote Animal Monitoring), and d) RINFI (National Forest Inventory since the 1910´s)
   - with **Lund University** hosting CAnMove (the Centre for Animal Movement Research),
   - with **SMHI** (the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute) supplying a wealth of marine data,
   - with **Gothenburg University** covering marine research and international contacts on marine issues,
   - with Stockholm University/SciLifeLab and the Royal Institute of Technology on bioinformatics, bacterial DNA and microplankton inventories in the Baltic proper.

All expected to become funded thorugh the Swedish Research Council.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node?

Strengths are: reasonably good coverage of <u>existing</u> occurrence (specimens/observational) datasets (but there´s a host of additional data to be mobilized!); efficient harvesting procedures (IPT implemented throughout); high and steady inflow of observational data, steady inflow of specimen data; active promotional and collaborative nodes work; several sample-based datasets coming up.

Weaknesses: insecure funding situation at present; minimum node staff.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node?

See Q2 and Q4. Opportunities: new data types developing (sample-based data); potential collaboration in national infrastructure (SeIBER).
Threats: Restricted funds split between initiatives and (finally) withdrawn due to (other´s) unwillingness to collaborate.

Q6: What are the broader projects you are involved in?

DINA, EU BON, GEO BON, UNEP GEO-6 etc.

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations and/or interactions with other GBIF Participant Nodes this year?

No.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes?

 (Technical) knowledge, advice, tools, materials.

Q9: What do you expect and/or desire from other European Nodes?

Not myself being technically inclined or knowledgeable I would be happy to collaborate more closely with other nodes/node managers as well on other international matters than explicitly GBIF data functionality-related issues but find little or no time to start up such activities myself. Organizational integration of underlying infrastructural components issues as well as user-end matters would be a valuable (as mentioned e. g. GEO BON applications, digitization initiatives, data mobilization or invasive and protected species questions).

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe?

Ah well…we all do our best don´t we? By continuously unraveling data sources and by improving data presentation I would like to see GBIF continue to become even more acknowledged and accepted as a standard tool for basic biodiversity information retrieval. We´re on track now…and Europe does pretty well in this respect – but obviously we constantly remain at risk of being dismantled because funding is always at stake.

UK

Questionnaire

Preliminary question

Q0: Are you planning to attend our Regional meeting this year? NO

Part 1: About your Node

Q1: How established and sustainable is your Node? Established and still sustainable though going through a period of change.

Q2: Can you briefly describe your node Staff? One post between two people loading data. Part of a technical post providing support. Three staff involved with recording community engagement.

Q3: What are the top 3 projects you are working on? Migrating to Atlas of Living Australia is probably the major one at present. Includes working with recorders to improve openness of data and getting engagement across all countries in the UK.

Q4: What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of your Node? Current version strength and weakness is extensive access controls. Encourages contribution but penalty is performance and stability.

Q5: What are the Opportunities & Threats for your Node? Opportunities are openness agenda. Most serious threat at the moment is funding.

Part 2: About Europe as GBIF region

Q6: What are the top 3 broader projects you are involved in? None – though collaboration around the Atlas would be the most sensible.

Q7: Did you have concrete collaborations with other GBIF Nodes this year? No.

Q8: What can you offer to other European Nodes? Very limited at the moment – things are fairly tight.

Q9: What do you expect from other European Nodes? Nothing but feel that there are collaboration opportunities around the Atlas.

Q10: What should/could we achieve together in Europe? See above – assessing the real opportunity for Atlas collaboration.