GBIF
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...free and open access
to biodiversity data

Mobilizing primary biodiversity data associated with EIAs

Steps in EIA process	Use of biodiversity data captured and published to global standards
SCREENING	Taxonomic, ecological and geographical data used to assess the state of the natural environment and ecological sensitivity of the site
SCOPING	Use of existing natural history records and inventories to provide initial guidance on what could be the key impacts
ASSESSMENT	Generation of a biodiversity dataset for the project site – records of occurrence, distribution and abundance of species; structure and role of biodiversity elements; rare and endangered taxa
EVALUATION	Improved cumulative impact assessment based on available data from other projects in the area; profiling of threats based on conservation status of species/habitats
MITIGATION	Access to biodiversity data for mitigation management
EIA REPORT	New set of biodiversity data generated; Data inputs to other EIAs
REVIEW	Data evaluation services; Data quality assessment
DECISION	Decisions made with greater reliability, verifiability, re-usability, transparency and credibility

Anticipated benefits at different steps of the EIA process

All Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) generate biodiversity records. However, these data are seldom published.

Partnership with IAIA

The principles of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation advocated in Articles 8, 9 and 14 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) provide a strong case for promoting biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment. In 2008, GBIF and the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) initiated a project to develop protocols, processes, and tools for publishing biodiversity data generated during EIAs.

## Benefits to EIA practitioners

- Accessible biodiversity data to assess the state of biodiversity prior to, during and after the impact assessment studies
- Improved reliability, verifiability, credibility and transparency of the EIAs
- Increased visibility through free and open access to EIA biodiversity data
- Practitioners gain recognition by publishing Data Papers in academic journals

Available products

- Suite of data capture and publishing tools and services such as GBIF Excel Templates, GBIF Spreadsheet Processor, GBIF Integrated Publishing Toolkit (IPT)
- GBIF-IAIA Best Practice Guide
  o Improving EIA practice: Best Practice Guide for publishing primary biodiversity data, accessible at http://links.gbif.org/eia_biodiversity_data_publishing_guide_en_v1 (complete version)
  o Publishing EIA-Related Primary Biodiversity Data: GBIF-IAIA Best Practice Guide, accessible at http://www.iaia.org/publicdocuments/special-publications/sp7_web.pdf (summary guide)

Pilot projects

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) were commissioned to develop a prototype of the EIA biodiversity data publishing framework, including (a) a web-based EIA primary biodiversity data publishing facility, (b) a suite of tools, standards and services for capture, management and publishing of EIA-related biodiversity data, (c) best practice guides for EIA practitioners and (d) solutions addressing legal, social, cultural and political issues.
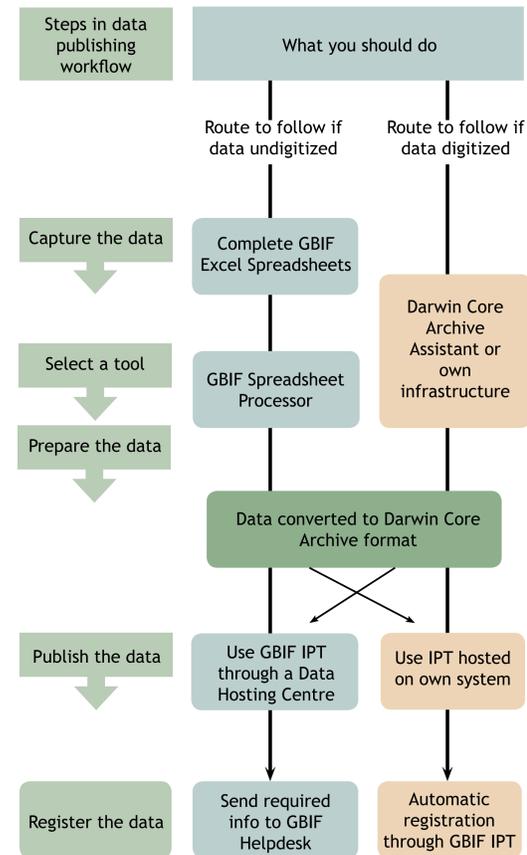
Options for preparing and publishing primary biodiversity data

About GBIF

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) was established by governments in 2001 to encourage free and open access to biodiversity data, via the Internet. Through a global network of national and thematic nodes, and a Secretariat based in Copenhagen, Denmark, GBIF promotes and facilitates the mobilization, access, discovery and use of information about the occurrence of organisms over time and across the planet.

Vision – A world in which biodiversity information is freely and universally available for science, society, and a sustainable future.

Mission – To be the foremost global resource for biodiversity information, and engender smart solutions for environmental and human well-being.

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