

BOUCHOUT DECLARATION

Bouchout Declaration

The Bouchout Declaration for Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management

Our natural world is a source of food, water, resources, protection and enjoyment that our society needs. The richness and complexity of nature, and the speed of new discoveries made possible by genomic and digital technologies, challenge us to find new ways to benefit from and be better custodians of the natural world. Digital information management systems can bring together the wealth of information now dispersed in a myriad of different documents, institutions, and locations. With such systems, we can harness the benefits of rapid discovery and open up our legacy of over 260 years of biological observations.

Intelligent information management provides mechanisms to link our understanding of biodiversity to the biomedical research that seeks new solutions to healthcare, to track change as it affects agricultural activities and food security, to support modelling of life on Earth, and to enable new discoveries. To take advantage of these opportunities, information must be made easily discoverable and openly and freely available.

The mission of the signatories is to promote free and open access to data and information about biodiversity by people and computers and to bring about an inclusive and shared knowledge management infrastructure that will allow our society to respond more effectively to the challenges of the present and future.

Collaborative Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management can bring together the achievements of many independent biodiversity projects, yet will allow them to retain their identity and missions. The resulting virtual pool of information will allow new services to emerge for everyone who relies on information about life on Earth. Awareness of, access to, preservation, and curation of information will be enhanced by a shared and seamless network of infrastructures. By enabling tracking data linking and citations, all who create, organise, or mobilise data will be fully credited for their contributions.

Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management will improve availability to information, increase the role and relevance of its participants, increase their impact, and reduce costs. As a society, we

will understand our natural world better, manage it better, enable new types of discovery, return greater benefits to biomedical and agricultural endeavours, and increase food security.

As signatories, we encourage an overarching approach to Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management which is based on the following fundamental principles:

- The free and open use of digital resources about biodiversity and associated access services;
- Licenses or waivers that grant or allow all users a free, irrevocable, world-wide, right to copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly as well as to build on the work and to make derivative works, subject to proper attribution consistent with community practices, while recognizing that providers may develop commercial products with more restrictive licensing.
- Policy developments that will foster free and open access to biodiversity data;
- Tracking the use of identifiers in links and citations to ensure that sources and suppliers of data are assigned credit for their contributions;
- An agreed infrastructure, standards and protocols to improve access to and use of open data;
- Registers for content and services to allow discovery, access and use of open data;
- Persistent identifiers for data objects and physical objects such as specimens, images and taxonomic treatments with standard mechanisms to take users directly to content and data;
- Linking data using agreed vocabularies, both within and beyond biodiversity, that enable participation in the Linked Open Data Cloud;
- Dialogue to refine the concept, priorities and technical requirements of Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management;
- A sustainable Open Biodiversity Knowledge Management that is attentive to scientific, sociological, legal, and financial aspects.

Biodiversity-related institutions and individuals who share the vision expressed in the Bouchout Declaration are warmly encouraged to sign the Declaration.

If you intend to sign the declaration click [here](#). If you have further queries please use the form on this page [top right](#).

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