

**Resolution of Cooperation¹
between
The Secretariat of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group
and the
Global Biodiversity Information Facility Secretariat**

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) (www.caff.is) is the biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council. Its mandate is to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity and communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices that ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources. In order to successfully conserve Arctic flora and fauna and allow for sustainable utilization, baseline data on long-term status and trends of Arctic biodiversity, habitat and ecosystem health are required.

A core activity of CAFF is to provide information and data for informed decision-making on Arctic biodiversity issues. The Arctic Biodiversity Data Service (ABDS) (www.abds.is) is the data-management framework for managing data generated through CAFF. The ABDS is an online, interoperable data management system which serves as a focal point and common platform for all CAFF data being gathered through its programs and projects as well as a dynamic source for up-to-date circumpolar Arctic biodiversity information and emerging trends. It allows for discovery, archiving and access to data at various spatial, temporal, and taxonomic scales (e.g., populations, regions, nations, circumpolar, biomes, and habitats), permitting users to explore relationships and factors driving change. Such a framework is essential to ensure effective, consistent, and long-term management of the data resulting from CAFF and partners' activities.

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) (www.gbif.org) was founded in 2001 as an intergovernmental scientific infrastructure aimed at providing free and open access to biodiversity data, via the Internet. It offers a single online access point to more than 640 million biodiversity records published from over 15 000 datasets from 780 institutions. The GBIF operates through a network of national and thematic nodes, and its Secretariat located in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Purpose

The purpose of this Resolution of Cooperation is to strengthen collaboration between GBIF and CAFF to improve the visibility, completeness, usefulness, complementarity and deduplication of data and information exchanged between them, thereby adding value to the products and services of both.

Rationale and Objectives

The Arctic plays host to a globally significant array of biodiversity. The size and nature of Arctic ecosystems make them of critical importance to the biological, chemical and physical balance of the globe. Dramatic changes (e.g. climate change) now underway are threatening the resilience and sustainability of the Arctic's biodiversity and the overall balance of its ecosystems. Continued rapid change in the Arctic will have global repercussions affecting the planet as a whole. Enhanced availability of data and information on biodiversity will be critical for informing decisions relating to the Arctic in the light of these changes.

GBIF's Participant countries currently include seven of the eight member states of the Arctic Council (Russia is not a participant, Canada is an associate participant, and the other Arctic Council member states are voting members). The data mobilized through GBIF include over three million occurrence records from north of the Arctic Circle encompassing almost 20,000 species. These data come from over 1,000 datasets published from institutions in 30 countries. At the same time, the CBMP mobilizes significant volumes of data for the purposes of its monitoring activities. Through technical and institutional collaboration, the

¹ For the purposes of GBIF, this Resolution of Cooperation is understood to have the equivalent status to a Memorandum of Cooperation between GBIF Secretariat and an external partner organization, being a non-binding agreement to collaborate on tasks within broadly-defined areas and without need for formal endorsement by the GBIF Governing Board.

respective strengths of GBIF and CAFF can add significantly to the value of the products and services of both.

The principal objective of this Resolution of Cooperation is to ensure that, to the extent possible, all data and metadata mobilized by each signator are accessible, using appropriate standards, to the members and users of the other thereby enhancing the quality and scope of information relating to Arctic biodiversity available to science and society.

Areas of Cooperation

Through this Resolution of Cooperation, the signators decide:

- to analyse their respective datasets to determine overlap and any gaps in each other's networks;
- to identify the data each can contribute to the other while avoiding duplication;
- to agree upon a process exchanging existing data and for sharing future datasets;
- to establish effective channels of communication and collaboration
- to explore use of GBIF-compatible publishing software (particularly the GBIF Integrated Publishing Toolkit [www.gbif.org/ipt]) for publishing datasets from CAFF/CBMP;
- to promote each other's programs where appropriate;
- to explore further steps to enhance the accessibility and persistence of data relating to Arctic biodiversity; and
- to implement other agreed-upon activities of mutual interest.

GBIF Affiliate status

Following signature of this Resolution of Cooperation, CAFF may be described as a *GBIF Affiliate*. The status of GBIF Affiliate does not confer any rights or responsibilities within the GBIF governance structure, and no fees shall be associated with this affiliation. Affiliate status signifies CAFF as a partner organization working with GBIF towards common goals based on this Resolution of Cooperation with GBIF Secretariat. This status will be represented in GBIF communications, including on its website www.gbif.org, and CAFF is encouraged to refer to this connection in its own communications.

Modification, termination and other conditions

The Resolution of Cooperation establishes a formal relationship between the signators. It does not establish any new or separate legal entity. Nothing in the Resolution of Cooperation alters the statutory authorities and responsibilities of the signators, where these are applicable. It is intended to facilitate those authorities through cooperative action.

The Resolution of Cooperation may be modified or amended in writing upon the request of a signator with the concurrence of the other. A signator may terminate its participation in the Resolution of Cooperation at any time with written notice to the other signator three (3) months prior to such withdrawal.

General

Any materials, including software products and publications, produced as a result of this Resolution of Cooperation will be freely and openly available. Any differences between the signators concerning the interpretation and the application of this RoC, or any document or arrangement relating thereto, shall be settled by negotiation between the signators. If the issue is not settled by negotiation or by another agreed mode of settlement, it shall, at the request of either signator, be submitted to a conciliator.

Implementation

The present Resolution of Cooperation will be effective upon signature by the Chair of CAFF and the Director of the GBIF Secretariat.

For the Secretariat of the Conservation of Arctic
Flora and Fauna Working Group (CAFF)



Reidar Hindrum
CAFF Chair

For the Secretariat of the Global
Biodiversity Information Facility



Donald Hobern
Director