

European Network for Biodiversity Information (ENBI)



Final Report (month 1 to 36)

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Section 5: Executive publishable summary, related to the overall project duration

Contract n°	EVK2-CT-2002-20020	Project Duration:	01-01-2003 to 31-12-2005
Title	European Network for Biodiversity Information (ENBI)		
<p>The general objective of European Network for Biodiversity Information (ENBI) was to manage an open network of relevant biodiversity information centers in Europe and other countries of the western European palearctic region. The network offers European researchers access to a European-wide pool of technical and human resources and to information on biodiversity expertise and know-how. ENBI is also the European contribution to GBIF.</p> <p>ENBI facilitated the development of a common strategy towards the maintenance, enhancement and presentation of biodiversity databases, which are basic requirements for the European contribution to GBIF. Important results were a species lists gap analysis, acceleration of specimen database sharing (through BioCASE and GBIF), standards development, and an array of recommendations on best practices.</p> <p>The integration of distributed primary data to end-user oriented products was studied in a prototype federated database architecture. Interoperability and middleware software was developed that can integrate different levels of information and thus cross the borders of disciplines of biodiversity (biogeography, taxonomy, phylogeny, genetics etc.), to give biodiversity research a new dimension. ENBI also specifically promoted a collaborative approach for Web Map Services to harvest data from several different biodiversity databases in order to build better distribution maps.</p> <p>For many users, the language barrier is an impediment to benefit fully from biodiversity information services. To this end digital 'biodiversity dictionaries' were made and integrated in an automatic online translation service that can be applied on top of any monolingual biodiversity information service. A number of pilot projects were run to investigate how to organise the information chain from data collection and preparation, web design, -testing, and -implementation up to user feedback. In addition, (market) analyses have revealed the discrepancy that often exists between producer and user expectations on biodiversity information. These studies have led to valuable conclusions and recommendations for all organisations that have or will develop biodiversity information e-services.</p> <p>ENBI's web site (www.enbi.info) provides access to the many products and services developed in the past three years. ENBI's results have been disseminated throughout Europe via the website, direct e-mail to the ENBI community, workshops on biodiversity information, a joint demonstration meeting of ENBI and Species2000 Europa, an exhibition stand at the Communicating European Research 2005 Event and a range of dissemination materials.</p>			

Europe holds a very large proportion of the global data on biodiversity. Although national initiatives to make these data available in digital format are lagging behind, Europe is now a major contributor of digital species-level biodiversity data to GBIF and other international efforts. The ENBI experience has made clear that its network approach promotes synergy at the European dimension, and has as such contributed to structuring the European Research Area.

All in all, ENBI has become a valued biodiversity information network that will continue to exist as a main European biodiversity platform and has taken the initiative towards a European Biodiversity Research Infrastructure.

Keywords: Biodiversity, Informatics, ENBI, GBIF, Research Infrastructure