

# Integrating ecosystem and biodiversity data to assist national development planning

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**Programme:** BID

**Project ID:** BID-AF2020-029-USE

**Project lead organization:** Conservation Alliance International

**Project implementation period:** 1/4/2021 - 31/3/2023

**Report approved:** 30/9/2021

## Narrative Early Progress report

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### Executive Summary

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This narrative reporting is based on the plans outlined in the approved Full Proposal and towards the expected milestones per each payment for a deliverable. The main items to be reported with milestones include

1. Pre-Implementation planning meeting
2. Project Inception Meeting
3. Stakeholder Consultation
4. Data Mobilization

The main achievements of the project include

- Pre-implementation planning meeting to define project roles and develop M&E plan.
- Stakeholder consultations (both data holders and end users) to define data needs and data user needs.
- Capacity Building programs organized by GBIF and other partners such as Connect Project by UNEP-WCMC.
- Draft Data Mobilization Plan completed and validated during inception meeting.
- Mobilized 20% of target data records (5200 records) for cleaning and make them fit for use.
- Organized project inception meeting to introduce project to stakeholders and validate results of user and data needs assessments.

The project was monitored and evaluated during pre-implementation planning meeting, stakeholder consultations and project inception meeting. These meetings looked at the full project proposal and through consultations reviewed with stakeholders especially data users to know their expectation so that the project team could present the data in the appropriate formats for user uptake. The M&E will give the project insights into changes or otherwise to be made on project implementation and delivery. Based on the M&E conducted, the project proposes the following changes.

1. More focus on Crop Wild Relatives and other agricultural crops and their distribution.
2. Priority on off-reserve Redlist and endemic fauna and flora.
3. Target is to finish data mobilization by end of 2021.

## Planning phase - User(s) consultation outcome(s)

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### Defining Data User Needs

The main policies are NBSAPs, NISSAP and other land use planning guidelines. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA); and Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) are the main data users and some of the scientific questions asked include

1. What are the distribution of agricultural crops and invasive species in Ghana?
2. What are endemic and threatened fauna and flora species in the off-reserve areas?

The data users want data to be presented in the form of maps, policy briefs and infographics. The main specific information products preferred by stakeholders include distribution of invasive species within the ecological zones of Ghana; infographics and factsheets on threatened and endemic fauna and flora species within off-reserve and CREMA areas; identification of potential KBAs in off-reserve areas, National Red List assessments of priority species and their range/distribution maps. The policy cycle for the target policies will be in 2021, 2022 and 2023 of which the project implementation period aligns perfectly to ensure successful uptake of developed information products. Representatives of the user institutions will be involved from the onset and these representatives are now part of the internal

project technical team tasked to mobilize and develop the information products. Additionally, the project team will meet every quarter to update the top executives of the progress of the internal project technical team for further inputs and validation of data mobilized and information products developed in addition to monthly virtual information briefing sessions as part of the evaluation criteria in addressing user needs. Furthermore, these monthly information sessions will also serve as policy dialogue discussions to review the user need information on the targeted policies to ensure that the project continually remains relevant during the policy cycles.

### Defining Data Needs

The main GBIF-mediated data required to address some of the scientific questions will include research and data on invasive alien species; climate change; conservation; and food and farming. The most suitable datasets that will be used will include mainly occurrence and checklist datasets. Additional datasets would be mobilized on crop wild relatives and invasive alien species of which the EPA and other data holders in Ghana are willing to provide such datasets. The project will also use datasets on threatened species (flora and fauna), invasive species, crop wild relatives on off-reserve and CREMA areas published on Ghana through GBIF to supplement data mobilized through the project to develop the required end user products. Additionally, all undigitized datasets will be digitized and electronically stored. All data will be checked for their fitness of use and where appropriate, additional data cleaning exercises will be conducted to improve fitness of use. The project technical team will ensure that all datasets have undergone all the required cleaning processes and formatted to Dwc standards. Members on the technical team have all undergone BID training program and have published more than 40,000 records on GBIF platform with more than 60 combined citations for the published works. Additionally, the team have undergone trainings by SANBI, NatureServe, UNEP-WCMC to data mobilization, information product development and mainstreaming. The formation products are expected to be hosted on LUPMIS and GEIN platforms managed by Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA) and EPA respectively in Ghana.

### Planning Phase Outcomes

Based on the planning phase outcomes, the project is expected to finish data mobilization by the close of 2021. Additionally, the project will add some agricultural data layer including legumes, vegetables, roots and tubers to the Crop Wild Relatives as users are also interested in agricultural information products. Additional focus will also be on NATIONAL ALIEN AND INVASIVE SPECIES DATA AND INFORMATION MOBILIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING. There is interest from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Ghana on alien and invasive species for the annual review of their National Invasive Species Strategic Action Plan (NISSAP). GBIF-mediated dataset and addition to national datasets on invasive species will be used to develop an invasive species distribution map for EPA.

### Report on Activities

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#### Activity progress summary

Pre-project implementation meeting has been completed for project implementing partners to be aware of their roles and responsibilities to ensure successful project delivery. An M & E template was developed during the meeting to track project progress. Relevant stakeholder consultations are more than 90% completed to define especially user needs so that the appropriate data needs are addressed. A technical team has therefore been constituted to work on the data mobilization and associated information products. The capacity of the technical team have been built through GBIF training in May, 2021 and other partner training organized by UNEP-WCMC through their Connect Project in Ghana.

Additionally, Project Inception Meeting/Launch was concluded on July 26, 2021 to introduce the project to key stakeholders, including its objectives, implementation plan, and the role of stakeholders (i.e data holders, data users, policy makers) in project implementation. The project inception launch brought together over 40 institutions and individuals involved on bioinformatics in Ghana. Participants were educated on the relevance of biodiversity information for development and the roles of JRS and GBIF have played over the years in ensuring that biodiversity data and information remain freely accessible for policy decision making. Participants validated and made inputs into the draft biodiversity mobilization plan developed by the project to ensure that they address the needs of the users and respond appropriately to the project deliverables.

Furthermore, the project within its short span has been able to mobilize about 20% of its target datasets which are currently undergoing cleaning to ensure fitness for use. Delays were observed during the stakeholder consultation phases due to delay in project approval and COVID-19 restrictions.

Approval for funding and subsequently payment was made in very late May (26th) hence inability of the project team to travel outside Accra to visit two key institutions. COVID -19 also restricted some of the travels and activities have been scheduled to August, 2021 and this will not no major impacts om project schedule and delivery.

### Progress on activities

#### Activity: Pre-implementation planning meeting

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**Description:** Involved the core project implementation team to draw up the project implementation plan, M&E Plan, plan formats and functionality of the biodiversity information products and protocols for documentation for continuous learning will be developed.

**Start Date - End Date:** 1/6/2021 - 1/6/2021

**Verification Sources:** Project Report

#### Activity: Project Inception Meeting

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**Description:** To introduce the project to key stakeholders, including its objectives, implementation plan, and the role of stakeholders (i.e data holders, data users, policy makers) in project implementation and to validate data mobilization plan and workflows

**Start Date - End Date:** 26/7/2021 - 26/7/2021

**Verification Sources:** Inception Report

#### Activity: Stakeholder Consultations

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**Description:** Purposely to define and conduct user needs and data needs assessments and also form technical team to mobilize and develop information products with relevant end users.

**Start Date - End Date:** 3/6/2021 - 26/7/2021

**Verification Sources:** Report on consultation meetings

#### Activity: Data Mobilization

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**Description:** Project team has been able to mobilize 20% of target data (5200 records)

**Start Date - End Date:** 8/7/2021 - 21/7/2021

**Verification Sources:** Project report

### Report on Deliverables

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#### Deliverables progress summary

Planning phase is 100% completed with development of a biodiversity plan and workflow validated during project inception meeting after conduct of user needs assessments by the project team. More 90% of stakeholder consultations completed that clearly defined data and user needs and expectations with formation of a technical team to work on data mobilization and information product development, 20% of target data to be mobilized has been completed and are currently undergoing cleaning to make them fit for use and publishable in GBIF's IPT. Approval for funding and subsequently payment was made in very late May (26th) hence inability of the project team to travel outside Accra to visit two key institutions. COVID -19 also restricted some of the travels and activities have been scheduled to August, 2021 and this will not no major impacts om project schedule and delivery.

#### Progress towards deliverables

#### Deliverables - Project planning phase

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##### User needs assessment

**Description:** Report from end user consultations outlining how the information products to be presented for uptake. This will help the project team to design the best format of the products.

**% complete:** 100%

**Status update:** This is fully completed and validated during the stakeholder planning workshop

**Sources of verification:** Project Progress Report

##### Data Mobilization Plan

**Description:** Data Mobilization Plan describes the expected user needs and how data will be mobilized to address the needs

**% complete:** 100%

**Status update:** Data Mobilization Plan completed taking into account the results of the user needs

assessment.

**Sources of verification:** Data Mobilization Plan attachment

### Deliverables - Project data mobilization phase

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#### Data Mobilization

**Dataset type:** Occurrences

**Dataset scope:** Dataset in on Crop Wild Relatives occurrences in Ghana obtained from Plant Genetics Resources Research Institute of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research

**Number of records:** 3,500

**Data holder:** CSIR-Plant Genetic Resources Research Institute

**Data host institution:** South African National Biodiversity Institute

**% complete:** 60%

**Status update:** Dataset is currently undergoing cleaning to make it fit for use and publishing. Dataset is 60% cleaned and expected to 100% cleaned and published in the middle of September, 2021

**DOI:**

**Expected date of publication:** 2021-09-22

### Deliverables - Project evaluation phase

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#### Project M & E Plan

**Description:** Project M & E Plan has been developed to track project progress to ensure successful project implementation delivery

**% complete:** 100%

**Status update:** Project M & E Plan template

**Sources of verification:** Project M & E Plan template will be attached

### Events

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#### Stakeholder Consultations

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**Dates:** 2021-06-01 - 2021-07-27

**Organizing institution:** Conservation Alliance

**Country:** Ghana

**Number of participants:** 40

**Comments:** Report on Stakeholder consultations will be attached

**Website or sources of verification:** Report on Stakeholder consultations

### Events

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#### Inception Meeting

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**Dates:** 2021-07-26 - 2021-07-26

**Organizing institution:** Conservation Alliance

**Country:** Ghana

**Number of participants:** 40

**Comments:** Inception Report will be attached

**Website or sources of verification:** Inception Report

### Events

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#### Project publicity

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**Dates:** 2021-06-08 - 2021-07-08

**Organizing institution:** Conservation Alliance

**Country:** Ghana

**Number of participants:** 5000

**Comments:** The project was publicized on the website and link distributed across the network of partners and project allies and expect to reach 5000 people.

**Website or sources of verification:** <https://conservealliance.org/integrating-ecosystem-and-biodiversity-data/>

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GBIF leads the Biodiversity Information for Development (BID), a programme funded by the European Union. The programme provides supplementary support for activities addressing the needs of regional researchers and policymakers through mobilization and use of biodiversity data.

