



MEDIA BRIEF FOR 2021 GBIF STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

Theme	Integrating ecosystem and biodiversity data to assist national development planning
Coordinating Institution	Conservation Alliance International
Partner Institutions	A Rocha Ghana, CSIR-Plant Genetics Resources Research Institute (PGRRI), Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)
Funder	JRS Biodiversity Foundation through the GBIF Biodiversity Information for Development (BID) Programme
Venue	CSIR-HEAD OFFICE, Accra

Biodiversity information is a key resource that informs planning, policy development and public decision-making. It has both national and international relevance. For example, biodiversity data can inform the effectiveness of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs); it can also help to conduct national and regional assessments of species, ecosystems and natural capital such as those required for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). It further helps to measure progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Biodiversity data are thus critical to advance the sustainable development agenda. It can be applied to multiple sectors, including energy development, tourism, agriculture, food security, public health and the green economy. As such, the environmental sector must incorporate diverse data sources and include data from cross-sectoral government departments to make data available quickly enough to ensure that the data cycle matches decision cycles.

Most biodiversity data are not digitised or publicly accessible and thus are often not integrated into governmental policies. Establishing a biodiversity information system is therefore useful for unlocking the sustainable



development agenda and opens new resources for its implementation. It is therefore by creating a central hub where digitised biodiversity data are stored and formatted consistently in a user-friendly manner that they can be integrated to produce powerful information products.

Thus, the **BID-AF2020-029-USE project** titled '**Integrating ecosystem and biodiversity data to assist national development planning**' was conceived to integrate off-reserve, Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) into government decision making processes. The key fulcrum for the realization of the project objective is through the Biodiversity Information Management Forum (BIMF).

The BIMF provides a space to coordinate efforts to digitise and utilise biodiversity data. It brings together key role-players in biodiversity information management to ensure initiatives are aligned and relevant in a rapidly changing world. The forum offers opportunities for strategic thinking, innovation, knowledge sharing, training, and networking. It is aimed at people who are involved in mobilising, managing, serving and using biodiversity information.

Aims of the 2021 GBIF workshop

1. Strengthen BIMF as community of practice for biodiversity data mobilization and mainstreaming into policy in Ghana.
2. Enhance the capacity of stakeholder institutions of the BIMF platform on GBIF data mobilization and mainstreaming standards to provide data solutions for policy needs.

The BIMF workshop was held from 1st -2nd December, 2021 and the capacity workshop from 16-17th December, 2021 and brought together key biodiversity data holding and end user institutions including the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research key institutes such as Plant Genetics Resources Research Institute (PGRRI), Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (STEPRI) and Institute for Scientific and



Technological Information (INSTI). Others include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Forestry Commission (including key divisions such as the Wildlife Division, Forest Services Division, Timber Industry Development Division, Resource Management Support Centre), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), the National Biodiversity Committee (NBC), and the Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System (CERSGIS)

Additionally, University of Ghana hosts the [Ghana Biodiversity Information Facility](#) (GhaBIF), which is the Ghana node of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility ([GBIF](#)), an open-data research infrastructure funded by the world's governments and aimed at providing anyone, anywhere access to data about all types of life on Earth. There were other representative institutions from the academia, civil society, the private sector and the media.

In opening the workshop, Mr Godwin Asiedu, the Principal Program Officer, underscored the importance of biodiversity data to the socioeconomic development of Ghana. He said, beyond building deep capabilities, Ghana needs to adopt a global perspective, and collaborate and learn from others to succeed in today's dynamic and complex biodiversity landscape. He encouraged the workshop participants to take the initiative and seize this Biodiversity Information for Development programme and other opportunities, to discover more and pursue new pathways to learn and manage biodiversity data in Ghana.

Moving forward, the chair of NBC, Professor Alfred Oteng-Yeboah indicated that the project implementers and the BIMF mobilize about 30,000 data records and made available of GBIF's IPT platform, develop key information products to contribute to the revision of the NBSAPs and national reporting on SDG indicator. He also thanked JRS Biodiversity Foundation through the GBIF Biodiversity Information for Development (BID) Programme for funding the workshop and **BID-AF2020-029-USE project** as whole.