**Twenty-year Review of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility by CODATA**

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Director and Deputy Director, Donald Hobern and Tim Hirsch respectively (“GBIF Staff”, below), with the agreement of the GBIF Executive Committee, have asked CODATA to conduct a review of GBIF’s activities and accomplishments. It has been just about two decades since the OECD Megascience Forum recommended the establishment of a Global Biodiversity Information Facility, so it can be treated as a “20-year Review”. The full GBIF Governing Board will consider this proposed review at its mid-October 2018 meeting.

CODATA, along with KPMG Denmark, conducted the first “3-year Review of GBIF”, in the 2003-2005 period (see: <http://www.codata.info/archives/2005/GBIF2005Rept.pdf>). The prospective review is expected to be somewhat different, both substantively and procedurally. From a substantive standpoint, GBIF has evolved significantly over the past fifteen years to an international research and data infrastructure, rather than just a collection of mostly museum donated biodiversity data. From a procedural perspective, the review is proposed to be carried out only by CODATA, which also has evolved considerably over the past fifteen years. Not only has CODATA performed many consulting activities for external research and data organizations (see [www.codata.org](http://www.codata.org)), but limiting the review to CODATA will help minimize costs and focus the work on an organization with the substantive knowledge of the issues.

The following statement of task was provided by the GBIF Staff and will guide the review:

1. Review how effective GBIF has been since 2001 in meeting the expectations from the [OECD working group](http://www.oecd.org/sti/sci-tech/1904691.pdf)
2. Review the governance and sustainability of GBIF as a global network and organization (including hosting of the Secretariat in Denmark)
3. Review the place of GBIF within the 2018 landscape of biodiversity and research organisations
4. Review the technical aspects of GBIF’s delivery and its sustainability and trustworthiness (in particular, to researchers) as a research infrastructure
5. Consider the challenges in the next 5-10 years that GBIF needs to be prepared to meet
6. Provide recommendations on areas needing attention and improvement.

GBIF Staff also expressed an interest in any connections that may exist between the example of GBIF and the recommendations from the recent OECD papers by CODATA and WDS and endorsed by the Global Science Forum.

The existing task statement would need to be approved by the GBIF Governing Board at its 2018 meeting next week before the review begins.

**Suggested consultation strategy**

The methodology for the GBIF review will include an analysis of all key GBIF and related documents; relevant external reports and studies; extensive interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders and additional analysis by all the consultants; desk research pertinent to the statement of task; and many email, phone, and in-person consultations. There will be two lead consultants, Hans Pfeiffenberger and Paul Uhlir, as well as four other regional consultants. The resulting report will be about 100 pages, plus appendices.

**Suggested timeline:**

o   Begin January 2019.

* Use January SC+NSG meeting in Copenhagen. Hans will go to this meeting and discuss the review with the GBIF principals.
* March 2019. Paul will be in Copenhagen for another meeting. He will be joined by Hans and they will interview the GBIF Secretariat as well as meet separately.
* March-May 2019. All 6 consultants will conduct the interviews with internal and external groups, compile the data and write summaries.
* April-July 2019. Hans will produce a complete draft.
* August 2019. Paul will integrate and edit the report draft.
* September 2019. The draft report will obtain its first review. (by ~10 selected biodiversity data/research infrastructure and policy experts).
* Early October 2019. Draft report sent to GBIF GB and Secretariat. Hans and Paul will give oral report at GB meeting.
* November 2019. Penultimate changes and completion of draft report, and final review by CODATA EC.
* December 2019. Any final changes and production of final text for transmittal to GBIF.