



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
between the
EU BON (Building the European Biodiversity Observation Network) Consortium
and
Associated Partners

Preamble

The European Commission has decided within its 7th Framework Programme (FP7), to support the collaborative project “Building the European Biodiversity Observation Network” (EU BON) (Grant Agreement No. 308454) for a duration of 4.5 years, starting 1st December 2012. The main objective of EU BON is to build a substantial European contribution to the “Group on Earth Observations – Biodiversity Observation Network” (GEO BON). To achieve this goal, EU BON will pursue innovative approaches towards the integration and analyses of biodiversity information ranging from on-ground to remote sensing data, to address policy and stakeholder needs and to deliver information in a timely and customized manner. EU BON will provide integration between social networks of science and policy and technological networks of interoperating IT infrastructures, resulting in a new open-access platform for sharing biodiversity data and analyses tools. EU BON will build on existing components, programmes and infrastructures, in particular, on GBIF, LifeWatch, as well as national biodiversity data and observation centres, and will contribute to GEOSS.

The EU BON project (www.eubon.eu) is carried out by a consortium of originally 30 partners from 18 countries, coordinated by the Museum für Naturkunde – Leibniz Institute for Research on Evolution and Biodiversity (MfN), Berlin, Germany. In addition to its formal “**Consortium Partners**”, the EU BON project intends to connect to other leading institutions, organizations and projects in the biodiversity research and environmental information realm in Europe and also globally.

The purpose of the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to describe the relationship between, and the respective roles and responsibilities of the **EU BON Consortium** and those institutions and organizations being accredited an “**Associate Status**” for the EU BON project and within the **network**. Association with EU BON is completely voluntary and based on common interests towards achieving the objectives of the network. This MoU also provides general information about the aims and objectives of the EU BON project, and outlines the benefits associated with participation in EU BON.

This Memorandum of Understanding is not a legally binding agreement nor does it obligate any of the parties to any financial commitments or expenditures.

I. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this MoU, the following terms are used as here defined:

EU BON Consortium

The EU BON Consortium is the group of those institutions and organizations, which are contractual partners to the EU BON project with the European Commission (Grant Agreement No. 308454). These partners are bound to deliver part of the EU BON project as laid down in the Description of Work (DoW) annexed to that contract.

EU BON project

In addition to the members of the EU BON Consortium, the EU BON project involves all associates, stakeholders, and interested parties who are linked to EU BON and take part in its facilitation and implementation.

EU BON Associate

An Associate to EU BON can be any R&D institution, national or international organization, NGO, SME or a project, which formally declares its interest to participate in the EU BON project, and to support the network. The acceptance of an EU BON Associate will be based on submission of a formal letter of interest addressed to the

EU BON coordinator, and the approval by the EU BON General Assembly. Associate members are not eligible to vote in the General Assembly.

II. The EU BON project: GOALS and PRINCIPLES

For achieving its specific objectives and deliverables, the EU BON project pursues the following **goals**:

- Enabling greater interoperability of relevant data layers and systems
- Advancing biodiversity data integration
- Increasing data mobilization (from science and society)
- Harmonizing and mainstreaming biodiversity recording and monitoring schemes
- Improving analytical tools and services
- Supporting (biodiversity) science policy interfaces
- Linking integrated information to relevant stakeholders
- Strengthening European capacities and infrastructures for environmental information management

The EU BON project is based on major **GEOSS** and **GEO BON principles**. The EU BON project will build a substantial part of the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON), and in doing so EU BON will be based on the "[GEO BON Detailed Implementation Plan](#)", and, in particular, apply the "[Principles of the GEO BON Information Architecture](#)" (www.earthobservations.org/geobon_docs.shtml) as prepared by the GEO BON Working Group for Data Integration. EU BON also intends to seek close cooperation with other consortia, projects, and organizations undertaking efforts towards sharing and integrating biodiversity and environmental information, and, more generally, acting in response to the challenge of sustainable use and management of the biodiversity of land and seas. By following the "[GEOSS Data Sharing Principles](#)" (www.earthobservations.org/geoss_dsp.shtml) and in promoting open access, EU BON will also develop an overall strategy and framework for biodiversity data publishing, sharing, and dissemination.

Regarding technology transfer and intellectual property, the EU BON project will adhere to the principles of free and open exchange of data, knowledge, and open-access publishing, in accordance with the "[Council of Europe's policies](#)", first declared in the 2832nd COMPETITIVENESS - Internal Market, Industry and Research Council meeting Brussels, 2007, as well as in the "[FP7 Open Access Pilot](#)". These policies also follow the "[OECD's Principles and Guidelines for Access to Research Data from Public Funding](#)".

III. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES of EU BON

EU BON recognizes Associates as prioritized partners for pursuing the goals of the project, and to be involved in the network, and to benefit from the project achievements. EU BON will seek to regularly provide information to its Associates about the progress achieved, as well as grant them access to the project deliverables and products as far as possible.

IV. ASSOCIATES: ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, and BENEFITS

Associates agree to engage and work with the members of the EU BON Consortium towards the project goals and to participate in and contribute to the network. Associates acknowledge the guiding principles of EU BON (see above, II), and respect the general and IPR policies of the EU BON Consortium, in particular the data sharing agreements. EU BON Associates may only represent their institutions or organizations as a participant in the network, but not as a branch or designated entity of the EU BON Consortium.

Benefits for Associates within the EU BON network:

- Recognition by the EU BON Consortium as a privileged partner
- Awareness by the larger GEO BON partnership
- Representation on the EU BON website and data portal
- Taking part in the EU BON project, by:
 - having direct access to the work areas and results of the project
 - having the opportunity to contribute to, present new ideas and use cases to the EU BON project
 - receiving updates on the latest developments in the EU BON project
 - being invited to attend the EU BON workshops and meetings
 - being able to publish original data through EU BON workflows
 - being able to participate in data sharing, under the principles of the EU BON Data Sharing Agreement
 - having the opportunity to contribute to the EU BON newsletter and participate in communication fora
- Opportunity to become part of a sustained EU BON

V. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Participating in the EU BON project as an Associate partner is free and without any financial obligation. Likewise, Associates cannot request funds from the EU BON Consortium or its individual partners.

VI. EU BON ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT

- The EU BON Consortium is governed by the General Assembly composed of all contractual partners.
- The EU BON Consortium and the project implementation are guided by a dedicated EU BON Advisory Board (AB).
- As laid down in the EU BON DoW, the project implementation will be organized via nine Work Packages (WPs).
- The coordination for the EU BON Consortium is based at the Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin, Germany, where the project management team oversees the day-to-day operations of the EU BON project.
- The EU BON Project Coordinator is the official representative of the EU BON Consortium and the EU BON project, and acts in close co-operation with the EU BON Steering Committee (SC).
- Individual EU BON Work Packages, working parties and activities may establish and maintain their own communication and network groups.
- Detailed information on the EU BON project organization can be found at the EU BON website (www.eubon.eu).

VII. TERMINATION

The participation in EU BON is terminated by the end of the EU BON project or when one of the parties gives notice of termination in writing.

This Memorandum of Understanding is understood and agreed:

Associate

(name of organization/project)
(name of person responsible)

On behalf of the EU BON Consortium

Project Coordinator
Dr. Christoph Häuser

Signature:

_____ Date _____

Signature:

_____ Date _____