4.6. Funding and sustainability (GOVERNANCE)

dhobern #1 March 27, 2020, 11:17am

> This is topic 4.6. in the *Governance* section of the ***Advancing the Catalogue of the World's Natural History Collections*** consultation. Use this topic to discuss the questions listed below.

Background
Funding needs will depend on other aspects of the approach adopted to build the catalogue. Costs will be higher if more central support is required to maintain the content. Even if the content is largely managed for free by the international community, sustaining a reliable infrastructure requires effort and long-term investment (see for example the **CoreTrustSeal model** for trusted repositories).

Other materials

The following contributed presentation is particularly relevant to this topic:

- **Presentation: CETAF and DiSSCo Collections Registry**

Questions

- How can the governance and technical aspects be funded? Is external funding likely?
- What other models may be feasible (contributions from collections, inclusion within the funded mission for GBIF or some other host)?

Adelantando el Catálogo de Colecciones de Historia Natural del Mundo

Faire Avancer le Catalogue des Collections d'Histoire Naturelle du Monde

Presentation: CETAF and DiSSCo Collections Registry

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pzermoglio #4 April 23, 2020, 6:18pm

For some regions contributions from individual collections are plainly not feasible (either because of economic constraints and/or legal constraints on how funds can be allocated). An option that could be considered are weighted contributions, where larger institutions, or institutions with more liquidity, can take care of the cost of those who are unable to contribute. This may require some level of altruism, which should not necessarily be expected, but a set of incentives could be recognized to foster such a system (a working example of this kind of system is Arctos). A combination of different funding systems may not be a bad idea either. There could also be special funds for particular regions according to the local needs.

2 Likes

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qgroom #5 April 27, 2020, 7:43am

To some extent I see this as part of GBIF's mission, but collections are only one part of a large stakeholder group for GBIF.
National and international consortia of collections have a much greater stake in having and maintaining quality collections information. In Europe this would be CETAF, but I'm sure there are examples on other continents. Nevertheless, it is not going to be easy to sustain long-term funding!

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bsterner #6 April 29, 2020, 2:33pm

I would find it helpful to clarify what would count as a long-term success of the collections in order to clarify what counts as sustainability. For example, a minimal goal for the catalogue of collections would be sustained growth over time as a pooled knowledge resource, relative to (our best knowledge of) the number of collections that exist. However, each collection record in the catalogue is a complex object with multiple metadata fields. Each collection record may also be valuable for multiple uses, which depend in contextual ways on the accuracy and completeness of the record metadata. Some basic criteria for growth over a time unit would then be:

1. The number of unique collection records increases
2. The proportion of collection records with valid and accurate metadata does not decline
3. The fitness-for-use of the pooled knowledge increases (indexed relative to one or more uses and associated quality standards)

The costs of achieving sustained growth will depend on who's responsible for contributing time and resources to each criteria, excluding the creation and maintenance of the underlying technical infrastructure of the catalog. Determining what's sustainable as a division of labor in this regard is highly dependent on the choice of governance arrangement. But I think it's important to keep in mind where these different contributions are supposed to happen to understand at a coarse-grained level what volunteer versus paid time are needed for sustainability.

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pzermoglio #7 April 29, 2020, 7:26pm

From **@maperalta** in the **Spanish thread**

Funding through governmental research agencies, contribution of the largest collections at a global scale and as part of GBIF.

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aidavasco #8 May 22, 2020, 3:18am

I consider that if this is a global initiative, supported by GBIF, this institution could negotiate directly with the governments of our countries. Funding would be provided, at least initially between GBIF and each country. I do not think that this already happens in Colombia in a certain way, between the GBIF and the Alexander von Humboldt Institute in Colombia, which is in charge of managing the country's biodiversity data. However, usually the existing initiatives do not go as far as the herbaria or zoological collections that house the collections.