

## Activities

### Overview

Activities in Argentina are currently centred on building barcode compliant collections and obtaining their DNA barcodes. This allows the database to grow and at the same time generates a highly valuable genetic resource for the region. This is done through the projects supported by the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET, the National Research Council of Argentina), the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC), Fundación Williams and the Richard Lounsbery Foundation. The Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales "Bernardino Rivadavia" (MACN – CONICET), which is the National Museum of Natural Sciences of Argentina, will continue acting as a centre for barcoding activities in the country, maintaining communication with researchers, organizing the Leading Labs Training Workshops, promoting barcoding, distributing materials, etc.

### Plans for 2011 include:

#### Training

- Training graduate students and researchers through the Third Leading Labs Training Workshop. Funding has been provided by CBOL to cover part of the cost of bringing the instructors from Canada and to invite 10 participants from neighbouring countries.
- In addition, at least 3 students and researchers from our partner institutions in Bolivia will be trained at MACN.

#### Field work

- Conducting at least 20 field collecting trips as part of the IDRC project "Engaging Developing Nations in the International Barcode of Life Project".
- Conducting field work and collecting trips in the context of the projects supported by the iBOL Argentina fund.
- Conducting at least one joint expedition to Bolivia with researchers from the Colección Boliviana de Fauna and stimulating colleagues in Bolivia to open new barcoding projects (e.g. projects about mammals and freshwater fishes) and to send the materials straight to BIO/CCDB for barcoding.
- Carrying out an Argentinean-Canadian joint research cruise along the Buenos Aires Province coast on board of the Comodoro Rivadavia Hydrographic vessel.

#### New projects

- Opening the fourth call of the iBOL Argentina Fund.
- There is interest in developing a biota barcoding project – specifically to barcode the biota of the Iguazú National Park. This could probably be done in collaboration with Brazil because both countries have National Parks that include the area of the Iguazú Falls. This project would be the first complex terrestrial ecosystem to be studied in this way.

#### Funding and administration

- Getting new local sponsors for the iBOL Argentina Fund.
- Streamlining administrative steps at CONICET regarding the iBOL Argentina. Fund.

Theme	Working Group	Node Activities / Priorities
<b>DNA Barcode Library</b>	1.1 Vertebrates	Since 2006 Argentina is actively participating in the ABBI and FISHBOL projects. So far, about 70% of the 1,000 species of birds of Argentina and about 150 species of marine fishes (out of about 500 species) have been barcoded. Projects in freshwater fishes, mammals and herps have also been initiated. Birds project is currently expanding to include Bolivia.
	1.2 Land plants	IBOL Argentina Fund is currently supporting a couple of projects in plants, centred around the Instituto de Botánica del Nordeste (Institute of Botany of the Northeast, IBONE-CONICET), where a DNA barcode laboratory is being built with CONICET funds.
	1.3 Fungi	There are two projects about Fungi supported by the iBOL Argentina Fund, aimed at the identification of species of Agaricales (Basidiomycetes) of Northern Argentina.
	1.4 Parasites, pathogens and vectors	There is a project to identify mosquitoes and their bloodmeals using DNA barcoding.
	1.5 Agricultural & Forestry Pests and their Parasitoids	One of the projects supported by the iBOL Argentina Fund is dedicated to the Curculionidae and Chrysomelidae families, including many species of agricultural importance (these two groups constitute the largest clade of fitofagous insects in the World). A project about parasitoid species of the Braconidae family is starting in collaboration with José Fernández Triana from the Canadian Collection of Entomology in Ottawa. Finally, there is also a project about ant species of Argentina and Bolivia.
	1.6 Pollinators	In association with people from the University of York (Canada), the MACN has been collecting bees in National Parks from Northeastern Argentina since 2008 as part of the BEEBOL initiative.
	1.7 Freshwater Bio-surveillance	There is one project focused on macrocystaceans at the Instituto Nacional de Limnología (INALI-CONICET), and campaigns to collect freshwater fishes are underway as part of the IDRC project "Enabling Developing Nations in the International Barcode of Life Project (iBOL)".
	1.8 Marine Bio-surveillance	Several projects in marine fishes, molluscs, crustaceans and echinoderms are being executed by CONICET researchers using the Puerto Deseado and Comodoro Rivadavia research vessels.
	1.9 Terrestrial Bio-surveillance	As part of the IDRC project and iBOL Argentina Fund several projects are supported, including mainly insects (e.g. butterflies of Argentina project). A project about spiders is also moving forward, including collaboration with colleagues from Bolivia and Chile.
	1.10 Polar Life	In February and March 2011 CONICET organized a collecting trip to the Antarctic Peninsula. This activity will continue every austral summer at least until 2015. So far this effort concentrates on fishes and benthonic invertebrates.
<b>Methods</b>	2.1 Barcoding Biotas	We plan to barcode the biota of the Iguazú National Park. This project is considered very important because it is the area with the highest biodiversity in the country. In addition, it would be the first complex terrestrial ecosystem to be studied in this way. So far, the project is progressing in birds, lepidoptera and wild bees
	2.2 Museum Life	Argentina has 196 scientific collections of biological specimens, totalling 12 million specimens. The use of this material for barcoding has been limited so far, but it is important for rare species. CONICET and the Ministerio de Ciencia y Técnica are investing funds in collections and infrastructure.
<b>Administration</b>	5.1 Project Management	We are looking for new sponsors for the iBOL Argentina Fund. In addition, CONICET is selecting a project manager for the National DNA Barcode Network.