

APPENDIX IV – LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Collaborators

Name	Affiliation
Nicholas King	Executive Secretary, Global Biodiversity Information Facility
Frank Bisby	Executive Director, Species 2000
Stephen O'Brien	Chair, iBOL Science Advisory Board

Dr. Paul Hebert
Scientific Director, iBOL
Biodiversity Institute of Ontario
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1, Canada



2 February 2011

Dear Dr. Hebert,

GBIF LETTER OF SUPPORT: iBOL INTERIM REVIEW

This letter serves to confirm our ongoing support for the International Barcode of Life (iBOL) Project.

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) is a multi-lateral initiative set-up to provide free and open access to biodiversity data worldwide via the Internet. Priorities, with an emphasis on promoting participation and working through partners, include promoting in-country activities to mobilise biodiversity data, developing the protocols and standards to ensure scientific integrity and interoperability, building an informatics architecture to allow the interlinking of diverse data types from disparate sources, promoting capacity building and catalysing development of analytical tools for improved decision-making based on these data.

The iBOL project is delivering on its promise of mobilizing the global DNA barcoding community to develop a comprehensive DNA Barcode Library for species identification and, in particular, a high quality database of organism imagery and occurrence data. This will significantly enhance and complement the many other activities underway in biodiversity data discovery, access and management and contribute to our ability to respond to urgent global, regional and local issues such as climate change, food security, invasive species, etc.

GBIF is currently working with iBOL to build partnerships and develop infrastructure to serve both GBIF and iBOL network members. Key synergistic projects include, but are not limited to, the development of a central registry of institutions containing voucher specimens, expansion of GBIF metadata standards to include barcode metadata, and integration of the barcode based taxonomic units (called BINs) into the Global Names Architecture (GNA). At a strategic level, GBIF has accepted iBOL's invitation to join its Scientific Advisory Board, and iBOL will join GBIF as an Associate Participant with a seat on the GBIF Governing Board.

Canada is a founding member and active participant in GBIF, and the success of iBOL greatly enhances the returns on this investment. GBIF congratulates iBOL on its progress to date and encourages Genome Canada to give its continued support to the project. If you require clarity on anything relating hereto, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes

Dr Nicholas King
Executive Secretary

**Global Biodiversity
Information Facility
Secretariat**

Universitetsparken 15
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark

Tel.: +45 35 32 14 71
Fax: +45 35 32 14 80
Email: nking@gbif.org
Web: www.gbif.org

Prof. Paul Hebert
International Barcode of Life (iBOL)
Biodiversity Institute of Ontario, 50 Stone Road West
University of Guelph, GUELPH, Ontario, CANADA, N1G 2W1

31 January 2010

Letter of Support: iBOL Interim Review

Dear Paul

I write on behalf of the Species 2000 Catalogue of Life Programme and our two current EC-funded projects (4D4Life and i4Life) to give our very strongest support for the further research and development of the iBOL Programme by Genome Canada.

First, we at the Species 2000 Catalogue of Life Programme are big admirers of iBOL. In rather the same way as ourselves attempting to bring together the taxon expert database community world-wide to create our Catalogue of Life, so you are providing the global co-ordinating principle and integrated barcode library needed to make sense of barcoding on the world scale.

Second, the recent discussions we have had, and the naming of iBOL as one of the six major Global Programmes in Biodiversity in our European funded i4Life project means that we can proceed to establish a most meaningful partnership and two-way exchange of knowledge. Your analysis of barcode identifiers for existing species, as well as the observation of new taxonomic entities within the 'BIN' notation, means that your own BOLD database is interesting at the species level. In one direction, we offer to assist the taxonomic structure and integrity of that system by providing regular updates of the Catalogue of Life, possibly to be made resident as an authority file, and to assist with the structuring of species within higher taxa where needed within the BOLD environment. In the other direction we hope you will offer access for the i4Life partners to see the newly discovered taxa/BINS, and to use them in the project's harmonisation of catalogues and indexes with IUCN RedList, INSDC, GBIF, EoL and the EC LifeWatch programmes as well as our own Catalogue. A goal of the project is to discover for the first time the full extent of species under scrutiny across these global programmes.

The Species 2000 Catalogue of Life (CoL) provides a unified species checklist and taxonomic hierarchy presently for some 70% of known species (1.35 million), integrating carefully knowledge provided by about one hundred taxonomic expert database institutions around the world. Usage of the CoL currently runs at about 90 million hits per year, providing the taxonomic backbone for major portals (including GBIF and EoL mentioned in your review), and connected to by over 230,000 websites world-wide.

We congratulate the iBOL group on the progress so far, and we are keen to work closely with you as the programme develops. Species 2000 strongly supports your proposal for the next phase.

Yours sincerely,



Frank Bisby
Executive Director - Species 2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health

Stephen J O'Brien
Chief/Director
Laboratory of Genomic Diversity
National Cancer Institute
Frederick, Maryland 21702-1201

2 February, 2011

Dr Paul Hebert
Dr Peter Freeman
Executive Director
International Barcode of Life Project
Biodiversity Institute of Ontario
University of Guelph
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

Dear Drs. Hebert and Freeman,

I am writing to affirm the enthusiastic support of the iBOL Science Advisory Board (SAB) for the vision, mission and progress to date and proposed future agenda. Our SAB met for the first time during the September 2010 iBOL Scientific Steering committee meeting at Guelph and developed our initial impressions. Present were Dr. Gary Borisy, Dr. Paul Thompson and myself, not a quorum but enough to generate a consensus opinion. All in all our impression was very positive and we especially enjoyed learning and interacting with the iBOL Staff and the impressive consortium of scientific advisors from across the globe who are dedicated to the dream of iBOL.

Without going into extensive details, I can say that our committee is enthusiastic in reviewing the mission and details of accomplishing that. In a time when computer and web communication binds our collective activities together, the advances in assembling partners and accomplishing in excess of one million DNA barcodes illustrate that the hope of a genomic label to the world's fauna and possibly flora is becoming reality. The iBOL management, staff and community earned our endorsement and I hope they will continue to enjoy the vigorous oversight, good will, and financial backing from Genome Canada.

We are looking forward to our next Science Advisory Board assembly in the coming months.

My very best wishes

Stephen J O'Brien, Director
Laboratory of Genomic Diversity
Chair, Science Advisory Board of iBOL

