Organization: Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Secretariat

ID: 2998

Title of the side-event:

Delivering Biodiversity Knowledge in the Information Age: the Global Biodiversity Informatics Outlook

Time: 18:15, Wednesday, 16 October 2013

Summary:

The GBIF executive secretary Donald Hobern outlined the critical steps needed for biodiversity data to contribute its full potential to inform decisions and contribute to the objectives of the CBD. He made the comparison with climate change, where data from many different sources had over decades been captured, organised and integrated in ways that generate evidence-driven models. Such models are seriously lacking in biodiversity, and the GBIO sets out the interdependent components needed for efficient capture, organization and interpretation of data to produce useful policy guidance. They divide into four main areas for effort and investment: a data-sharing culture with supportive policies; efforts to capture data in digital forms from all available sources, from historic literature and collections to field observations, molecular sequences and remote sensing; the conversion of data into evidence through contextual lenses such as taxonomy, integrated spatial and temporal occurrences and aggregated species traits and interactions; and the development of understanding through models and visualizations based on this accumulated evidence. Juan Carlos Bello of Colombia's Humboldt Institute gave a country perspective on this framework, emphasising the need to bring communities together, for example the scientific and environmental communities, changing the culture and providing new opportunities to publish data in a way that gave full recognition to the data holders, for example through the portal www.sibcolombia.net where NGOs, private sector and research organizations all publish datasets using tools and standards available globally through GBIF. Jerry Harrison of UNEP WCMC pointed out that better access to data and information, through mechanisms such as those highlighted in the GBIO framework, was essential for the scenarios and indicators

to monitor progress under the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, to develop EBSAs and to meet the needs of IPBES. During discussion, speakers addressed questions relating to the challenges of reconciling open access with issues such as access and benefit sharing, intellectual property rights and sensitive data relating for example to threatened species or biosecurity where presence could have negative economic impacts.

Relevant online resources:

www.biodiversityinformatics.org

www.gbif.org
