



Subregional Workshop for Arabic-speaking Countries on the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM)



5-9 March 2018, Cairo, Egypt

Guidance for Developing National Clearing-House Mechanisms

Alexandre Rafalovitch, Clearing-House Mechanism, CBD Secretariat



Roadmap for establishing and strengthening national CHMs

Level	Situation	Action
0	No CHM NFP	Convince Party to nominate CHM NFP
1	CHM NFP not equipped	Find solutions to provide basic infrastructure & communication facilities
2	No national CHM website	Get tools & support to establish web presence
3	National CHM web presence	Enhance web content Improve user experience
4	Good national CHM website	Expand information services Establish interoperability mechanisms Support other national CHMs

Adapt guidance to national situation

- No one-size-fit-all solution
- Various needs → Various approaches and responses

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- 0 - No CHM NFP
- 1 - No Capacity
- 2 - No Website
- 3 - Web Presence
- 4 - Good Website
- Final comments



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CBD NFP	CHM NFP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Role • Government representative • Diplomat skills • Decision-making process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiation - National Policy - National Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Role • Project Manager • Entrepreneur skills • Implementation process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scientific & tech. cooperation - Information Management (gathering, disseminating) - Webmaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both roles are important & time-consuming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Adequate capacity to be effective • Importance of collaboration between CBD & CHM NFPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → CHM NFP should serve the CBD NFP 	

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Convince Party to nominate CHM NFP

- **Explain the important role of the CHM**

- Support to the NBSAP process
- Portal for national knowledge on biodiversity
- Useful as national dissemination tool
- Can increase international visibility
- Should facilitate scientific & technical cooperation
- Not just a website, but website is a focus point

- **Identify the right person or partner institution**

- Survey of national biodiversity actors
(scientific institution, museum, university, ...)
- There may be a strong sustainable existing institution interested
in carrying out the role of CHM NFP
→ Win-Win situation
- Role of CHM NFP is very different from CBD NFP

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- **Promote and plan the CHM at national level**
 - Convince national decision-makers that CHM is useful
 - Integrate the CHM in the NBSAP
 - Identify & mobilize resources (National, GEF/NBSAP, other)
 - Prepare a plan with sustainability in mind
 - Establish inter-institutional coordination mechanism
 - Identify and capture national information & knowledge
- **Involve stakeholders and users**
 - Involve representatives of your target audience when planning, testing and collecting feedback
 - Joint ongoing process to improve effectiveness

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Prepare a "business plan" for the New CHM

- **Institutional arrangements**
 - Responsibilities & Terms of references
 - Partnership arrangements
- **Resources allocation**
 - Human resources
 - Technical: graphic design, programming, webmaster
 - Content: management, update, validation
 - Website hosting options
 - Web content production & management
- **Activities**
 - Building national contact network
 - Learn about NBSAP priorities, targets & implementation
 - Information gathering & disseminating
 - Information architecture & web content preparation
 - Outreach & awareness activities

Provide basic infrastructure & communication facilities

- **Party's responsibility**
 - CHM NFP should be operational
 - Donors insist on sustainability
- **Prepare realistic project proposal**
 - First assess sustainability potential
 - Provide a detailed description/justification of needs
 - Project funding is temporary
- **Identify sustainable resources**
 - At least small budget to maintain operations
 - Resources may be allocated if effectiveness is proven

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Establish web presence

- **Several options to establish web presence**

- New or existing website
- Hosted in-house or externally (commercial or partner)
- Select a content management system (CMS)

- **Important decision**

- Based on available resources and expertise
- Each option has advantages and drawbacks
- Big impact on maintenance
- Political aspect
- Choose the safest and easiest approach
- Don't undertake a big project without adequate resources

CMS-based website infrastructure

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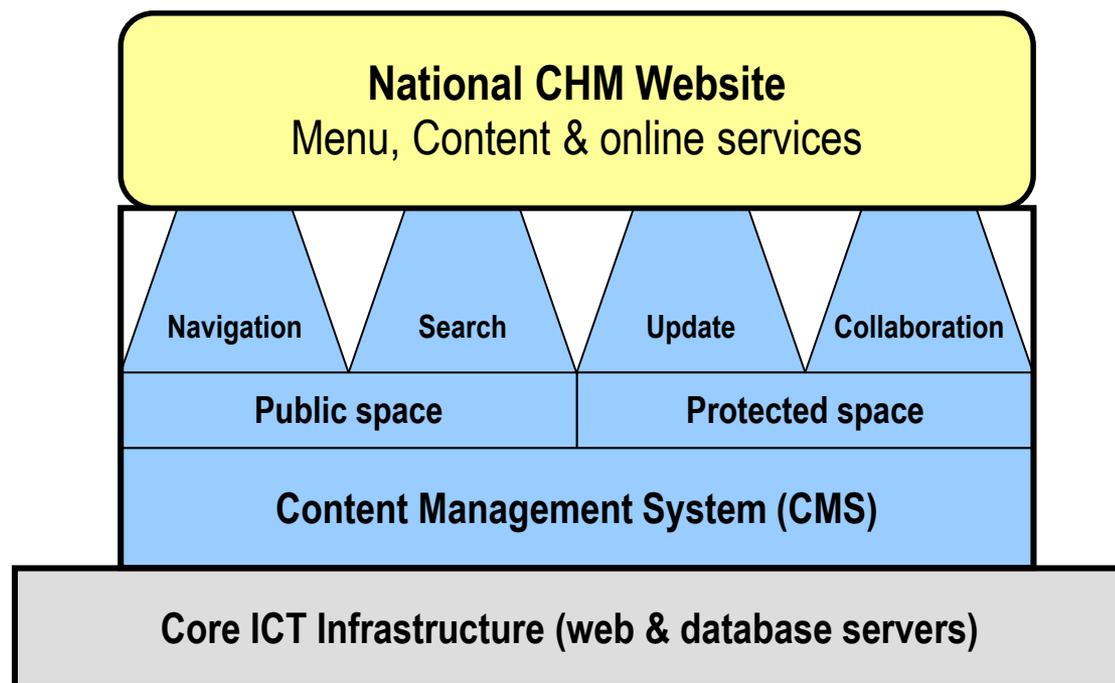
1 - No Capacity

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Options to establish web presence

- **Hosting a website**
 - Requires a solid infrastructure:
Web server + Firewall + High speed Internet + Support 24/7
 - Don't do it unless you have a special team
- **Obtaining space on existing website**
 - Agreement with a strong supporting partner
 - Many African Countries have their website hosted in Belgium
 - Many EU Countries have their website hosted by the EEA
 - Bioland Tool (hosted by CBD)
- **Using a web hosting service on the cloud**
 - Many options
 - Price depending on usage
 - Can be combined with a CMS → Easy solution
 - Some solutions are free for low-volume usage

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Use a Content Management System (CMS)

- **Highly recommended**
 - Avoid reinventing the wheel
 - Many features, including templates & multi-lingual capabilities
 - Adherence to modern web standards (XHTML, CSS)
 - Follow trends (e.g. responsive user interface for mobile devices)
 - Easier maintenance and evolution
 - Extensible
- **Negatives**
 - Many features => many configuration options
 - Any large interactive system has security concerns
- **Selecting a CMS**
 - Several good open-source CMS
WordPress, Drupal, Joomla, Typo3
 - Bioland Tool
Customized open-source CHM tool built on Drupal
 - Commercial CMS or custom solution
Depends on existing situation

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Advanced options other than CMS

• Static site generators

- Editor has interactivity (enter content, configure, link, upload)
- Generator creates completely static site
- Benefits
 - Very fast browsing (everything is pre-generated)
 - Much cheaper to host (even potentially free, see Netlify)
 - Very secure (no moving parts)
- Issues
 - Harder to setup (for now)
 - No (built-in) forums, private sections, public upload, feedback forms
- Many implementations with different features
<https://www.staticgen.com/>

• Content as a service

- Separates content generation and presentation
- Still need a lot of developer for visual aspects
- Can be combined with Static site generators
- Example: <https://www.contentful.com/>

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- **Navigational and organizational structure of the content**
- **Your site will have one, even if you do not**
- **Most essential choices**
 - Website name (can you pronounce/market yours?)
 - Bad example: <http://www.b4itis218.org>
 - URL structure (big deal for search engines)
 - www.example.com/content.aspx?id=12345
 - www.example.com/2011/12/07/news-article-title
 - www.example.com/news/2011/news-article-title
 - www.example.com/fr/about-us
 - Home page content
 - Some evergreen/static content (short intro)
 - Some dynamic content
 - News headlines
 - Events
 - Projects
 - Titles - different and relevant for each page standalone
 - Metadata - description is used by Google

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Join the CHM Network

• Notification 2008-066

- Show CHM Logo
- www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2008/ntf-2008-066-chm-en.pdf

• Common domain chm-cbd.net

- National URL can be maintained
- To strengthen CHM networking
- Each country/partner is encouraged to join cc.chm-cbd.net (where cc is the country code)

• How to join the domain

1. Configure the web server to accept the URL
2. Give URL & IP address to Secretariat
3. The Secretariat will activate the URL in their Domain Name System (DNS)

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Enhance web content

- **Review Information Architecture:**
Structure of web navigation (menus, header, footer, search) to provide access to various website sections
- **Review User Experience:**
Web content must be attractive, easy to find, up-to-date and relevant
- **Usability Testing:**
Prepare test scenarios and involve users in testing the website
- **Requires a permanent effort**

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Enhance web content

• Reasons of no-use

- Nobody knows that it exists → audiences
- It is not useful / no demand → strategic vision (marketing)
- Product that does not sell because nobody needs it
- Badly organized; too much information; not up-to-date
- Technical issues, bugs

• Solutions

- Target audiences → For whom? What for?
- User monitoring → Feedback, Statistics, "User Testing"
- User experience (UX) → **"User-Centric"** Design
- Information architecture (IA) → Home page & Navigation

***Perfection is achieved not when there is nothing to add,
but when there is nothing to remove***

What is CHM (again)



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CC by [Denis Egan](#)

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1. Entry point for country biodiversity (Exercise)

- Search result for "[Country] + Biodiversity"
- Repeat with local language

2. Home page

- Should answer 2 questions:
 - **Where am I?** (in the Internet shopping mall)
 - **What can I do here?** (What can I buy?)
- Promotion of what's recent or most important

3. Disseminate biodiversity-related information

- Biodiversity in the country
- NBSAPs & national reports
- Other national biodiversity-related documents
- Information by programme areas relevant to the country
- **Support NBSAP implementation**
 - National targets and indicators
 - Build an inventory of projects/initiatives
 - Links to expertise (experts, centres of excellence)

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Examples of national CHM

- **Canada**

- <http://www.biodivcanada.ca>
- Good federal structure
- In process of migrating to Bioland Tool

- **Europe - BISE**

- <http://biodiversity.europa.eu>
- Good information architecture

- **Switzerland**

- <http://ch.chm-cbd.net>
- Good integration of 3 treaties

- **Some African CHMs**

- Burundi - <http://bi.chm-cbd.net>
- Cameroon - <http://cm.chm-cbd.net>
- Madagascar - <http://mg.chm-cbd.net>
- Morocco - <http://ma.chm-cbd.net>
- Based on PTK, potentially migrating to Bioland in the future

Level 3 – Canadian CHM

<http://www.biodivcanada.ca>



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying www.biodivcanada.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=DABC84B3-1. The page features a large green banner with the text "biodivcanada.ca" and a collage of nature images including a polar bear, a field of purple flowers, a mountain landscape, a whale, and a group of birds. Below the banner is a "Home" link. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with links: "About Us", "Canadian Biodiversity Strategy", "Provinces and Territories", "Biodiversity Outcomes Framework", "Ecosystem Status and Trends 2010", "Caring for Canada's Biodiversity", "Valuing Nature", "United Nations Decade on Biodiversity", "Education and Awareness", "Access and Benefit-Sharing", "International Day for Biological Diversity", "Convention on Biological Diversity", "Biodiversity Events", and "Biodiversity Publications". A "National Day of HONOUR" banner for Afghanistan is also visible. The main content area has a "Welcome to biodiversitycanada.ca" heading and a "Français" button. The text below the heading discusses the responsibility of Canadians to protect biodiversity and mentions the UN Decade on Biodiversity (2011-2020). A "Highlights" section features a photo of a chipmunk holding a book titled "Sustainable Living" and a "Biokits" label. The page footer includes the text "Partnering in biodiversity" and a paragraph about the federal, provincial, and territorial working group on biodiversity.

biodivcanada.ca - Home x

www.biodivcanada.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=DABC84B3-1

Home

National Day of HONOUR May 9, 2014
AFGHANISTAN

Welcome to biodiversitycanada.ca Français

Helping protect Canada's biodiversity, while encouraging the sustainable use of our biological resources, is a responsibility that all Canadians can share. With our population of more than 34 million people, we can play a role in preserving the immense natural wealth and valuable ecosystems from which we draw significant social, economic and environmental benefits. Bordered by three oceans, the second-largest nation in the world, Canada is rich in biodiversity, and we depend on it for our survival.

We invite you to celebrate the [UN Decade on Biodiversity \(2011-2020\)](#) and to explore this website. Learn about our country's biodiversity and actions Canada is taking to conserve our biological resources.

Partnering in biodiversity

This is the website of the federal, provincial and territorial working group on biodiversity. It profiles biodiversity information, news and events. This website reflects the shared responsibility for biodiversity in Canada and the commitment of federal, provincial and territorial governments to achieve the goals and objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity through a collaborative approach. This site also serves as Canada's national biodiversity [Clearing House Mechanism](#).

Highlights

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Stop

Biokits

Level 3 – European CHM

<http://biodiversity.europa.eu>

Biodiversity Information System for Europe BISE is a single entry point for data and information on biodiversity supporting the implementation of the EU strategy and the SDG targets in Europe. [Learn more about BISE](#) [Log in](#)

[Topics](#) [Policy](#) [Data](#) [Knowledge](#) [Countries](#) [Networks](#)

BISE Highlights 3/3

BISE - CHMs network of Europe

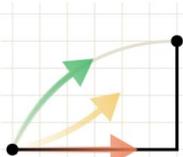
The network aims at promoting and facilitating technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and information exchange amongst national CHMs and BISE, in support of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

Mid-term review of the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020
INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION

EU assessment of progress towards the targets and actions.

[View Presentation](#) [View Leaflet](#)

 Progress against targets

*Our life insurance
our Natural capital*

BISE is contributing to the improvement of the knowledge and evidence base for the EU's environmental policy.

News Europe
[Policy Brief: SDG Knowledge Weekly: Migration, Health, Gender and Data](#)
The International Organisation for Migration, German ...

News World
[Celebrate Pangolin Day – but there's much work to be done to save these scaly anteaters](#)
Today is the fourth World Pangolin Day – a day on whi...

1067 DAYS to meet the **EU Biodiversity**

Level 3 – Swiss CHM

<http://ch.chm-cbd.net>

SIB - Swiss InformationSys x

www.sib.admin.ch/en/index.html

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Administration admin.ch

Swiss Information System Biodiversity (SIB)

Deutsch | Français
Italiano | English

Homepage | Sitemap | Contact | Login

News | Convention on Biodiversity | Cartagena Protocol | Nagoya Protocol | Documentation

[Information Service Biodiversity Switzerland IBS: News on biodiversity research from the Swiss scientific community](#)

30.04.2014 [The fifth National Report on the Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Switzerland](#) is available: [Download](#) (pdf, 2.7 MB)

03.12.2013 [The Council of States adopts Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization](#)

01.10.2013 [Nagoya Protocol reaches halfway mark to entry into force](#)

01.10.2013 [New federal act: CITES](#)

11.09.2013 [New national phytosanitary laboratory: Safe research on pests](#)

11.09.2013 [Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety marks its tenth anniversary](#)

27.08.2013 [Model projects: New approaches and new partnerships for sustainable territorial development](#)

14.08.2013 [Impact of GMO on biodiversity: Federal Council supports adoption of an international liability regime](#)

10.07.2013 [New publication: Environment Switzerland 2013](#)

20.06.2013 [New publication: Swiss Environmental Law - A brief guide](#)

03.06.2013 [Area Requirements for the Conservation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Switzerland](#)

About the Swiss Information System Biodiversity (SIB)

 The Swiss Information System Biodiversity (SIB) is Switzerland's contribution to the global network of Clearing-House Mechanisms (CHM) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Approval of the Nagoya Protocol

The Swiss Parliament has approved the Nagoya Protocol and its implementation in the Federal Act on the Protection of Nature and Cultural Heritage on 21 March 2014. The decision is subject to an optional referendum.. [Further information...](#)

 The Federal Council adopted the message to the Parliament on the approval of the Nagoya Protocol on 10 April 2013. [Further information...](#)

Message on the approval of the N-KL Supplementary Protocol

The Federal Council adopted the message to the Parliament on the approval of the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on 14. August 2013. [Further information...](#)

Action Plan on the Implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy

The Federal Council adopted the [Swiss Biodiversity Strategy](#) on 25 April 2012. In order to preserve biodiversity in our country, an action

Search inside SIB

search

[Advanced Search](#)

[Finding publications](#)

CBD

 Convention on Biological Diversity

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

 GBIF SWISS NODE

Global Biodiversity Information Facility

sc|nat

Science and Policy
Platform of the Swiss Academy of Sciences
Swiss Biodiversity Forum

Swiss Biodiversity Forum

Level 3 – Burundian CHM

<http://bi.chm-cbd.net>

Centre d'Echange d'Inform x

← → × ☆ ☰

ACCUEIL ACTUALITÉS ÉVÉNEMENTS CARTE GLOSSAIRE À PROPOS

 **Centre d'Echange d'Informations du Burundi**
Convention sur la Diversité Biologique

Connexion **Chercher**

Anglais Français

Convention Biodiversité Mise en Oeuvre Coopération Information et liens



PLANTE DU MOIS



Osyris quadripartita Salzm. ex

BIENVENUE AU CENTRE D'ECHANGE DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU BURUNDI

Le [Centre d'échange \(CHM\)](#) dans le cadre de la Convention (CDB) est un instrument d'échange d'informations conçu pour promouvoir et faciliter la coopération technique et scientifique en vue de réaliser les trois objectifs de la Convention à savoir:

- la conservation de la diversité biologique,
- l'utilisation durable de ses éléments et
- le partage juste et équitable des avantages découlant de l'usage des ressources biologiques.

NOUVEAUTÉS

- [Formation sur la conservation et informatisation de collections muséales en zoologie et géologie au Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale de Tervuren, en Belgique](#) [publié le 13/03/2014]
- [Avis d'appel d'offre de l'Institut National pour l'Environnement et la Conservation de la Nature/Projet Biodiversité](#) [publié le 19/02/2014]
- [Atelier de validation d'une Etude d'Exploitation Durable d'Osyris](#)

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- **Search engine (SEO)**
 - optimize for Google
 - think about regional options (like Baidu, Yandex)
- **Referrals (links from other sites)**
- **Feed Subscriptions to news and events**
 - RSS/ATOM - handled by CMS
 - Less popular now, but still in use for interoperability
- **Topic-based aggregator websites (e.g. invasive species)**
 - Information architecture that supports categories helps here
 - Some are automatic, some are curated
- **Embedded content discovery**
 - Example: YouTube relevance algorithms
 - Example: Google Calendar
- **Social media sharing (aiming for viral spread)**
 - Facebook likes and reshares
 - Tweet links
 - LinkedIn

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- **Mailing list**
 - Some people prefer emails over newer subscription methods
- **Hard copy material**
 - Books
 - Cards (postcards, bookmarks, etc)
 - PDF documents (often printed out)
 - Consider URL length
- **Social media announcements**
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - LinkedIn
 - Beware of ongoing engagement level required

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• Listening

- Do you have a feedback/contact link on each page?
- How easy is it to find?
- Where does it go to (P.O box, submission form, email)?
- Who monitors the feedback and how often?

• Analytics

- For web pages – Google Analytics
 - Visits and page hits, popular and ignored pages
 - Where do visitors come from (Country, City)
 - Has anyone linked to us (Referrals)
 - Periodic reports (standard or custom)
- For links in social media (e.g. bit.ly)
 - Basic analytics
 - Virality analysis (e.g. Twitter reshares)
- For email newsletters (e.g. MailChimp)
 - open rates
 - links clicked
- NOTE: Numbers are indicators, not absolutes

Level 3 – Troubleshooting website issues

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- **Google Web Master portal**
 - Search keywords
 - Dead pages
 - Pages with same titles
 - Malware detection
- **Google Analytics - alerts**
 - Send an email when a parameter goes out of expected range
 - Example: too many hits on 404 (not found) page
- **Search Engine Optimization tools**
 - Designed to improve search engine rankings
 - Can also be used to check for content/structure issues
- **Performance test - manual**
 - Google Analytics now shows page speed
 - webpagetest.org can check page speed and tell you why
- **Performance test - availability**
 - 3rd party services that check your site is still there

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Level 4 – Good National CHM Website

- **Expand information services**
 - Typical services
 - Specialized services contributing to the Strategic Plan
- **Establish information exchange mechanisms**
 - Interface specification
 - Interoperability
- **Support other national CHMs**
 - Advice and support
 - Cooperation

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• **Typical CHM information services**

- Information discovery (search, SEO, AICHI targets)
- Databases (species, experts, calendars)
- Directories
- Videos
- Maps
- Social networking

• **CHM services vs CHM Website**

- Needs to be discoverable via CHM website
- Does not need to be owned by CHM website
- Many specialized websites do better job
 - Preferred if there is country-specific direct link (e.g. Country Profile)
 - May be much more effective to fix/improve existing websites
- CHM website can provides context and links

Specialized information services contributing to the Strategic Plan

	Aichi Strategic Goal	Information Services
A	Underlying causes & mainstreaming	Knowledge of biodiversity and of ecosystemic services
B	Reduce pressures	Information on invasive species, threatened species, vulnerable ecosystems
C	Safeguard biodiversity	Information on protected areas, ecosystems, species
D	Increase benefits	Information on sustainable use
E	Enhance implementation	NBSAP Indicators Cooperation Funding sources

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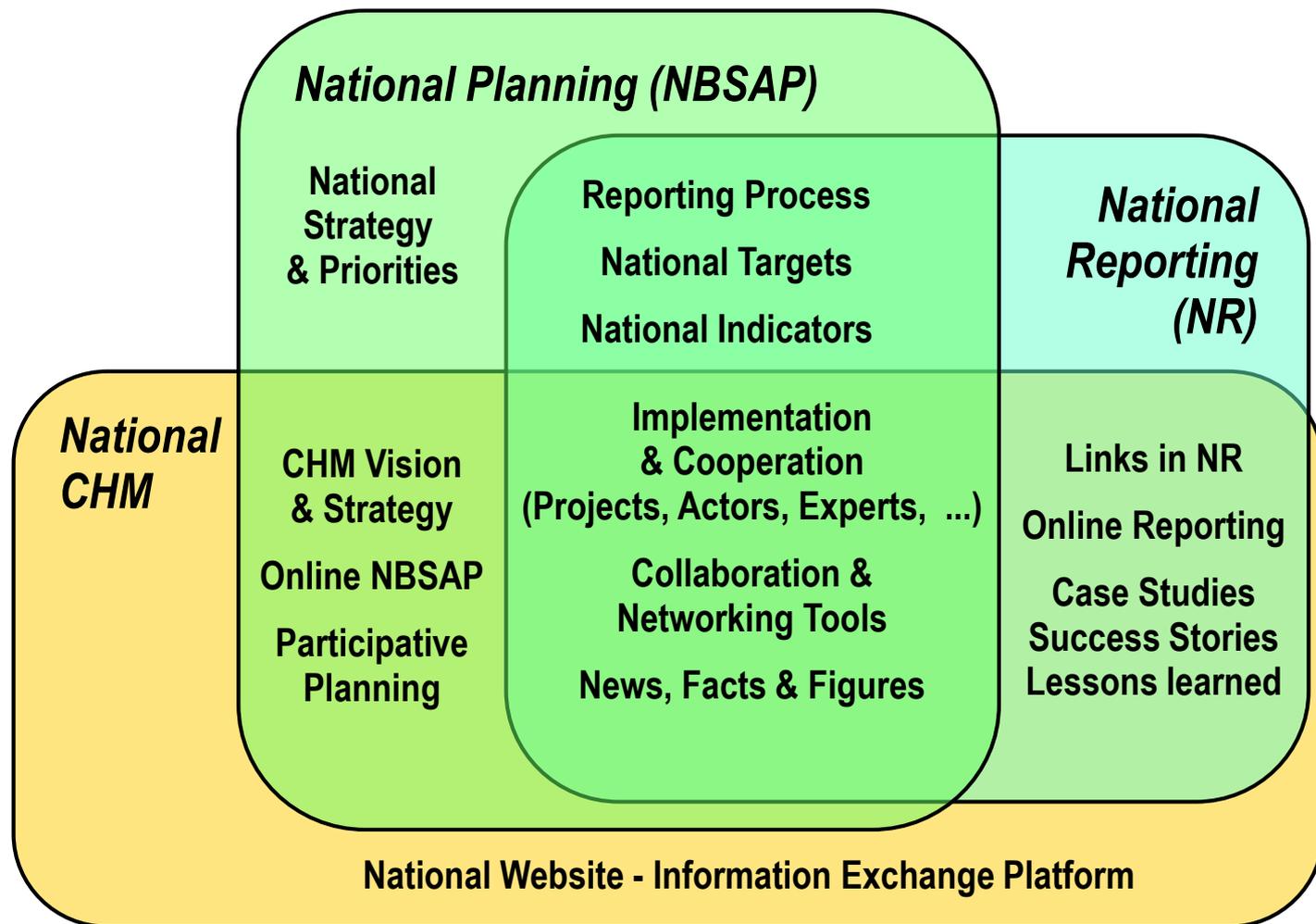
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Information services to support planning and reporting



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on the Clearing-House Mechanism
(CHM)

5-9 March 2018
Cairo, Egypt

Establish exchange mechanisms with other networks

- **Define information exchange interface**

- Basis for data exchange & aggregation
- Important to define good formats and classifications
- Agree on single update point

- **Interoperability**

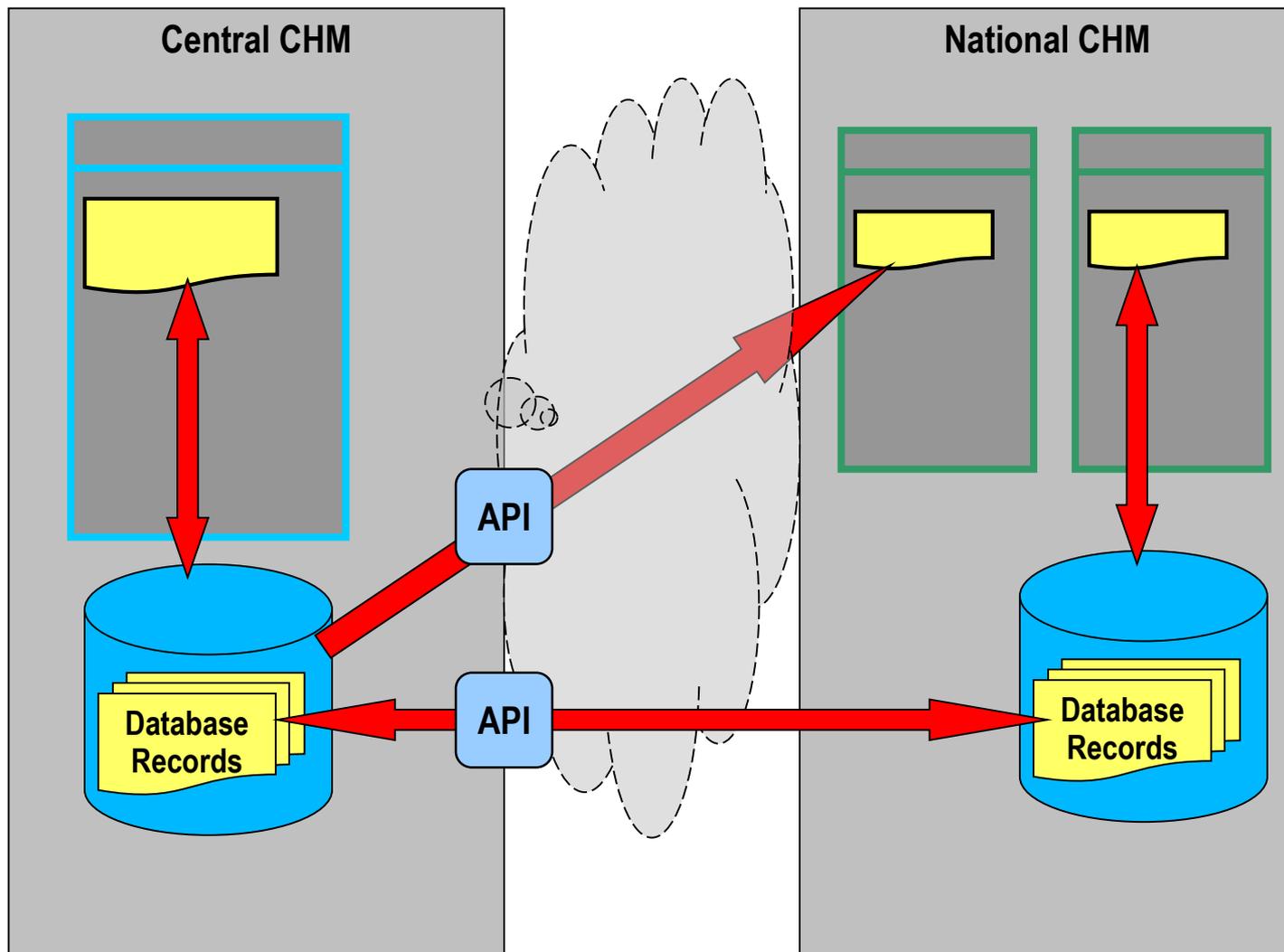
- Automated information exchange between computer systems
- Various technologies based on standards (REST, RSS/Atom, Open Data Protocol, ...)
- Requires some IT expertise

- **Examples**

- European Portal Toolkit (RSS/RDF News & Events)
- InforMEA using Open Data Protocol www.informea.org
- GFIS RSS formats (News, Events, Publications) www.gfis.net
- Bioland is building this capacity

Level 4 – Information exchange mechanism

Interconnection & Interoperability



Contents

Roadmap

- 0 - No CHM NFP
 - 1 - No Capacity
 - 2 - No Website
 - 3 - Web Presence
 - 4 - Good Website
- Final comments



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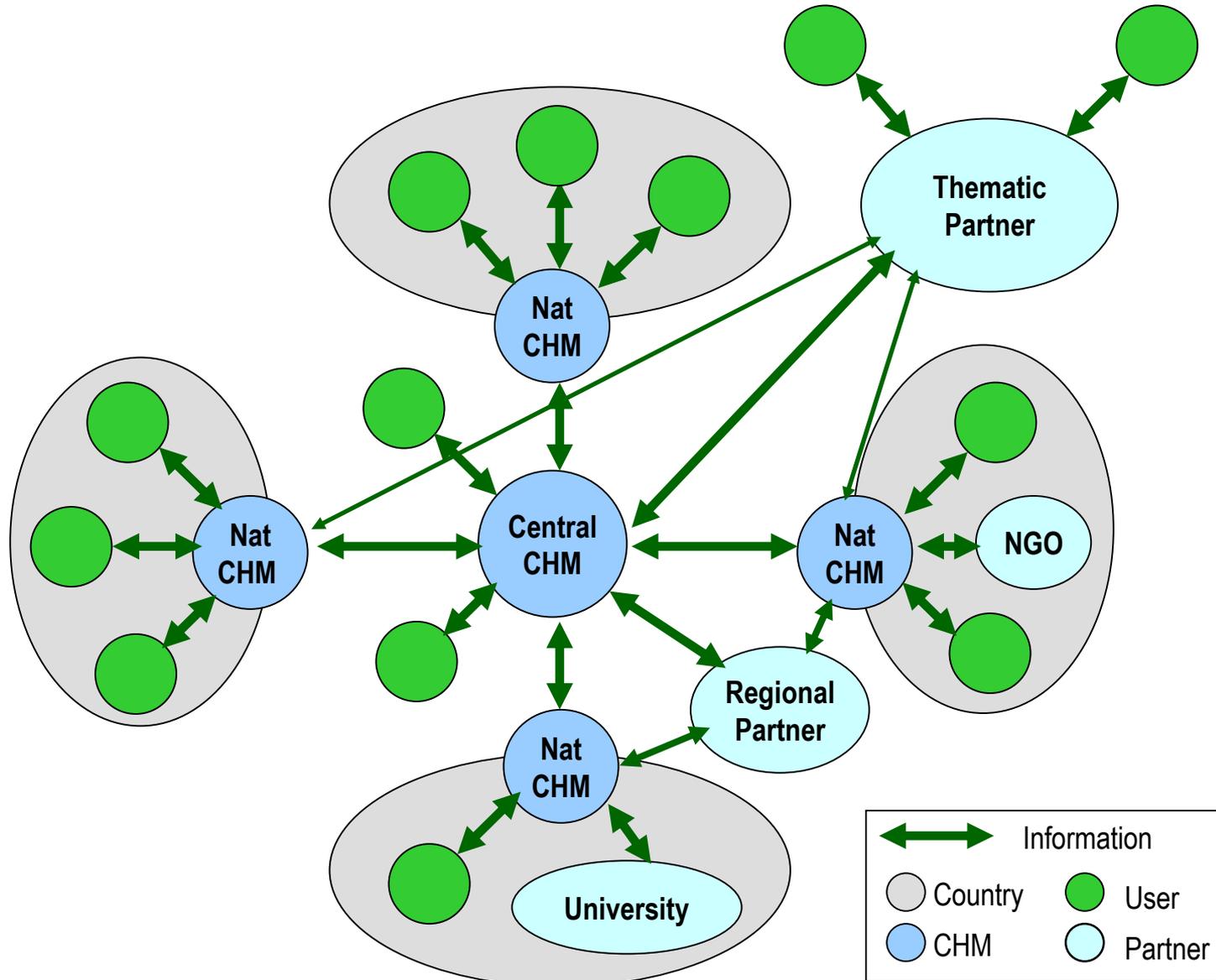
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- National agency has a static web page with list of projects
- National CHM Website scrapes content and creates a set of «Project» entries, with tags/meta:
 - Project title/Description (possibly translated)
 - CHM category (e.g. AICHI Target 9: Invasive Species)
 - Start date/End Date
 - Involved Agencies/Countries
 - Contact details
- **Central CHM**
 - Aggregates project information from multiple CHM sites
 - Provides a feed that shows all the new/changed projects across all national CHMs
- **Thematic partner (e.g. Invasive Species catalogue)**
 - Monitors Central CHM projects feed (automatically)
 - Extracts/Displays all projects under relevant CHM category
- **Researcher**
 - Discovers a new Invasive Species project
 - Contacts relevant agency for more details on the project

Level 4 - Good National CHM Website

Encourage sharing of expertise to support other national CHMs

- **But do not neglect your own National CHM**

- Make sure information is kept up-to-date
- Ensure sustainability
- Be ready to adapt to new situations

- **Support other National CHM**

- in the same region / speaking the same language
- Share expertise & data
- Provide advice and technical support

- **Facilitate technical & scientific cooperation**

- Meet national actors and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation
- Link to all cooperation agencies in the country (UN, EU, Bilateral Cooperation, NGOs, ...)
- Promote transfer of technology

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- **CHM Website is a portal of discovery**
- **Biodiversity primary data often belongs somewhere else**
 - Even if managed by the same person/team
- **Role of CHM is to close the gap, not just generate content**
 - Make existing data available in reusable ways
 - Extract from large/unreadable PDF into smaller web pages
 - Add metadata and cross-link (e.g. AICHI target)
 - Create one place for links to similar work
 - Translate information from/to local languages
 - Help to localize existing good resource
 - Choose best tool and market it
- **Exercise:**
 - Download WCMC Databases report
 - Read through the list of databases and pick 5-6 most relevant/interesting
 - Check if they have search/maps/downloads/mobile apps
 - Check if they have your Country's profile
 - Check if they support Arabic
 - Check report's appendix to see if they use/contribute data

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- **General guidance (No one-size-fit-all)**
- **Importance of**
 - High-level commitment → CHM in NBSAP
 - Planning & thinking → Roadmap & wireframes
 - Regular work → Good content
- **Often possible to do something even with limited support**
 - External hosting, CMS and/or specialized tool
 - A few pages can be very useful
 - Links to other sites / sources → National biodiversity portal
- **Do not hesitate to contact the CBD Secretariat**
 - alexandre.rafalovitch@cbd.int
 - sandra.meehan@cbd.int
 - chm@cbd.int
 - secretariat@cbd.int
- **Questions or comments**

Thank you



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Guidance for Developing National Clearing-House Mechanisms

Alexandre Rafalovitch, Clearing-House Mechanism, CBD Secretariat

