Effective new biodiversity data access portal

July 2 2007

A new internet tool (http://data.gbif.org) was launched today by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). The launch event took place at an international meeting for scientific and technical advice to the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the UNESCO building in Paris.

The new GBIF Data Portal is an Internet gateway to more than 130 million data records provided by 200+ institutions scattered over 30+ countries around the world. All of these data (with more to come) can be accessed all at once on the GBIF Data Portal.

Using GBIF's new search engine, you can find where on the globe a species can be found, or get a list of species in your country or your back yard. The data retrieved are instantly mapped by the Portal. The data can also, if the user chooses, be easily plotted on Google Earth.

The Data Portal is a sophisticated tool for users to incorporate biodiversity data into their own websites, or download datasets for ecological studies.

When combined with environmental datasets (soil type, climate, elevation and the like), GBIF data can be used in predicting species' response to climate change, choosing the best places to put protected areas, etc.

"This new Portal is one of the key tools GBIF has been working toward since its inception in 2001," said Dr. Nick King, currently CEO of the

Endangered Wildlife Trust, and soon to become Executive Secretary of GBIF. "It will be extremely useful in improving decisions in support of sustainable development."

GBIF is an international organisation founded to make the world's biodiversity data freely and openly available worldwide. Membership now stands at 40 countries and 33 international organisations. Current non-members are welcome and invited to join.

The GBIF Data Portal is capable of handling hundreds of millions of data records. With the launch of the Portal, the GBIF network of data providers is set to grow dramatically, from hundreds to thousands of institutions.

GBIF makes the Portal and its extensive capabilities and services, as well as software for data providers, freely available. Civil society, countries and organisations are invited to utilise GBIF's new Data Portal.

Source: Global Biodiversity Information Facility

Citation: Effective new biodiversity data access portal (2007, July 2) retrieved 24 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2007-07-effective-biodiversity-access-portal.html

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