

How to Become a GBIF Participant

Definition and roles of a Participant:

According to the GBIF [Memorandum of Understanding](#), a GBIF Participant is

A country, economy, inter-governmental or international organisation or an entity¹ designated by them, that has signed this MOU and has expressed its intention to observe the provisions herein.

Each Participant should seek to:

- participate actively in the formulation and implementation of the GBIF Strategic Plan and the Work Programme;
- share biodiversity data through GBIF under a common set of technical standards and within an Intellectual Property Rights framework (such as that described in Paragraph 8 of the MOU);
- form a Participant Node or Nodes, accessible via GBIF, that will organise and/or provide access to biodiversity data, or to data and metadata standards, software tools or other services to enhance the GBIF network;
- as appropriate, make other investments in biodiversity information infrastructure in support of GBIF, as well as helping to co-ordinate and harmonise the biodiversity informatics programs of the Participants, and
- as appropriate, contribute to training and capacity development for promoting global access to biodiversity data, including implementing specific programs to enhance the biodiversity informatics capacity and technical skills base of developing countries.

Modes of Participation in GBIF:

Voting Participants

Those Participant *countries* that have decided to make a financial contribution as suggested in Annex I of the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) and have made a financial arrangement as described in Paragraph 10.2 of the same document.

Associate Participants

Associate Participants are encouraged to take part in the deliberations of the Governing Board, but may not vote. There are two categories of Associate Participants:

Associate Country Participants: those Participant countries that have not yet decided to make the financial contribution suggested in Annex I. They are eligible and encouraged to become Voting Participants as soon as possible.

Associate Participants -- Other: Intergovernmental organisations and international organisations are Associate Participants. They are not eligible to become Voting Participants.

¹ A Participant may designate an entity to take part in the operation of GBIF and to act for the Participant in such matters as the Participant chooses to delegate to it.

Application for Participation in GBIF:

Voting Participants

1. Any country that intends to sign the GBIF MOU and is prepared to make a financial contribution toward the core funding of GBIF following the recommended contributions in Annex 1 of the MOU, may petition to become a Voting Participant.
2. The petition should take the form of an official letter addressed to the Chair of the GBIF Governing Board in care of the Secretariat² that
 - expresses the country's wish to become a Voting Participant of GBIF,
 - agrees to pay a financial contribution according to Annex 1 of the MoU, and
 - agrees to develop a financial arrangement as described in the GBIF Governing Board's Rules of Procedure, Paragraphs 4.1.3 and 4.2.
3. When the financial arrangement has been agreed upon and a signed copy of the MoU has been received by the Secretariat, the Executive Committee of the GBIF Governing Board will consider the petition. When the Executive Committee has accepted the petition, the Chair will inform the country of its official status as a Voting Participant with voting rights in the GBIF Governing Board.

Associate Participants

1. Any country, economy or relevant inter-governmental or international organisation that wishes to become an Associate Participant in GBIF may send a petition to the Chair of the Governing Board in care of the Secretariat² that
 - expresses its wish to sign the GBIF MOU, and
 - willingness to observe the provisions of MOU.
2. The Executive Committee of the GBIF Governing Board will consider the petition. When the Executive Committee has accepted the petition and a signed MoU has been received by the Secretariat, the Chair will inform the petitioner of its official status as an Associate Participant in the GBIF Governing Board.

² Chair, GBIF Governing Board
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