



Biodiversity Meets Data – Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in an EU-funded project. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why this work is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. If you have any questions or would like more information please get in touch with the project team (details can be found at the end of this document).

About the project

Biodiversity Meets Data (BMD, 2025-2029) is a pan-European project that will develop a cutting-edge, advanced Single Access Point to an in-depth digital toolbox for managers of natural resources, policy-makers and the wider stakeholder landscape. BMD is an 'Innovation Action' meaning that the project will scale-up and mainstream technology that was developed in other projects. BMD will enable more functional, intuitive, and efficient biodiversity monitoring leading to a better implementation of the EU nature directives via the use of high-throughput methods and access to relevant environmental and habitat data for terrestrial, freshwater and marine realms. The project aims to provide:

- A better monitoring of biodiversity in the EU
- A better understanding of the state of nature and the drivers of biodiversity loss, and a better usage of existing data to reverse biodiversity loss, and bolster restoration and protection
- A more complete view of the state of nature and its evolution

Co-design is fundamental to the delivery of the project, and the project team is working to actively engage relevant parties to foster participation in the design of the Single Access Point and underpinning Virtual Research Environments. The project has 14 partners and is coordinated by Naturalis (Stichting Naturalis Biodiversity Center). Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and Eurosite (The European Land Conservation Network) are facilitating the engagement of relevant parties in the project to support the co-design of the project and related outputs.

BMD (Biodiversity Meets Data) receives funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme and the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (ID No 101181294). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, the European Research Executive Agency (REA) or SERI. The EU, REA and SERI cannot be held responsible for them. <https://doi.org/10.3030/101181294>

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate due to your role in the strategic delivery of biodiversity conservation in Natura 2000 sites and across Europe. Participation in the project is voluntary and if you decide to take part you may withdraw from the project at any time, without giving a reason. Withdrawal from the project is only possible before the data has been anonymised and analysed.

What does taking part involve?

Throughout the duration of the project relevant parties will be invited to participate in various co-design activities. These activities may take the format of in-person and online: events, workshops, interviews, focus groups, discussion forums and questionnaires. By agreeing to participate in the project, you will not be obligated to attend

Project funded by



Co-funded by
the European Union



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
**State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI**



all/any of these activities and may choose to participate in the activities that are most relevant, interesting and accessible to you. In these activities you will be invited to explore your practical data and analytic needs relating to natural site management. Activities will focus on developing and discussing participant questions relating to biodiversity data and analyses and how these might enable or enhance natural site management practices and decision-making. At later stages of the project you may also be invited to give feedback on and test the tools being developed by the project, to ensure that the Single Access Point and underpinning Virtual Research Environments appropriately reflect the needs and expected uses of relevant parties. More information on the co-design activities will be provided closer to the date of each activity.

If you wish to take part in the BMD project, please complete the online consent form. Consent forms are standard practice in social research, and include important information about participation in the project such as the use of quotes, your right to withdraw, preferences regarding data storage and photography/recordings at events and activities. The online consent form also includes some questions about your role, organisation and the site you work on. By completing the consent form, your details will be added to the project database which comprises a network of relevant parties working to deliver biodiversity conservation across Natura 2000 sites. This database will be stored securely on the project's shared drive for the duration of the project and will only be accessible to the project team. We will use your details to send you information about upcoming co-design opportunities that you may choose to sign up for if you wish to participate.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The Single Access Point (SAP) tool will provide access to data analytics to inform biodiversity conservation decision-making and practices across Europe, in a format that is designed to meet the needs and priorities of participants. The BMD team are working to ensure multiple benefits for participants are delivered throughout the duration of the project in advance of the delivery of the SAP. Some of the benefits of taking part include: knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer learning, networking, field visits, and practical training and development opportunities. The BMD team will ensure regular feedback opportunities to ensure future activities are designed and coordinated in a way that is attractive to participants while meeting the project requirements.

There is no monetary compensation available for taking part in the project. However, the BMD project may be able to reimburse you for travel expenses should you need this support in order to participate.

What if I want to withdraw from the project?

Agreeing to participate in this project does not oblige you to remain in the study or to have any further obligations to the research project or team. You should note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, reports) prior to your withdrawal and so you are advised to contact the research team at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw from the study.

If you choose to withdraw from the project, identifiable personal data collected from you will be destroyed and you will not be contacted about future project activities and/or data collection. If you wish to have the data you contributed to BMD co-design activities (e.g. recordings or transcripts) withdrawn from the project the BMD team will work to remove this where possible. However, please note that if your data is part of a group discussion (e.g. focus group, workshop) or has been anonymised and/or included in reports, publications and outputs it will not be possible to destroy your portion of the data.

Should you wish to withdraw from the project please contact Tami Wooldridge the Stakeholder Engagement Manager for the BMD project (twooldridge@rbge.org.uk) as soon as possible who will discuss with you how existing data will be managed.





What will happen to my data?

All your data will be processed and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) along with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). The project will be guided by and adhere to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh's data protection guidelines and regulations: <https://www.rbge.org.uk/privacy-notice/>. The BMD consortium consists of project collaborators from across the European Union. Therefore the project adheres to EU guidelines for data protection:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/ftp/privacy-statement_en.pdf

All personal details, including contact details, addresses, phone numbers etc, will be kept strictly confidential within the research team, stored on password-protected devices and/or servers in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, and the latest Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh data security protocols.

Electronic project data will be uploaded as soon as possible to a secure Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh system and stored there for the duration of the project and for an additional period of 5-10 years thereafter, only accessible to the project team. After this point all electronic and paper data will be destroyed.

All paper records will be transferred to secure storage at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh as soon as practicable. Your Consent Form will be stored separately from your participation data.

For more information on your rights under the UK GDPR see <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/>

For more information on your rights under the EU GDPR see

https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-topic/data-protection/legal-framework-eu-data-protection_en

For more information on how RBGE uses your data please contact the Data Protection Officer at dpo@rbge.org.uk

What will happen with the results of the project?

The results of this project will be used to design and deliver the BMD Single Access Point and underpinning Virtual Research Environments. Additionally, results will be used to produce a variety of outputs including: academic publications, articles, books, reports, and web sites related to the project. All identifiable information will be anonymised in any outputs (i.e. if we use a direct quote from you, we will use generic descriptors such as 'Natura 2000 site manager' and avoid naming you directly unless you have given permission to do so).

Contact Information

Christopher Ellis
BMD Work Package 1 Lead
cellis@rbge.org.uk
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Emma Bush
ebush@rbge.org.uk
BMD Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Tami Wooldridge
twooldridge@rbge.org.uk
BMD Stakeholder Engagement Manager
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Ana Casino
Ana.casino@cetaf.org
BMD Ombudsperson
Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities

This project has been reviewed by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) Research Ethics Committee (REC). Should you wish to raise any concerns about the actions and activities carried out in this project, please contact the REC (ethics@rbge.org.uk) and RBGE Complaints Officer (secretariat@rbge.org.uk) who will record the complaint and advise on an appropriate response and further action if necessary.

