

## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Between

The Encyclopedia of Life

And

The Catalogue of Life partnership

### Introduction

This Memorandum of Agreement provides the basis for the Encyclopedia of Life and the Catalogue of Life partnership to recognize each others' ongoing programs and to work together to develop and share critical biodiversity informatics infrastructure to aid in assembling the Encyclopedia of Life and completing the Catalogue of Life. In particular, for those taxa contained in the Catalogue of Life's annual and dynamic checklists, the Encyclopedia of Life will utilize the Catalogue of Life as its default taxonomic backbone. The Catalogue of Life will have access to the resources of the Encyclopedia of Life, including species pages, scanned literature, and informatics tools.

### The Parties

**The Encyclopedia of Life (EOL)** is an informal consortium of organizations dedicated to building an on-line Encyclopedia of Life composed of content-rich multi-media species pages for all of the presently known species on Earth. Currently, the EOL is composed of five working groups:

- *Species Sites Group*—defines the composition of information on species pages; works with the scientific community to identify potential sources of information (such as the Catalogue of Life) for the species pages and to authenticate the information on the species pages; establishes licensing agreements with data providers.
- *Biodiversity Informatics Group*—conceptualizes and prepares the software needed to host and to search the species pages; applies taxonomic intelligence to the scientific names on the species pages and in the literature.
- *Scanning and Digitization Group*—working with the Biodiversity Heritage Library, a consortium of many of the world's largest natural history libraries, digitizes and marks up the world's biodiversity literature.
- *Education and Outreach Group*—exploits the EOL's potential by exploring and promoting its educational uses.
- *Biodiversity Synthesis Group*—holds synthesis meetings to help reach taxonomic consensus on megadiverse groups; develops tools for analyzing and synthesizing information across species pages.

**The Catalogue of Life Partnership (CoLp)** is an informal partnership dedicated to creating an index of the world's organisms, called the Catalogue of Life (CoL). The CoL provides different forms of access to an integrated, quality, maintained, comprehensive consensus species checklist and taxonomic hierarchy, presently covering more than one

million species, and intended to cover all known species in the near future. They contain substantial contributions of taxonomic expertise from more than 50 organizations around the world, integrated into a single work by the ongoing work of the CoLp partners.

The CoLp MOU brings together two organizations in establishing the Catalogue of Life program,. They are:

- *Species 2000*, a global not-for-profit organization registered legally in England
- *Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS)*, a North American inter-agency project of US, Mexican and Canadian federal governments.

### **Objectives**

1. To establish a framework for co-operative working between the ongoing EOL and CoLp programs, on the basis that this co-operation will assist EOL to compose its Encyclopedia of species pages, and will assist CoLp to complete and enhance its comprehensive Catalogue of all organisms. The intention is to enable EOL and CoLp scientists and managers to work together, when appropriate, in addressing both the work of assembling the Encyclopedia of Life and the continuing work on creating and enhancing the Catalogue of Life.
2. To authorize EOL to make full use of the CoLp services and products, and in particular to warrant EOL to use the CoL as its default taxonomy for those taxa covered by the CoL. The intention of this authorization is to enable EOL to use the CoL in a variety of ways within the EOL program, including its presentation either to those within the program, or to the public as the default taxonomy being used by EOL, provided that the conditions of use enumerated below are met in full. It is understood that EOL may use records in the CoL for the composition of publicly accessible, content-rich, multi-media pages for individual species, eventually aimed at covering all of the presently known species on earth.
3. To authorize the CoLp to gain access to information and tools provided by the EOL, in particular the species pages and the data contained therein, all open-source software developed by the EOL, literature scanned by the Biodiversity Heritage Library, and participation in the consensus-building meetings sponsored by the Biodiversity Synthesis Group.

### **Conditions of Use**

1. Both parties agree that they will clearly label the source of all content and require users to cite those sources when using the information. For EOL-supplied data, CoLp will indicate that the information came from the EOL and will include all further attribution metadata. For CoLp-supplied data, EOL will recognize three levels of attribution:
  - a. Credit for the whole work to the Species 2000 and ITIS Catalogue of Life
  - b. Credit to the supplier database
  - c. Credit (where available) to the individual expert or editor.
2. The Species 2000 & ITIS Catalogue of Life products are copyrighted by Species 2000 under English Law on behalf of the CoLp partners. It is the policy of Species 2000 and ITIS that these CoLp products should be as widely used

around the world as possible, and that this should include both the CoL being published on many portals and web-sites of other organizations, and its content being used to structure or order the biodiversity information of many organizations where appropriate.

3. Both parties agree to show the other's logo on the site's list of partners.
4. Users of the EOL will be allowed to cite information provided by the CoLp. However, EOL may not sub-license re-use of the CoL by other parties, but will instead require any parties wishing to use substantial portions of the CoL to contact the relevant CoLp partners directly to request approval for such re-use. A substantial portion is defined as one or more entire taxonomic sectors as supplied by an individual supplier database, regardless of the number of species contained therein.
5. EOL may not use the CoL for commerce or sub-license it for commerce.

### **Amendments and Modifications**

Either party may amend this Memorandum of Agreement by notifying the other party in writing and with the agreement of the other party.

### **Modification, Termination, and Other Conditions**

The MoA establishes an informal partnership between the signatory partners. It does not establish any new or separate legal entity and will have no effect as a legal or political precedent.

The MOA does not obligate funds. Any reimbursement or contribution of funds by one signatory of the MoA to the other will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures.

Nothing in the MoA alters the statutory authorities and responsibilities of the signatory partners, where these are applicable. It is intended to facilitate those authorities through cooperative action.

The MoA may be modified or amended upon the request of a signatory partner with the concurrence of the other.

The MoA will be effective for an initial period of two years from the date of signature. The MoA can be renewed by agreement between both parties. A signatory partner may terminate its participation in the MoA with written notice to the other partner three (3) months prior to such withdrawal at any time.

### **Non-exclusive Agreement**

This Memorandum of Agreement is non-exclusive, and in no way restricts either EOL or CoLp from participating in similar activities or arrangements with other public or private initiatives, organizations, or individuals.

**Signatures**

For Catalogue of Life partnership

Signature



Date:

15 Oct 07

Name: Frank A. Bisby

Title: Executive Director, Species 2000

Signature



Date:

15 Oct 2007

Name: Thomas M. Orrell

Title: Acting Director, ITIS

For Encyclopedia of Life

Signature



Date:

8 Nov. 2007

Name: James L. Edwards

Title: Executive Director, EOL