GBIF Consultation

Licensing of data within GBIF

This form is for responses to a consultation to gather input on proposed changes to the licensing of data within the GBIF network. The consultation document is available [here](http://imsgbif.gbif.org/CMS_NEW/get_file.php?FILE=906e4c47b4e0052e703624a2ea1981):

Please provide your response by completing the following and sending the completed form to [**licensing@gbif.org**](mailto:licensing@gbif.org)by **14 June 2014**.

Thank you for your participation. You can follow the outcomes of this and other consultations, and view replies from other respondents, at [www.gbif.org/newsroom/consultations](http://www.gbif.org/newsroom/consultations)

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| **Name of respondent:** | Tom Hunt |
| **Position/Institution:** | National Coordinator, Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (UK) |
| **Type of response:**  I am responding on behalf of the following GBIF Participant:  I am responding as an individual/institution | |
| **Date of response:** | 14 June 2014 |
| **Public access to this response:**  To support transparency and free discussion, all responses will be made public through the GBIF portal, unless otherwise requested. Please select one of the following:  Please share my response publicly through the GBIF portal  This response is in confidence. Please do not share it publicly. | |
| **Question 1:**  The approach outlined would significantly clarify licensing and aims to promote fair use and citation via a set of community norms. However, data publishers would no longer be in a position to claim to copyright over data. Do you support GBIF taking this position? | [ALERC](http://www.alerc.org.uk/) members are comprised of local environmental records centres (LRCs) in Scotland, England and Wales. Our members are charged with collecting, collating, digitising and sharing biodiversity records from a number of sources. One of the major roles of LRCs is matching the needs and rights of recorders with those of data users. Doing this enables data provision to individual users, the [NBN Gateway](https://data.nbn.org.uk/) (UK GBIF node) and ultimately GBIF. It is unknown exactly what proportion of data accessible through GBIF comes from LRCs, but LRCs probably contribute over a third of the data on the NBN Gateway, and therefore are responsible for a sizeable proportion of the records that reach GBIF from the UK.  Whilst we support the objective of making licensing simpler, which is beneficial to both data users and data providers, in short, no, we don’t support the position of a copyright waiver in all cases. This is likely to be counter productive and actually reduce the amount of data available to users.  The United Kingdom has a long tradition of biodiversity data being collected by volunteers and not for profit organisations. This can be supported by investment from the commercial sector, if free access to data is restricted in some way for commercial users. In order to preserve this valuable investment, ALERC cannot support a simple blanket waiver. More details on data exchange in the UK are set out by the NBN Trust’s seven [data exchange principles.](http://www.nbn.org.uk/Share-Data/Providing-Data/NBN-Data-exchange-principles.aspx)  That is not to say that data providers should not be encouraged to waive copyright, but if this is the only option available to them then it is likely that many volunteer recorders will wish not to have their records submitted to GBIF. |
| **Question 2:**  Do you believe that there are additional factors which should be considered at this time? | Yes, the spatial resolution at which data is available.  Data submitted to GBIF from the UK NBN Gateway is provided at a spatial resolution that the original data provider is happy to have publically available. In many cases this is less than the greatest possible spatial resolution. It may therefore be possible to find a spatial resolution that suits most of GBIF’s users as well as providing the confidence to data providers that will allow them to waive restrictions on the use of their data. This idea should be explored by GBIF, who should investigate what resolution their data users require, and whether or not data providers would be happy to relinquish rights to their data at this resolution.  Also, electronic solutions be used to make citations easier. An example of this can be found [here](http://i.imgur.com/ANdr7jY.png). This enables a reasonable amount of licenses to be retained, whilst reducing the burden on data users. |
| **Question 3:**  Do you foresee any substantial risk arising from this approach, in particular regarding the willingness of data holders to continue publishing through GBIF? | There is a risk that fewer records are made available as a result of applying the CC0 waiver. Biodiversity recorders in the UK, particularly voluntary ones, are likely not to mandate LRCs to submit data to GBIF if they think it will mean commercial users have free and unimpeded access to their data. However, this may be addressed by considering the alternatives outlined above. |
| **Question 4:**  Are you interested in contributing to collaborative documentation on this topic? | Yes, which should most likely be done in conjunction with the National Biodiversity Network Trust for UK institutions. |