

The Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network and the Conservation Commons

I. BACKGROUND

1. During the Fourth IABIN Council meeting a presentation on the Conservation Commons initiative was presented to Council members. At that meeting there was consensus on the potential and usefulness of this initiative to further IABIN goals.

2. The Conservation Commons (<http://www.conservationcommons.org/>) is an information-sharing initiative designed to ensure open access and fair use of data, information, knowledge, and expertise on the conservation of biodiversity for the benefit of the global conservation community and beyond. Supported by dozens of non-governmental organizations, international and multi-lateral organizations, governments, academia, and private sector institutions, the Conservation Commons strives to make biodiversity and environmental data widely and freely available.

The established Principles of the Conservation Commons below are designed to allow flexible information and data exchange within the conservation community while preserving intellectual property and attribution rights. As initiatives become members of the Conservation Commons, they also pledge to support these principles to the best of their abilities.

II. PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMONS

Principle 1

Open Access: The Conservation Commons promotes free and open access to data, information and knowledge for conservation purposes.

Principle 2

Mutual Benefit: The Conservation Commons welcomes and encourages participants both to use resources and to contribute data, information and knowledge.

Principle 3

Rights and Responsibilities: Contributors to the Conservation Commons have full right to attribution for any uses of their data, information, or knowledge, and the right to ensure that the original integrity of their contribution to the Commons is preserved. Users of the Conservation Commons are expected to comply, in good faith, with terms of uses specified by contributors and in accordance with these Principles.

1. In the past, IABIN has been asked by the Conservation Commons initiative to join in submitting statements to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties (CoP) to promote the principles advocated by them, which are in accordance with our network principles. IABIN has, accordingly, lent its support to these statements.

2. Taking into account that i) the goals of the Conservation Commons initiative are similar and complementary to IABIN's mission and goals, ii) several of our members already belong and participate in this initiative, and iii) in order to fully collaborate with this initiative and take advantage of the wider exchange and advances taking place within the global biodiversity informatics community, including resources, applications, and fora being developed or sponsored by this initiative it is to our network interest to formally join this initiative it its proposed herein for adoption the following resolution:

i. That during its Fifth Meeting, from the 9th to the 11th of May 2007 in Uruguay, the Council of the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network formally join the Conservation Commons and endorse its central principles.