

Visionary Plan for a Wikimedia User Group for Biodiversity

I. Visionary Component: Why Biodiversity Matters

Biodiversity is critical for the planet's sustainability, as it underpins ecosystems that regulate climate, provide food security, and support human health and economic activities. Addressing the climate and biodiversity crises requires globally interoperable data, open collaboration, and proactive conservation strategies. The Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL), as the world's largest digital library for biodiversity literature, plays a vital role in unifying historical and current biodiversity knowledge. By connecting this knowledge through Wikimedia projects such as Wikidata, Wikipedia, and Wikimedia Commons, we can enhance research, policy-making, and public awareness.

Key Objectives:

1. **Expand Accessibility:** Liberate 60+ million pages of biodiversity literature for global users via structured data on Wikidata.
2. **Strengthen Decision-Making:** Provide policymakers with historical biodiversity data to inform strategies for climate resilience and ecological conservation.
3. **Foster Knowledge Exchange:** Bridge knowledge gaps and link local and global biodiversity datasets.

The proposed Wikimedia User Group for Biodiversity will unite experts, enthusiasts, and volunteers to amplify biodiversity's presence on Wikimedia platforms. This initiative aligns with Wikimedia's mission to collect, develop, and share free educational content globally.

II. Technical Component: Steps to Form a Wikimedia User Group

1. Requirements for Recognition

- Membership: Secure at least three active Wikimedia editors with 800+ edits (for Wikidata) or 500+ edits (for other projects) in the past year. It is recommended to have at least ten members to demonstrate community support.
- Documentation:
 - Create a Meta page with the group's name, planned activities, aims, and contact details for at least two key members.
 - Develop a logo or use the Wikimedia logo (subject to approval).
 - Draft and agree to a Code of Conduct and the Wikimedia User Group Agreement.
- Good Standing: Ensure all members adhere to Wikimedia's standards, including the Universal Code of Conduct.

2. Steps to Establish the Group

- Step 1: Submission

- Submit an application to the Wikimedia Affiliations Committee (AffCom) through Meta.
- Step 2: Review
 - AffCom staff will assess the application for compliance with the criteria, including the appropriateness of the group name, membership requirements, and alignment with Wikimedia's mission.
- Step 3: Approval
 - Upon passing the review, the application will be presented at the next AffCom meeting for resolution and voting.
- Step 4: Confirmation
 - If approved, the group will sign the User Group Agreement and begin operations.

3. Organizational Structure

- Primary Contact: Designate a liaison to ensure smooth communication with AffCom and the Wikimedia Foundation.
- Activities Coordinator: Manage events, campaigns, and collaborations.
- Data Specialist: Oversee biodiversity data integration into Wikimedia projects.

4. Planned Activities

- Content Creation: Enhance biodiversity-related articles on Wikipedia, Wikidata items, and Wikimedia Commons images.

- Campaigns: Host edit-a-thons and workshops on topics like endangered species, biodiversity hotspots, and conservation practices.
- Collaborations: Partner with institutions like BHL, GBIF, and conservation organizations to enrich Wikimedia content.
- Education: Develop resources to train new contributors, including thematic guides and tutorials.

5. Timeline

- Month 1-2: Recruit members, establish Meta page, and draft documents.
- Month 3-4: Submit the application to AffCom and respond to feedback.
- Month 5-6: Launch the group with an inaugural event.

III. Future Vision

The Wikimedia User Group for Biodiversity aims to become a global hub for biodiversity information on Wikimedia platforms, advancing interdisciplinary research and education. Through this initiative, we can empower a global community to contribute toward preserving and celebrating life on Earth.