

## **The Bromeliad Working Group - Constitution**

**The Bromeliad Working Group (BWG):** The BWG is an international consortium of researchers studying the ecology of bromeliads and their associated macro- and micro-faunal food webs.

**Policy date:** This document summarizes policies as agreed to by vote and consensus of the BWG membership on 23 September 2015. These policies may be discussed and changed at future meetings as the BWG grows and changes.

### **Definitions:**

*Dataset:* a collection of bromeliad-level data collected by the same people in the same place in a discrete period of time. Datasets are normally collected within a single habitat.

*Data owner:* the person or persons who collected the data. In the case of a student or postdoctoral fellow, this includes the faculty supervisor. For other datasets collected by more than two people, the group should nominate two people to be the data owners for the group.

*BWG open release date:* the date at which the rest of the BWG may use the dataset without obtaining permission from the original data owner. The data is open only to the BWG, not necessarily to the general to the public.

*Public open release date:* the date at which the dataset becomes available for use by the public.

## **1 Membership**

Membership is open to any researcher studying bromeliads and their associated micro- or macro-faunal food webs, providing the researcher agrees to the policies on data sharing, data use, authorship and data publication as outlined in this constitution. Additionally, members commit to respect the differences amongst us, and to act in ways that value collaboration and support over competition and criticism. The BWG is a non-hierarchical, multi-lingual and international organization.

## **2 Data Policies**

### 2.1 Using and publishing data

2.1.a The BWG has two **guiding principles** about data sharing and use:

- The BWG operates on a system of mutual trust. We believe that all BWG members will benefit from the open sharing of data, and so the expectation is that BWG members will upload and share their data within the BWG.
- However, we also believe that no individual should ever bear any cost to sharing their data. Specifically, publication of datasets as part of multi-site BWG studies should never preempt prior publication by the original data owner. Data owners always reserve the right to veto the use of their data in any publication.

2.1.b Procedure for asking data-owner to use their data

- Ask once before using the data in a multi-site analysis, ask again before publishing. This includes asking the author whether or not they want to be involved in other aspects of the project. The data owner always has a veto over the use or publishing of their data.
- In the case of multiple data owners for a dataset, the two nominated data owners can give permission on behalf of the others as long as there is evidence of broad consultation and consensus.

2.1.c What happens if the data-owner leaves the group, and cannot be contacted, but has not published the data?

- The data owner is required to enter a “BWG open release date” at the time of entering their data in the BWG database. If the data owner has not provided a “BWG open release date”, the data will automatically become open to the BWG 5 years after the data has been uploaded.

2.1.d What happens if a student data-owner and their supervisor cannot reach an agreement as to data release, use and publication?

- This cannot be resolved at the BWG level – conflict between students and supervisors should instead be addressed by the relevant University.

2.1.e Labs are expected to contribute data before they can use other BW data.

- Labs that cannot contribute data immediately, you just have to promise that you will once you have completed the data collection.

2.1.f Principles for contributing data to the database in a timely manner

- It is expected that data will be uploaded to the BWG database within 3 months of finishing the collection and identification of fauna and analyses of environmental variables. Entering data in the BWG database will facilitate the data owners own analysis as they can then easily access BWG information on similar species (e.g. traits, per capita biomass).

2.1.g Labs are expected to contribute data before they can use other BWG data.

- Labs that cannot contribute data immediately, you just have to promise that you will once you have completed the data collection.

2.1.h Data input should include: identification of and contact information for the data owner(s); date of data submission, BWG open release date, Public open release date, and – in the case of students or postdocs within a lab, the faculty supervisor contact information.

### **3 Authorship**

3.1 ***Guiding principles:*** We recognize that there is a diversity of publication cultures represented within the BWG, and that these differences should be respected. In particular, we recognize that in Latin America the cost of producing data is higher because less money is available than in Western countries, and that the velocity of individual publications may sometimes be slower. Our

policies on authorship are guided by recognition of these differences, and a desire to provide a system that is mutually beneficial and encourages the sharing of data.

### 3.1.a Role of data owners and data managers in authorships

- All data owners who have contributed data to a scientific manuscript will be invited to join in the authorship of a paper. Such invitations shall not be limited to the provision of data, but also include an invitation to contribute in the analysis, synthesis and writing parts of the manuscript. The number of authors originating from a site will be proportional to the importance of that site's data in the analysis. Data owners may decide to decline invitations for authorship.
- When database managers have made substantial and essential contributions to the success of a data analysis project, it may be appropriate to recognize the contributions of these individuals with authorship. This may include the creators of data compilation and analysis packages.
- In the event that the number of authors exceeds that permissible by journals, the BWG will collectively decide on the best solution at the time. It may require limiting the number of data owners per dataset that are given authorship, or simply referring to the Bromeliad Working Group as an author.

3.1.b Given that papers with many names have highest emphasis on the first and last author, how do will we acknowledge the contribution of a few authors when there are several data co-authors?

- The primary authors (those with primary responsibility for collating and analyzing the data and writing the manuscript) should normally be allotted the first few authorship positions, and potentially the last position. The primary authors can be indicated in the footnotes, and some journals now allow for multiple lead authors or detailed explanations of each authors' role. The other authors should be arranged in some sort of systematic order that is explained in a captioned note.

3.1.c Who is the author/owner of data from Bio-Blitz data collections

- In the case of a BioBlitz or similar multi-data owner dataset, it is suggested that two people are elected to be co-authors. This can be rotated between papers to allow authorship opportunities for many data collectors.

## 4 Open Science

4.1.a **Guiding principles:** Open science should be a goal of all ecologists, because publically funded science must become the property of the public at some point. However, we recognize that there are a broad range of equally valid perspectives on when and how data becomes open to the public.

#### 4.1.b Making BWG data public.

- Data owners will be requested to enter a public open release date at the time of uploading their data. Every 5 years the data manager will collate all datasets that has passed this public open release date, add appropriate metadata, and place this collated data on a stable data repository such as – for instance – The Knowledge Network for Biodiversity or Dryad. In this way, the open-to-the-public database will grow cumulatively at five year increments. Data owners will be contacted prior to data release for final approval. If numerous unsuccessful attempts have been made to contact data owners over a six month period for this final approval, permission is implicitly given to release the data. The open data will be released under either Creative Commons license CC0 or CCBY following further discussions within the BWG.
- Lead authors of BWG manuscripts are encouraged to use best practices in reproducible research and open science, including the publication of related programming code and publication in open science journals. It is understood that these goals may not be attainable by all authors for a variety of legitimate reasons.