



## **EDIT VISION(S) / OBJECTIVES**

*Network Steering Committee for the Directors Institutional Working Group, dec 2007*

### **1. SUMMARY OF WP LEADERS VISIONS FOR EDIT**

- address the Taxonomic Impediment at EU level and beyond, including knowledge transfer to biodiversity-rich countries: constitute the European focal point for species information and for taxonomic contributions to societally relevant issues e.g. CBD, climate change and invasive species
- implement a joint vision and strategy for taxonomic research (means: constitution of taxonomic expert-groups both taxon- and location- focused, including both amateurs and professional inside and outside EDIT members institutions; involvement of most EDIT researchers in joint projects; mobility of personnel between partner institutions; information on taxonomic researchers and their ongoing research readily available; implement a joint employment strategy for taxonomists; common strategy for equipments/labs and agreement for their shared use)
- ensure the long term preservation and availability of taxonomic collections (means: implement a common collection management strategy through common management standards, best practice, common indicators; agreement on privileged repositories by taxa, mobility of collections through long term loans)
- sustain and develop the elements of the Internet platform for Cybertaxonomy (data access, IT tools for field work, data analysis and assembly of treatments, scratchpads)
- safeguard the long-term sustainability of web based, interoperable databases and e-taxonomic infrastructures
- make taxonomic data and results available electronically using state-of-the-art platforms (means: common database standards, common platforms, integration of IT policies, coordinated contribution to very large e-facilities)
- make rapid identification means available to users (means: coordinating barcoding and other identification means; e-tools)
- organize efficient and, if necessary, fast deployment of personnel and amateur societies through task forces
- creating awareness of biodiversity-related issues in the general public
- provide integrated training in taxonomy at all levels

#### General mechanisms

Efficient and sustainable mechanisms to integrate core business operations and assist the decision-making process (means = multilateral MoUs, possibly an overarching legal status, sharing information); establish lasting partnerships with non-EU taxonomic infrastructures and with key sectors of users of taxonomy

## **2. WP LEADERS VIEWS, BY WP**

### **WP2 – HENRIK ENGHOFF**

The partners in the network of excellence EDIT intend to reach a level of integration between the participating institutes where

EDIT is an integrated distributed institution where European/global level activities are being executed in a truly integrated manner

A joint vision and strategy for taxonomic research has been approved and is being implemented

A joint employment strategy for taxonomists has been approved and is being implemented

The majority of the partners' taxonomic researchers are involved in joint projects with colleagues from other partner institutions

A scheme for mobility of personnel between partner institutions has been approved and is being implemented

Taxonomic results are made available electronically, using state-of-the-art platforms

Information on taxonomic researchers and their ongoing research is readily available

Agreements on mobility of collections (short and long term loans) have been implemented

Agreements on the use of equipment have been implemented

Training in taxonomy at all levels is being offered at the EDIT level

### **WP3 – LEO KRIEGSMAN**

EDIT will have established itself at the forefront of European and global taxonomy and is regarded as a success by all stakeholders. It has designed efficient and sustainable mechanisms to integrate core business operations. Member institutions and others have, through multilateral MoUs, shown their commitment to endorse these mechanisms. The operations include: sharing information, identifying commonalities and forging alliances among member institutions; initiating and carrying out transnational projects and collaborative research; common management of natural history collections held by the member institutions; implementing best practices and performance indicators in collections management; coordinating and leading DNA-barcoding and rapid species identification efforts in Europe; sharing and co-financing major lab facilities; providing efficient training to a new generation of taxonomists; organising knowledge transfer to biodiversity-rich countries; creating awareness of biodiversity-related issues among the general public; efficient and, if needed, fast deployment of personnel and amateur societies through task forces.

EDIT has become a centre of gravity to which increasing numbers of institutions want to adhere. It has forged lasting partnerships with non-European taxonomic infrastructures and with key sectors of users of taxonomy. It has developed e-tools that are widely used by the taxonomic community within and outside Europe and safeguards the long-term sustainability of web-based, interoperable databases. Finally, EDIT is the European focal point for species information and for taxonomic contributions to societally relevant issues like CBD, climate change and invasive species, it is able to influence national and international research agendas, and makes significant contributions to policy making.

## WP5 – WALTER BERENDSOHN

WP5 will create the base for the Internet Platform for Cybertaxonomy, which supports the taxonomic work process by means of applications and services. WP5 will foster institutional integration and work-sharing of EDIT member's IT departments to allow for the long-term sustainability of Platform components.

As a cross-workpackage long-term vision, the EDIT Platform for Cybertaxonomy will provide taxonomists with tailored (i) full & efficient data access, (ii) IT tools facilitating fieldwork, (iii) IT tools for data analysis, and (iv) IT tools for assembly of treatments, all this in a manner that makes the generation of reusable data and information an integral and non-obstructive part of the taxonomic work process.

By the end of the EDIT project in 2010 the exemplar groups provide an example for the platform-based cybertaxonomic work process, providing reusable, dynamic, standardised data as a community consensus. Further such websites will be emerging.

The European checklists (Fauna Europaea, Euro+Med & ERMS) will be fully integrated into the platform. The platform architecture based on the Common Data Model will serve as an interface between multiple external applications and services as well as for a series of software products build specifically for the platform.

## WP6 – DAVE ROBERTS

EDIT aims to change the way taxonomists work, using the web to support the formation of taxonomic expert-groups, both taxon- and location- focussed. The experts contributing to these groups should be global, including both amateur and professional and not restricted to a small number of institutions. The current consensus taxonomic classification for many groups will be openly accessible on the web, together with the ability to cross-link purely taxonomic opinion with various applied data. Specialists will be able to drill down into the data to uncover taxonomic issues that deviate from the consensus and expose reasoning, enhancing taxonomists' ability to produce new revisions, keys and similar products. In short, these sites should act as authoritative sources in the same manner as classic monographs, while being dynamically upgraded so that they remain in-date. Essentially, EDIT's infrastructure support taxonomist and to users of taxonomy while being invisible to them.

EDIT should continue to exist as a management structure to assist the decision-making process in member institutions and here it should have high visibility with Institution managers. In this rôle it will be a source of information for the independent Institutional management systems and be a vehicle for co-ordinated actions where they are appropriate.

## WP7 – CHRISTOPH HÄUSER

The EDIT consortium has become a recognised centre of global excellence for taxonomy, and is regularly called upon for its expertise by stakeholders from other fields of biodiversity science, education, environmental policy, and society at large.

EDIT partner institutions are jointly undertaking research projects, training programs, and other activities in support of taxonomy on a regular basis, and closely cooperate for their institutional management and in developing and implementing future strategies.

The EDIT consortium has successfully established and maintains a series of products and services, such as the cyberplatform for taxonomy, an ATBI+M expert task force to assist with biodiversity inventory and monitoring efforts, and a European School of Taxonomy, which are used by the larger scientific community and stakeholders from around the World.

Through EDIT activities and products, taxonomy has visibly changed towards a true information science, generating more efficiently data and knowledge in a truly sustainable, re-usable manner.

The EDIT consortium and partnership model will be looked upon and applied as a successful example for trans-national integration of research institutions and a greater community for other areas of science.

## WP8 – JACKIE VAN GOETHEM

The European Distributed Institute of Taxonomy (EDIT) is a concerted action to address the global ‘taxonomic impediment’.

Participating institutions commit themselves to jointly and actively promote and support taxonomy as the basic research discipline that underpins all other biological sciences.

EDIT institutions catalyse the integration of activities in the realm of taxonomy i.e. systematic research, collection management, capacity building and dissemination. Other European potential partners are encouraged to join and to contribute to these goals.

EDIT strives to set up a pan European decentralised training program in taxonomy aiming at delivering officially recognised academic diplomas.

By favouring and integrating taxonomic activities EDIT addresses the needs of contemporary taxonomy, in particular for future generations worldwide. In fact, EDIT prepares for, and builds up, an integrated structure that with future appropriate funding will allow to carry out a pan European program similar to the very successful and bottom up driven US PEET program: Partnerships for Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy.