
DATA SHARING AND INTERNET DELIVERY OF NEW GUINEAN HERBARIUM COLLECTIONS

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Made on the 14th day of June, 2004, between the following parties:

Australian National Herbarium

National Herbarium of New South Wales

National Herbarium of Victoria

Papua New Guinea National Herbarium

Queensland Herbarium

(Referred to collectively hereinafter as the Parties.)

The Parties recognise that:

- This Memorandum of Understanding is based on longstanding co-operation among the Parties in sharing data and information for scientific research on the Australian and New Guinean floras, and facilitating the provision of such information to external users in a wide array of printed and electronic forms. In response to increasing demand for flora information in electronic format each of the Parties has a major goal of developing electronic flora information systems with web-based delivery to external users and in several cases has established such systems.
- Flora is understood and agreed to include all those organisms traditionally studied by botanists and represented by collections in herbaria; it encompasses plants, algae, fungi and lichens.
- The New Guinean region is understood to include Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and West Papua (Irian Jaya, Indonesia)
- The collections, data and expertise of the Parties collectively provide the single most comprehensive source of reliable taxonomic and distributional information on the flora of the New Guinean region.

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- The *Plants of Papua New Guinea* website will be based on *Australia's Virtual Herbarium* development and will provide specimen-based distributional information.
 - It is recognised that each of the Parties has a longstanding responsibility and role of providing flora information for their constituency, through provision of authoritative censuses, publication of regional floras and provision of identification and other information services.
 - To date the information associated with the collections held by the Papua New Guinea National Herbarium have not been captured electronically. The repatriation of any New Guinean collection data held by the Australian Parties will assist the Papua New Guinea National Herbarium manage the information associated with these collections.

The Parties agree as follows:

1. To follow the provisions of the existing Australia's Virtual Herbarium Memorandum of Understanding between CHAH herbaria.
2. To work together towards a delivery system for specimen-based distribution data and for making the Papua New Guinean data available to external users.
3. Specimen data will be exchanged between the Parties for scientific researchers and bona fide users according to existing specimen exchange procedures and protocols.
4. Free access to the non-sensitive data will be made available to external users.
5. The definition of 'sensitive' data will be agreed to by all Parties prior to the release of any data to external users.
6. The delivery system will coordinate access to the distributed databases held by the Parties as custodians; a centralised database will only be created if all Parties agree that this is the preferred option for web-delivery of these data.

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7. All Parties agree that the delivery system will either have a multiple of internet entry points at the website of each Party or a single *Plants of Papua New Guinea* internet entry point.
 8. Parties agree to make available inputs of data for general access via *Plants of Papua New Guinea* website to allow provision of combined distribution maps at species level with each occurrence depicted as a filled grid square covering 10 minutes latitude by 10 minutes longitude.
 9. For each mapped occurrence data will be made available via the *Plants of Papua New Guinea* website. To meet general needs, data available to all users will be the scientific name, herbarium source, record number, collection date, at least generalised locality information, State, country, approximated geocode, geocode source and precision. More detailed information will be available from custodians, targeted to the nature of the specific inquiry.
 10. Each of the Parties remains the custodian of data held in its system and based on its collections or publications.
 11. Every Papua New Guinea-wide map and other output provided by the *Plants of Papua New Guinea* website will acknowledge all Parties.
 12. The Parties agree to work co-operatively in exchanging detailed data for replicate material held in various herbaria, to avoid duplication of effort and reduce data capture costs.
 13. Within resource limits, Parties agree to ensure the sustainability of sharing data on New Guinean plants by curating collections, maintaining currency and capability of computer databases and ensuring requests for data are met responsively.
 14. This Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to be and does not constitute a legally binding obligation or commitment.
 15. Participation in this New Guinean plants data-sharing project in no way limits the rights of Parties to continue to produce botanical products to meet the needs of their constituencies.

EXECUTED by the Parties on the date first appearing on this Memorandum of Understanding.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE NAMED PARTIES AND PARENT ORGANISATIONS:

Australian National Herbarium

Commonwealth Scientific and
Industrial Research Organisation

National Herbarium of New South
Wales

Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and
Domain Trust

National Herbarium of Victoria

Royal Botanic Gardens Board Victoria

Papua New Guinea National
Herbarium

Papua New Guinea Forest Research
Institute

Queensland Herbarium

Queensland Environment Protection
Authority