

# BHL Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025

**Vision:**

Inspiring discovery through free access to biodiversity knowledge.

**Mission:**

The Biodiversity Heritage Library improves research methodology by collaboratively making biodiversity literature openly available to the world as part of a global biodiversity community.

**Outcomes will support the goals outlined in *Biodiversity Next Conference 2019*:**

“Better data, better collaboration and better science” **via:**

- Active policies to support open access/open data/open science
- More content for open access use and re-use
- Development of new and improved tools
- Appropriate funding and governance
- Increased partner participation
- Better integration with the biodiversity community

**The following goals represent the next 5 years of development of the Biodiversity Heritage Library to deliver the expected outcomes.**

**Goal 1 Relevant Content:**

**Grow the BHL into the most comprehensive, reliable, reputable repository of data-rich biodiversity literature, and other original materials to support response to global challenges.**

**1.1 Continue to develop a collection of relevant data-rich publications and original content by ...**

- a. Revising and updating the collection development plan;
- b. Pursuing in-copyright works;
- c. Expanding subject areas for example, Earth Sciences, Geodiversity, environmental science, sustainability, microbiology and other topics;
- d. Regularly review and define content such as legacy literature, monographs, articles, current publications, and other materials.

**1.2 Add original material and archival sources by targeting repositories with original material aligned with collection development policy.**

**1.3 Ensure reliability and accuracy of the collections by curating the collection.**

**1.4 Identify data in BHL that can support global challenges, ensuring that the content can be parsed into appropriate data packets such as museum identifications, specimen numbers, species descriptions and treatments, observations, climate change data.**

**1.5 Define the BHL collection as a data resource as well as a digital library to support big data approaches by...**

- a. Changing perceptions of BHL by facilitating the extraction of big data;
- b. Establishing BHL as an international infrastructure;
- c. Maintaining a role as a resource for expertise in digital libraries;
- d. Sharing best practices at appropriate conferences and through publications to explain what BHL is, how it accomplishes its mission, how it operates, and the impact it makes.

**Goal 2 Tools and Services:**

**Create services and tools that facilitate discovery of BHL content to improve research efficiency for all potential users.**

**2.1 Improve global awareness and accessibility through...**

- a. Implementing a responsive design;
- b. Ensuring the biodiversity community is aware of BHL's availability and reusability;
- c. Facilitating regional BHL installations, for example in low bandwidth areas;
- d. Exploring alternative technological development models where third parties would develop apps and services from open BHL data;
- e. Improve multi-national usability for example multi-lingual interface and search functions;
- f. Extend and deepen metadata parsing.

**2.2 Ensure continued clear priorities and leadership for technical infrastructure and direction by...**

- a. Creating a 5-year technical roadmap aligned to the strategic plan to enhance the BHL user experience;
- b. Enabling re-use of BHL content by ensuring the biodiversity community is aware of its availability and reusability;
- c. Applying best practices in digital library and bioinformatics developments.

**2.3 Enhance machine-readability of BHL content for data re-use by...**

- a. Improving OCR of existing content;
- b. Finding or developing tools to allow for user generated OCR and metadata and transcription.

**2.4 Identify resources needed to achieve the technical plan by...**

- a. Collaborating with other digital library projects;
- b. Identifying sources of external funding for specific elements (for example from DiSSCo, private donors, institutions, etc.).

**2.5 Implement BHL 2020 Technical Priority Plan.**

**Goal 3 User Engagement:**  
**Increase global awareness about the BHL and biodiversity issues to inform existing users and attract new user communities.**

**3.1 Increase partner participation in outreach initiatives to help promote BHL broadly and educate users about our collections and services by...**

- a. Establishing a BHL Outreach Committee to help guide initiatives, develop resources, share best practices, and contribute content;
- b. Defining expectations for partner contributions to outreach initiatives;
- c. Developing virtual workspaces and toolkits that provide easy ways to engage staff, volunteers, interns, and students at partner institutions with BHL outreach priorities;
- d. Developing reports that demonstrate the impact of partner contributions to BHL to encourage partner organizations to support BHL.

**3.2 Leverage our Global Partnerships to grow the BHL global audience by...**

- a. Working with BHL partners to create multilingual outreach materials;
- b. Working with the BHL Outreach Committee to prioritize the BHL audiences that we want to reach and develop outreach strategies tailored to those communities;
- c. Developing a strategy to identify international conferences that will have the most impact on growing our core BHL audiences and facilitate partner participation.

**3.3 Increase engagements with and usage of BHL content by...**

- a. Evaluating current and potential new outreach platforms to reach target audiences;
- b. Experimenting with email marketing campaigns to increase engagement, fundraising, and use of BHL;
- c. Creating a systematic user training program;
- d. Developing a brand management plan to ensure effective use and promotion of the BHL brand.

**Goal 4 Partnerships and Alliances:**  
**Grow BHL consortial partnerships and alliances to foster cross-institutional collaboration.**

**4.1 Build relationships with other biodiversity projects by ...**

- a. Establishing the role of BHL in national, regional, and international science infrastructure;
- b. Identifying potential partners and champions, including new categories of partners to expand technical capability;
- c. Integrating BHL data into established and emerging biodiversity projects and programs;
- d. Engaging with other biodiversity groups regarding the direction of BHL.

#### **4.2 Align with science specimen collections initiatives that enable open science to address the scientific global challenges by....**

- a. Participating in discussions about science collections;
- b. Participating on advisory teams and workgroups;
- c. Working with organizations to define the specific goals their members have for BHL content;
- d. Facilitating linkages between BHL and science specimen collections.

#### **4.3 Engage with librarians, archivists, and related information professionals by...**

- a. Fostering a professional network of individuals interested in natural science to share expertise and knowledge;
- b. Exploring the feasibility of a regular externally facing open conference that maintains BHL's place in the future landscape of biodiversity information (similar to "Life and Literature");
- c. Building stronger relationships with professional associations.

**Goal 5 Mission Enabling:  
Increase financial strength, effective administrative support, and organizational excellence to ensure BHL's continued success.**

#### **5.1 Sustain the BHL global partnership by ...**

- a. Reviewing the current membership structure to identify a sustainable model which meets the needs of BHL;
- b. Reviewing the governance of BHL;
- c. Engaging with existing and potential BHL champions such as thought leaders, policy makers, governments, donors and funding organizations.

#### **5.2 Create a sustainable funding model for the BHL platform, Secretariat, and governance by ...**

- a. Establishing a formal agreement for hosting the BHL platform and Secretariat;
- b. Identifying high-level sustaining partnerships;
- c. Seeking focused and relevant short-term funding opportunities;
- d. Establishing a baseline financial model for revenue from partners.

#### **5.3 Establish a sustainable model for continued content aggregation by ...**

- a. Identifying and targeting specific, key content providers;
- b. Exploring and developing a framework for managing simpler ways to get content into BHL.

#### **5.4 Maintain effective administrative support and organizational excellence by ...**

- a. Delivering meaningful value to BHL Members that extends their ability to fulfill their own institutional strategic priorities;
- b. Fostering proactive participation and transparency among BHL partners to create a community of shared best practices and peer-generated support;
- c. Empowering stakeholders to maximize their experience of BHL through transparent and responsive communication strategies;
- d. Ensuring that the core foundational elements of BHL are supported to provide the services and operations BHL needs to be effective.