

# 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 a response to global challenges.**

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

- a. Revise and update the collection development policy;
- b. Pursue in-copyright works;
- c. Expand 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:**

- a. Change perceptions of BHL by facilitating the extraction of big data;
- b. Establish BHL as an international data infrastructure;
- c. Maintain BHL's role as a resource for expertise in digital libraries.

**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:**

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

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

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

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

- a. Improve OCR of existing content;
- b. Find or develop tools to allow for user generated OCR and metadata and transcription.

**2.4 Identify resources needed to achieve the technical plan:**

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

**2.5 Annually review BHL Technical Priorities.**

**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:**

- a. Establish a BHL Outreach Committee to help guide initiatives, develop resources, share best practices, and contribute content;
- b. Define expectations for partner contributions to outreach initiatives;
- c. Develop virtual workspaces and toolkits that provide easy ways to engage staff, volunteers, interns, and students at partner institutions with BHL outreach priorities;
- d. Develop 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:**

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

**3.3 Increase engagements with and usage of BHL content:**

- a. Evaluate current and potential new outreach platforms to reach target audiences;
- b. Experiment with email marketing campaigns to increase engagement, fundraising, and use of BHL;
- c. Create a systematic user training program;
- d. Develop 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:**

- a. Establish the role of BHL in national, regional, and international science infrastructures;
- b. Identify potential partners and champions, including new categories of partners to expand diversity of input and technical capability;
- c. Integrate BHL data into established and emerging biodiversity projects and programs;
- d. Engage 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:**

- a. Participate in discussions about science collections;
- b. Participate on advisory teams and workgroups;
- c. Work with organizations and institutions to define the specific goals they have for BHL content;

- d. Facilitate linkages between BHL and science specimen collections.

**4.3 Engage with librarians, archivists, and related information professionals:**

- a. Foster a professional network of individuals interested in natural science to share expertise and knowledge;
- b. Develop BHL external conferences;
- c. Build 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:**

- a. Review the current membership structure to identify a sustainable model which meets the needs of BHL;
- b. Review BHL governance;
- c. Engage 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:**

- a. Establish a formal agreement for hosting the BHL platform and Secretariat;
- b. Identify high-level sustaining partnerships including institutional or consortial networks;
- c. Seek focused and relevant short-term funding opportunities;
- d. Establish a baseline financial model for revenue from partners.

**5.3 Establish a sustainable model for continued content aggregation:**

- a. Identify and target specific, key content providers;
- b. Explore and develop a partnership framework for managing simpler ways to get content into BHL.

**5.4 Maintain effective administrative support and organizational excellence:**

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