**Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme**

**Large, integrated team projects**

**Programme focus areas**

Projects falling within the following seven focus areas have been identified for support (selection in 2019 and implementation in 2020-2022):

**Environmental sustainability:**

i. **Multitaxa surveys, with the geographic area clearly identified on the basis of a large scale proposed development, or neglected areas for which no spatial plan exists for biodiversity, resulting in potentially poor decisions or management**. The NDP and the National Strategic Infrastructure Plan as well as provincial spatial development plans and biodiversity strategy and action plans and bioregional plans for metros can be accessed on the internet to provide a context for sites selected for surveys. Local community involvement in the project must be a core component. The survey must deliver occurrence records, DNA barcodes, and species pages.

ii. **Surveys of the biodiversity of a particular habitat / biome that is neglected and important for ecosystem services, across a broad geographic area.** There must be a strong rationale for how the survey data will be used in managing or rehabilitating habitats. Examples of the type of habitats are soil habitats, wetlands, urban environments.

**Agro-biodiversity and food security:**

iii. **Crop Wild Relatives: taxonomy and distribution of crop wild relatives in South Africa.** A preliminary checklist of priority CWR has been developed for South Africa as part of a National Strategy & Action Plan for Crop Wild Relatives. The understanding of the distribution of CWRs should be enhanced by additional databasing of collections, and surveys that expand current collections of herbaria and genebanks, species must be barcoded according to IBOL requirements, taxonomic / nomenclatural problems must be resolved, and species pages developed.

iv. **Crop and livestock pests, parasites and disease vectors, with a focus on indigenous taxa**: documenting and describing these, understanding their distribution and changes in this through data capture from historical collections and new surveys; includes taxonomic studies, occurrence records, specimens for collections, identification keys / DNA barcodes and species pages. Must be multi-taxa and of a sufficiently broad scope to justify the three year period and financial investment.

**Human health and biocultural diversity:**

v. **Vectors of disease, parasites, pathogens, allergens. Documenting diversity** – including characterisation, building collections, data mobilisation, species pages, understanding changes in historical distribution and predicting future spread.

vi. **Cultural significance of biodiversity:** documenting biodiversity from a cultural diversity perspective in order to promote social cohesion, increase awareness of cultural value of biodiversity, and preserve biocultural diversity. This theme should include indigenous names and classification systems, traditional use for medicinal, food and other uses, and should result in species pages and additional information for species pages where these already exist, as well as occurrence records and DNA barcodes.

**Taxonomic revisions of priority South African taxa:**

vii. **The purpose of this theme is to substantially shift the taxonomic knowledge of taxa that require large scale revision, and that have a large component of their diversity in South Africa / have high proportion of South African endemics and that include economically or ecologically important species.** The revision should include different approaches (morphological and molecular), and lead to descriptions of new taxa and redescriptions where required, DNA barcodes, compilation / updating of species pages, mobilisation of collections data and upgrading of existing data in terms of georeferencing and nomenclatural updates, and may include surveys where these are justified and can produce material that is included in the revision. Representative specimens and associated samples (eg. DNA extracts) must be deposited in appropriate institutions. A collaborative team approach, which may include international expertise, is required. The list of priority families and genera for plants should be used to identify potential plant taxa for revision (see https://www.sanbi.org/biodiversity/foundations/biosystematics-collections/biosystematics-strategies/for the list of genera). For animals, entire invertebrate orders or families can be selected for revision.