

Workshop 1 – Quality Control and Verification

Workshop aim:

*To review current status and establish **achievable actions** for the short, medium and long term.*

What is Verification?

Participants were asked to briefly describe what they thought verification meant in order to make sure everyone had the same understanding.

- Is it [a species record] believable?
- Is it probable?
- Provenance in a record AND a recorder (trust).
- Verification of the identification not the record (i.e. what the person thought they saw).

Verification Issues

Participants were asked to describe the issues surrounding verification.

- 66% of the records in iRecord are currently unverified.
- It is unknown what percentage of the remaining records has gone through an automated process.
- The quality of verification is itself unknown.
- Individual people need to be in control of taxon groups.
- The verification process as a whole needs clarity.
- There needs to be clearly defined rules for taxon groups.
- The rules [in Record Cleaner] need updating and to be more sophisticated.
- Standardisation of the of the terminology surrounding verification tags.
- Greater use of images.
- Need of a “way in” to becoming a verifier.
- Need to have documentation describing what verification involves, including instructions for verifiers and some degree of “self-policing”.
- Acceptance that one record could have multiple verifications.
- Who decides who can become a verifier?
- Need for more information about how verification decisions were reached for individual records.

Suggestions for change

Participants were asked to describe something that they themselves could do to address the above issues, although in reality most of the suggestions were for changes to the system as a whole.

- Allowing more than one verification comment to be stored alongside each record in the Atlas.
- Implement verification at all points of the data flow.
- A national terminology and protocols to be applied.
- Ensure updated NSS verification rules are applied to record cleaner.

- Need to be able to easily feedback errors in verification status to the data provider. Could this be automated?
- Systems to support a central point for verification of all taxon groups.

Commitments from participants

- Keiron Brown willing to verify all records for his taxonomic group (Earthworms)
- ALERC could try and find time to create the initial draft of a verification protocol and standardised terminology.
- Once this is done records centres and the role of verifiers is agreed and clearly laid out others should be willing to take it to local people to try and recruit more verifiers.