

An Infrastructure to Provide the Drive for Innovation

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Biological resources, such as microorganisms and their derivatives, are the essential raw material for the advancement of biotechnology, human health and research and development in the Life Sciences. They represent an untapped treasure trove. However, scientific progress and the resulting growth of the knowledge-based bioeconomy will depend from the facilitated and safe access to *ex-situ* held living biological material of adequate and comparable quality world-wide, and will require coordinated policy actions put in place by governments. A Global Biological Resource Centre Network (GBRCN), as envisioned by OECD and now being explored by the GBRCN Demonstration Project, would provide the favourable environment for such development. Based on the idea of the transition of classical culture collections to Biological Resource Centres (BRCs), and such centres working according to Best Practice and commonly agreed procedures and principles, this global infrastructure would enable and greatly enhance

- strengthening of global collaboration between collections / BRCs and their user communities and relevant regulatory bodies
- addressing scientific challenges, such as diminishing taxonomic and systematic expertise
- delivering innovative solutions to major global problems
- developing common policies on biosafety / biosecurity / biorisk issues
- supporting legislation compliance on all levels
- developing operational frameworks to facilitate safe access to materials and information
- coordinating and focussing activities on resource and service provision towards user demanded key issues.