



Distributed System of Scientific Collections

## Consultation on Digital Specimens Persistent Identifiers (PIDs) for the operation of DiSSCo

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## Cover letter

### Consultation on Digital Specimens Persistent Identifiers (PIDs) for the operation of the DiSSCo RI

Dear DiSSCo member, CETAF group chair, European GBIF node representative, member of the global alliance for biodiversity knowledge, or other stakeholder,

Based on recommendations included in the '[Conceptual Design Blueprint](#)' document for the DiSSCo digitization infrastructure (produced by the ICEDIG project), the DiSSCo Technical Team has developed a comprehensive **option analysis document**, investigating the ways through which the core data concept of digital specimens (i.e. an informationally enriched digital twin of a physical object) can be unambiguously identified in a global, actionable and persistent manner.

It is understood that the selection of the Persistent Identification (PID) scheme for the digital specimens, can have major operational, financial, and socio-technical implications across the DiSSCo Research Infrastructure. Therefore we have put this document out for wide consultation within DiSSCo community and relevant advisory bodies, as well as a wider set of international stakeholders.

The analysis presented in the document constitutes mandated activity described under relevant tasks in the DiSSCo Prepare project and has been evaluated with Task 6.2 partners. In the development process the authors have discussed with a series of stakeholders, including: the DONA foundation, the International DOI Foundation (IDF), DOI Registration Agencies (DataCite & CrossRef), IGSN, ePIC, GBIF and iDigBio. Furthermore, an earlier version of the document was reviewed by the DiSSCo Technical Advisory Board (TAB) and revised to its currently released version (v.0.9) based on the received feedback. This version was first presented in the DiSSCo 2<sup>nd</sup> interim General Assembly meeting.

**As part of the wide consultation process the DiSSCo CSO would welcome comments from a multitude of internal and external stakeholders.** For this we prepared a form for comments: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FTK9WSJ>

Please reply with your comments and suggestions **before 12 December**. A few weeks after this we aim to organize an **informal PID seminar** in the form of a public online session in which we will present the initial results of the consultation. All stakeholders are invited to join the seminar for discussion and further questions.

Following completion of the consultation, DiSSCo CSO will initiate a pilot implementation of the recommended PID scheme for digital specimens, aiming to reach a pre-operational level before the end of the preparatory phase of DiSSCo.

### Guidelines for reviewing

In reviewing the document, we invite you first to read the “Frequently asked questions about Digital Specimens” document to have an understanding of the digital specimens for which we need the PID scheme. You may then want to continue with having a look at the powerpoint presentation which gives an overview of the work that has been carried in selecting and evaluating the options. This should give you enough back ground information to carry on with the options analysis document, starting with the one-page *executive summary*. The DiSSCO preliminary determination of the optimal PID scheme for DiSSCO to adopt can be found in this summary, as well as towards the end of the main document, which covers appraisal of all options. If you do not have enough time to read the full document, then the powerpoint together with the executive summary and the conclusion at the end of the document, should give a good overview.

Note that when the term “powered by DOI” is used, we mean a scheme fully compatible with DOI, but realising this within the DOI ecosystem such that DiSSCO requirements are met (large number of identifiers, tailored metadata scheme, influence to governance) .

For more background information you are welcome to read the [dissco.tech](https://dissco.tech) blog, which covers items like: [What is a digital specimen](#), What is the relation between [Natural Science Identifiers & CETAF Stable Identifiers](#), and [Debunking reliability myths of PIDs for Digital Specimens](#).