



## VACANCY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified team for a consultancy equivalent of thirty (30) person-days to contribute to a sub-component of project VARUNA entitled “*Renforcer les capacités, pour la mobilisation et l'utilisation efficace des informations biologiques et écologiques*”. The consultancy consists of: 1) Evaluate databases of the network partners for upload into Symbiota; 2) Propose solutions for improvements and workflows to efficient digitisation using Symbiota; 3) Standardise core database fields for snapshot upload for partners that will continue using different software; 4) Provide practical hand-on training on the use of Symbiota as a main database software or for snapshot uploads.

### 1. Overall objectives

The objective of this consultancy is to improve the efficiency of digitisation and enhance data quality of the ten herbaria collections in the Western Indian Ocean Islands of Comoros (HKM), Madagascar (TAN, TEF, CNARP, DBEV), Mauritius (MAU), Mayotte (MAO), Réunion (REU, CBNM), and the Seychelles (SEY). The broader aim of this VARUNA sub-component is to foster accessibility and quality of information stored in herbaria collections to support evidence-based decision making for biodiversity conservation and valuing of the natural capital, including the recognition of the importance of the herbarium collections themselves.

### 2. Project Background

Madagascar and the islands of the south-west Indian Ocean form one of the world's biodiversity hotspots and its effective biodiversity conservation rest on a robust understanding of biodiversity information that may be readily made available locally, regionally and beyond. This VARUNA project subcomponent seeks to strengthen the regional collaborative network of herbaria by improving data capture and quality, data sharing, and enhancing institutional capacity for managing botanical collections. A Symbiota portal (<https://wioh.symbiota.org/portal/>) will be used to this end. Many staff of the partner herbaria have followed the GBIF bourse on Biodiversity Data Mobilization. Most herbaria have databases in BRAHMS, and a few in Excel or other collection database software. An assessment of the ten herbaria collections and digitisation from 2024, showed some databases are not standardised to Darwin Core and need concatenation and parsing before upload to Symbiota, while others can be uploaded directly.

### 3. Scope of Work

The consultancy is remote, although if the consultant (or someone in the team) is based in one of the islands, face-to-face meetings could be arranged. Communication can therefore be through electronic means (e.g. email, video calls, messaging) and, if possible, face-to-

face meetings. The consultant team will 1) Evaluate databases of the network partners and, when necessary, propose solutions for upload into Symbiota; 2) Propose improvements and workflows to efficient digitisation using Symbiota; 3) Standardise core database fields for snapshot upload for partners who will continue using different software; 4) Give practical hands-on training on the use of Symbiota so that partners can confidently use the platform for direct data entry or for snapshot uploads.

#### **4. Schedule and Work Plan**

This is a consultancy for an equivalent of thirty (30) person-days, ending on 15 June 2026. The main deliverables are: 1) Ensure that network partners databases are fit for uploading into Symbiota; 2) Data standards and efficient workflows are in-place or suggested for digitisation using Symbiota or for snapshot upload 3) Herbaria in the network have the basics on the use of Symbiota. The team of consultants will report to the Principal Investigator (PI) and collaborator, and will record hours worked and outputs to be submitted for payment and audit purposes.

#### **5. Payment**

The consultancy fee is fixed at 800 Euros per day, summing to 24,000 Euros. The team of consultants will receive payment upon submission of the agreed and record list of tasks performed. This consultancy is funded by the VARUNA subproject allocated to the University of Mauritius (<https://varuna-biodiversite.org/en/project/projet-2-mobiliser-les-chercheurs-autour-du-capital-naturel/>)

#### **6. Special Conditions**

- A) Qualifications: The team of consultants should have experience with dedicated herbarium database software. At least one person in the team should have a university degree in a relevant field. Post-graduate qualification in a relevant field will confer an advantage.
- B) Facilities to be Provided by the team of Consultants: The consultancy fee includes all expenses involved in contacting and gathering necessary information with all herbaria in the region.
- C) Facilities to be Provided by the Client: The consultancy rate is fixed. The PI and his main collaborator in this sub-project will provide guidance to the Consultant or Group of Consultants.
- D) Other special conditions: Fluent in French and English.
- E) Evaluation Criteria: Based on previous experience on natural history collections and databasing experience, qualifications, language skills, and related experience that would be considered advantageous to the proposed task.

#### **Mode of Application**

A letter of application together with (i) A detailed *Curriculum Vitae*, (ii) Scanned copies of qualifications, (iii) Other documents that can support special conditions enumerated above

and (iv) Suggested plan of work, are to be sent by email to the Dean, Faculty of Science, University of Mauritius, Réduit (Email: [deanfos@uom.ac.mu](mailto:deanfos@uom.ac.mu)) with copy to Associate Professor Dr. F. B. Vincent FLORENS, Principal Investigator, Faculty of Science, University of Mauritius, Réduit [Email: [Vin.Florens@uom.ac.mu](mailto:Vin.Florens@uom.ac.mu) ] by **Thursday 07 May 2026 by 16:00 (-4 GMT) latest**. Applications received after the closing date cannot be considered.

The University reserves the right:

- To call for interview only the most appropriately and best qualified applicants.
- Not to make any appointment as a result of this advertisement.
- To conduct a written and aptitude test as and when required.

**27 April 2026**

**Acting Dean  
Faculty of Science**