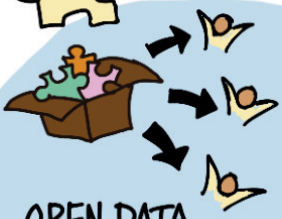
INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY & OPEN DATA IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Tattersall, E., Cardinal-McTeague, W., Myers-Smith, I., Jenkins, D. A., & Burton, A. C. (2025). Affirming Indigenous data sovereignty in collaborative wildlife conservation in the era of open data. People and Nature, 00: 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.70161

DATA are pieces of information.

WILDLIFE DATA include recordings from environmental sensors. These recordings capture valuable information about animals and the land on which they live.





Open data aims to make it easier to access data and improve knowledge sharing

OPEN DATA



IDS means Indigenous people have the right to control data about themselves and their lands

INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY

HOW SHOULD WILDLIFE ECOLOGISTS AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES HANDLE WILDLIFE DATA?



RECOMMENDATIONS

Rachel MacNeill, 2025.

COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- **Relationship** is essential
- Use **collaborative** research methods (such as data sharing protocols)
- **Support** community to be involved in the research at all stages

DATA GOVERNANCE

- Talk to all collaborators about **who owns data** and what that means
- **Respect** Indigenous protocols
- Set **clear** expectations

DATA STEWARDSHIP

- Ensure community data **needs** are met
- Make sure the community can **access, understand, and use** data
- Include **traditional knowledge & community context**

What species are culturally important in this region?

USE THESE QUESTIONS TO GUIDE DATA PLANNING

PLAN
What will we collect?
Why/what for?
Who will decide?
How will we work together?

COLLECT
Who will collect data?
How will they do it?

ASSURANCE
How will we make sure the data is correct?

DESCRIBE
How will we organize it?
What needs to be included?

PRESERVE
Where will we keep the data?
Who will take care of it?
Who can access it?

DISCOVER
Who can find the data? How?
Who can use it?

INTEGRATE
How will we work with other datasets?

ANALYZE
What questions can we ask?
Who interprets it?
How do we talk about it?



Ecologists must consider Indigenous data sovereignty to avoid causing unintended harm