

Conference Abstract

Camtrap DP: A frictionless data exchange format for camera trapping data

Peter Desmet[‡], Jakub Bubnicki[§], Ben Norton[|]

[‡] Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO), Brussels, Belgium

[§] Open Science Conservation Fund, Białowieża, Poland

[|] North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Raleigh, North Carolina, United States of America

Corresponding author: Peter Desmet (peter.desmet@inbo.be)

Received: 18 Aug 2021 | Published: 31 Aug 2021

Citation: Desmet P, Bubnicki J, Norton B (2021) Camtrap DP: A frictionless data exchange format for camera trapping data. Biodiversity Information Science and Standards 5: e73188. <https://doi.org/10.3897/biss.5.73188>

Abstract

Camera trapping is one of the most important technologies in conservation and ecological research and a well-established, non-invasive method of collecting field data on animal abundance, distribution, behaviour, temporal activity, and space use (Wearn and Glover-Kapfer 2019). Collectively, camera trapping projects are generating a massive and continuous flow of data, consisting of images and videos (with and without animal observations) and associated identifications (Scotson et al. 2017, Kays et al. 2020). In recent years, significant progress has been made by the global camera trapping community to resolve the challenges this brings, from the development of specialized data management tools and analytical packages, to the application of cloud computing and artificial intelligence to automate species recognition (Tabak et al. 2018). However, to effectively exchange camera trap data between infrastructures and to (automatically) harmonize data into large-scale wildlife datasets, there is a need for a common data exchange format—one that captures the essential information about a camera trap study, allows expression of different study and identification approaches, and aligns well with existing biodiversity standards such as Darwin Core (Wieczorek et al. 2012).

Here we present [Camera Trap Data Package \(Camtrap DP\)](#), a data exchange format for camera trap data. It is managed by the [Machine Observations Interest Group](#) of Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG) and developed publicly, soliciting community feedback for every change. Camtrap DP is built on [Frictionless Standards](#), a set of generic

specifications to describe and package (tabular) data and metadata. Camtrap DP extends these with specific requirements and constraints for camera trap data. By building on an existing framework, users can employ existing [open source software](#) to read and validate Camtrap DP formatted data. Validation especially is useful to automatically check if provided data meets the requirements set forth by Camtrap DP, before analysis or integration.

Supported by the major camera trap data management systems e.g. [Agouti](#), [TRAPPER](#), [e Mammal](#), and [Wildlife Insights](#), Camtrap DP is reaching its first stable version. The first Camtrap DP dataset was published on Zenodo (Cartuyvels et al. 2021b). This dataset was also published to the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) (Cartuyvels et al. 2021a), demonstrating the ability and limitations of [transforming the data to the Darwin Core](#) standard.

Keywords

camera trap, data format

Presenting author

Peter Desmet

Presented at

TDWG 2021

References

- Cartuyvels E, Adriaens T, Baert K, Brosens D, Casaer J, Devisscher S, Donckers D, Fritz H, Huysentruyt F, Lodewijckx J, Maistrelli C, Neukermans A, Sloommaekers D, Van der beek D, Desmet P (2021a) MICA - Muskrat and coypu camera trap observations in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) / GBIF. Release date: 2021-3-18. URL: <https://doi.org/10.15468/5tb6ze>
- Cartuyvels E, Adriaens T, Baert K, Brosens D, Casaer J, Devisscher S, Donckers D, Fritz H, Huysentruyt F, Lodewijckx J, Maistrelli C, Neukermans A, Sloommaekers D, Van der beek D, Desmet P (2021b) MICA - Muskrat and coypu camera trap observations in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. v1. Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) / Zenodo. Release date: 2021-7-08. URL: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4893244>
- Kays R, McShea W, Wikelski M (2020) Born-digital biodiversity data: Millions and billions. *Diversity and Distributions* 26 (5): 644-648. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ddi.12993>
- Scotson L, Johnston L, Iannarilli F, Wearn O, Mohd-Azlan J, Wong W, Gray TE, Dinata Y, Suzuki A, Willard C, Frechette J, Loken B, Steinmetz R, Moßbrucker A, Clements

- GR, Fieberg J (2017) Best practices and software for the management and sharing of camera trap data for small and large scales studies. *Remote Sensing in Ecology and Conservation* 3 (3): 158-172. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rse2.54>
- Tabak M, Norouzzadeh M, Wolfson D, Sweeney S, Vercauteren K, Snow N, Halseth J, Di Salvo P, Lewis J, White M, Teton B, Beasley J, Schlichting P, Boughton R, Wight B, Newkirk E, Ivan J, Odell E, Brook R, Lukacs P, Moeller A, Mandeville E, Clune J, Miller R (2018) Machine learning to classify animal species in camera trap images: Applications in ecology. *Methods in Ecology and Evolution* 10 (4): 585-590. <https://doi.org/10.1111/2041-210x.13120>
 - Wearn O, Glover-Kapfer P (2019) Snap happy: camera traps are an effective sampling tool when compared with alternative methods. *Royal Society Open Science* 6 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.181748>
 - Wieczorek J, Bloom D, Guralnick R, Blum S, Döring M, Giovanni R, Robertson T, Vieglais D (2012) Darwin Core: An Evolving Community-Developed Biodiversity Data Standard. *PLoS ONE* 7 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0029715>