BIEN Milestone – feedback

**Aaron's feedback on the timeline**

* Do we want to do the web interface last?
  + Yes, but we could start earlier once you think we are ready. But bear in mind that we cannot provide access to data until we have (a) imported the data, (b) developed validations that make data useable. An important part of the website will be user controls that enforce data access restrictions and protect embargoed data. We must have all these elements (metadat) in place in the core database before we can build the website upon them. Finally, I would like to be confident that all the pieces of BIEN3 are working before we expose it to the world via the website. If new users decide to contribute data, we should be able to ingest it fairly quickly, without have to do new development.
* Does that mean easy access to the database (both for importing and exporting data) isn't important?
  + No, it's extremely important. Which is why we shouldn't release the website until we are certain it is working properly. And we need to have a fully developed database in place before we can develop the website.
* Do we need 3 months to revise schemas?
  + Probably not, although we haven't made any progress so far in this respect. It would certainly speed development if we could have all revisions to VegBIEN and VegX complete by end of January. Is this possible?
* Do we want to devote 2 months to data provider feedback?
  + Perhaps this is better included as an ongoing element. I now think the best time to get data provider feedback is after we finish mapping and importing their data and run the validations. But I also see a separate user-feedback stage after we complete the website, we users can view their data via the web.
* What is involved with "Additional data"?
  + By the end of the year, BIEN3 should contain data from all sources currently in BIEN2, plus a few key "missing" sources. Specifically, specimens from Canadian and Argentinian herbaria.
  + Acquiring and mapping data from many additional data sources will take time, maybe more than 2 months (part of which are dedicated to the web interface)
  + Specimen data is DwC, and should be almost instant to import. Plot data is more difficult; probably during BIEN3 development (1 year) we should not import anything other than what we already have in BIEN2. But I would like to have a mechanism in place whereby we can continue to import data, of either type, indefinitely. This is why an import and mapping tool would be extremely helpful.
* "Build and test BIEN3 database and import utilities" is an overarching task that will be worked on throughout the BIEN project, rather than just in the first few months
* OK, let's make that an ongoing task. However, although we will always need to develop custom mappings between source DBs and VegX, everything downstream of VegX should be a single set of generic scripts. It should be done only once and should not be specific to individual data sources.
  + There will always be new features we want to add
  + Sigh. You said it.

**Martha's feedback on the timeline**

* Do web services for georeferencing and geovalidation exist? If not, these bullet items may be problematic dependencies.
* These are actually two separate issues.
* (1) Georeferencing. There are services already out, and it may be possible to use the "out of the box"—although in my experience none are particularly good. This will require some research. It is possible it is out-of-scope.
* (2) Geovalidation. This is done. John's and my scripts already do a good job of flagging "bad records"; they just need to be linked up to the rest of BIEN3 and automated. This is not a big job, just a matter of script integration. The scripts John and I wrote to correct place names constitute a fully functional GNRS. It would be nice to add fuzzy searching as well, but not necessary. With a bit of extra work, the existing GNRS could be made available via a web service and simple user interface on the BIEN website.

Will Aaron develop the web site (interface)?

I would love a full-featured website, but if time is running short we could more easily have a useful and attractive website by building the on the wordpress platform I have started. It is easy to plug in dynamic, server site tools into a wp template. I did have in mind that Aaron would build both the database and website, but thay may not be realistic. We should discuss.