

Sensitive and for other reason use-restricted biodiversity data at the Finnish Biodiversity Information Facility

Background

Legislation and other reason for use restrictions

The Act on the Openness of Government Activities (21 May 1999/621), Publicity Act is the most important legislation governing how data distributed through FinBIF is made less specific or secret.

Section 24 – Secret official documents, item 14: Documents containing information on endangered animal or plant species or the protection of important natural habitats, if access would compromise the protection of the species or the habitat;

Research data is not in principle open information and its use is often restricted for a certain time limit;

The data owner may, if he or she so wishes, limit the openness of his or her data, unless otherwise specified by law.

Method

Sensitive data or for other reason use-restricted data held by the Finnish Biodiversity Information Facility is protected either by making location data less specific or making the data secret. This is done automatically for species with sensitive data, and one-time for other restricted information.

However, a complete copy of the data is always taken and can be shared, for example for authorities or other use on a case-by-case basis.

A national list of species with sensitive data has been compiled and can be consulted at Species.fi:Finnish Biodiversity Information Facility – sensitive biodiversity data. The list consists of species whose conservation would be endangered by data disclosure due to persecution, hunting, disturbance or commercial or hobby-based collection activities and the protection of information is based on the Publicity Act.

Terms

The user of sensitive or otherwise restricted data commits to

- take special care to avoid endangering the species as described in the Publicity Act and / or taking into account other reasons that have caused the restriction of use.
- use the information solely and exclusively for the purpose for which the data has been released.
- not to distribute the material to anyone outside.
- when using the data, refer to the data according to the citation instructions and note that the exact location information of sensitive species may not be published.