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## **GLOSSARY**

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### **AD HOC ELEMENT LISTING**

A selective approach for determining what to include on an Element list. With *ad hoc* Element listing, only some of the Elements within a group are included without consideration of others in the group, some of which could be of equal or greater conservation concern. This approach is usually applied to those species in poorly-known groups of Elements that are believed to be imperiled and vulnerable, including species of official national or subnational concern.

### **AREAL DELIMITED UNCERTAINTY**

Locational uncertainty greater than negligible that varies within a known extent in more than one dimension. The true location of an EO with areal delimited extent can be visualized as “floating” within some area for which boundaries cannot be specifically delimited.

### **AREAL ESTIMATED UNCERTAINTY**

Locational uncertainty greater than half the minimum mapping unit and that varies an unknown extent in more than one dimension. The true location of an EO with areal estimated extent can be visualized as “floating” within a specified boundary that delimits the full extent of uncertainty associated with the occurrence.

### **BASIC FEATURE**

A feature derived from a source feature that represents the occurrence including associated locational uncertainty without the addition of any procedural or programmatic buffers

### **CALCULATED REPRESENTATION ACCURACY**

Ratio of the observed area to the procedural area of an EO representation, multiplied by 100, used to indicate the percentage of the procedural area of an occurrence that is actually occupied by the Element.

### **COMMUNITY**

An ecological community (*i.e.*, a community Element Occurrence) is an assemblage of species populations that co-occur and potentially interact with one another (Begon *et al.* 1990, McPeck and Miller 1996).

### **COMMUNITY TYPE**

A terrestrial vegetated community type (*i.e.*, a community Element) is defined by conceptually grouping “on the ground” communities into “associations” or taxonomically higher-level units (*i.e.*, “alliances” or “formations”) based on similarities in floristic composition, vegetation structure (physiognomy), and environmental characteristics (Grossman *et al.* 1998).

### **COMPOSITE EO**

An occurrence comprised of different contiguous areas reflecting different categories of observed features (*e.g.*, an EO comprised of a stream [linear area] and a pond [large area]).

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**COMPOUND EO**

An occurrence consisting of noncontiguous areas close enough to each other to be considered one EO, based on separation guidelines defined for the Element (*e.g.*, a pothole pond community comprised of two or more distinct ponds).

**COMPREHENSIVE ELEMENT LISTING**

An approach for determining what to include on an Element List in which all Elements within a group (typically phylum, class, order, or family for species) are listed. This approach is often applied in situations where the taxonomy, status, and distribution (*e.g.*, by subnation) are reasonably well-known for most species in each family or group.

**CONCEPTUAL FEATURE**

Conceptually characterization of an observed feature as a simplified cartographic unit (a point, line, or polygon).

**CONDITION**

EO rank factor that is an integrated measure of the quality of biotic and abiotic factors, structures, and processes within an occurrence, and the degree to which they affect the viability of the EO.

**CULTURAL VEGETATION**

Planted/cultivated areas defined by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (1996) as “Areas dominated with vegetation which has been planted in its current location by humans and/or is treated with annual tillage, a modified conservation tillage, or other intensive management or manipulation. The majority of vegetation in these areas is planted and/or maintained for the production of food, feed, fiber, or seed. This includes: vegetation planted in built-up settings, for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes; all areas used for the production of crops, such as corn, soybeans, vegetables, tobacco, cotton, wheat, and rice; grasses, legumes, or grass-legume mixtures planted for livestock grazing or the production of seed or hay crops; orchards, vineyards, and tree plantations planted for the production of fruit, nuts, fiber (wood), or ornamental. In cases where one cannot assess whether it was planted by humans (*e.g.*, some mature forests), the vegetation is considered ‘natural/semi-natural’”.

**DETAILED FEATURE**

A feature use to represent an observation at a scale larger than the standard map scale.

**ELEMENT LIST**

A register comprised of many species and communities that currently exist, or have existed historically. Element Lists are compiled at global, national, and subnational levels to provide a broad and well-balanced selection of the biodiversity present in the jurisdiction.

**ELEMENT**

An Element is a unit of natural biological diversity. Elements represent species (or infraspecific taxa), natural communities, or other nontaxonomic biological entities (*e.g.*, migratory species aggregation areas).

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**ESTIMATED REPRESENTATION ACCURACY**

Scale that indicates the accuracy of a feature. EOs with negligible uncertainty are the most accurate, with all other features categorized according to the biologist's estimate of the percentage of an EO representation that is attributable to the area of the original field observation (*i.e.*, before added locational uncertainty).

**EO RANK**

An EO rank represents the relative value of an EO with respect to others for that Element, defined according to criteria derived from specific EO rank factors. An EO rank provides an assessment of the estimated viability or probability of persistence of the occurrence.

**EO RANK FACTOR**

A factor that reflects the present status, or quality, of an occurrence, used as the basis for estimating the viability of the EO, *i.e.*, its EO rank. There are three EO rank factors, each reflecting what is currently known about an EO: size, condition, and landscape context.

**EO RANK FACTOR SPECIFICATIONS**

For communities, guidelines developed in a global context that establish rank criteria for each of the EO rank factors individually. EO rank factor specifications are based on knowledge of historical evidence and current status of occurrences of the Element.

**EO RANK SPECIFICATIONS**

For species, guidelines developed in a global context that establish criteria for an EO rank based on EO rank factors. EO rank specifications are based on knowledge of historical evidence and current status of occurrences of the Element.

**EO REPRESENTATION**

Mapped feature delineating the boundaries of an EO, including locational uncertainty associated with the underlying data.

**EO SPECIFICATIONS**

Guidelines developed in a global context that establish minimum criteria for what constitutes a valid EO.

**EO TRACKING LIST**

A subset of an Element List, compiled at national and subnational levels to define the set of Elements that are of sufficient conservation concern to warrant the accumulation and maintenance of detailed locational and status data (*i.e.*, EO records) on some or all occurrences. (Also known as an Element Inventory List.)

**EO**

Element Occurrence - an area of land and/or water in which an Element is, or was, present.

**ESTIMATED VIABILITY**

The likelihood that if current conditions prevail, an occurrence will persist for a defined period of time (typically 20-100 years). The estimated viability of an occurrence is essentially represented by its EO rank.

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**FEATURE LABEL**

An optional descriptive label indicating what the data is (*e.g.*, deme, nest, den, watershed). In practice, feature labels are most useful for sub-EOs.

**GENERALIZED REPRESENTATION**

A representation of an EO with blurred boundaries and/or an offset position, used to protect the location of a sensitive Element on a map to be used for public distribution.

**LANDSCAPE CONTEXT**

EO rank factor that is an integrated measure of the quality of biotic and abiotic factors, structures, and processes surrounding an occurrence, and the degree to which they affect the viability of the EO.

**LINEAR UNCERTAINTY**

Locational uncertainty greater than negligible that varies in one dimension (*i.e.*, along an axis). The true location of an EO with linear uncertainty may be visualized as effectively “sliding” within a linear span that delineates the uncertainty.

**LOCATIONAL UNCERTAINTY**

The recorded location of the occurrence may vary from its true location due to many factors, including the level of expertise of the data collector, differences in survey techniques and equipment used, and the amount and type of information obtained. This inaccuracy is characterized as locational uncertainty, and should be incorporated in the representation of an EO.

**LOCATION USE CLASS**

A descriptive name that should be assigned to all observed areas of migratory species that utilize geographically and seasonally disjunct locations, used to group EOs by their season of occurrence.

**METAPOPOPULATION**

In a broad sense, a metapopulation is a spatially structured group of subpopulations where at least one of the subpopulations has a non-trivial probability of natural extirpation. More narrowly defined, a metapopulation is a population that has demographically significant exchange among subpopulations (*e.g.*, demes) such that the persistence of the metapopulation depends on the combined dynamics of extirpation from given patches and recolonization among patches by dispersal. If habitats are so far apart that dispersal between them virtually never occurs, the system will behave as a set of completely separate populations.

**MINIMUM DIGITIZING UNIT**

The size of the smallest feature that is larger than the minimum mapping unit for which boundaries will be digitized. Features that are larger than the minimum mapping unit but below the threshold of the minimum digitizing unit may be more practically digitized using a circle buffered to the appropriate size.

**MINIMUM MAPPING UNIT**

The size of the smallest feature for which boundaries will be delineated on a map of a particular scale.

**NEGLIGIBLE UNCERTAINTY**

Locational uncertainty that is less than or equal to half the minimum mapping unit in any dimension. EOs with negligible uncertainty are based on a comprehensive field survey with high quality mapping has a high degree of associated certainty.

**OBSERVED FEATURE**

Feature based on an observed area from a field survey or historical account that serves as the foundation from which an EO representation may be developed.

**OCCUPIED HABITAT**

For species Elements, the area that encompasses the full extent (or full seasonal extent for aerial, marine, or anadromous migratory species) of all behaviors and life history functions, except long-distance dispersal, for that local population.

**POINT REPRESENTATION**

A point used to represent an EO at any map scale small enough that the boundary of the occurrence is not apparent.

**PRACTICAL CONSERVATION VALUE**

Idea that an instance of an Element at a particular location should potentially contribute to the survival or persistence of the Element at that location in order to qualify as an EO. Because a primary purpose for delineating EOs is to guide conservation action, it is critical that occurrences have practical conservation value for the Elements they represent; this is evidenced by potential continued (or historical) presence and/or regular recurrence at that location.

**PRINCIPAL EO**

For species, a conceptual representation of the full occupied habitat (or previously occupied habitat) that contributes, or potentially contributes, to the persistence of the species at that location. Principal EOs are typically separated from each other by barriers to movement or dispersal, or by specific distances defined for each Element across either unsuitable habitat, or suitable but apparently unoccupied habitat.

For community types, a representation of a defined area that contains (or contained) a characteristic species composition and structure. Principal EOs are separated from each other by barriers to species interactions, or by specific distances defined for each Element across adjacent areas occupied by other natural or semi-natural community types, or by cultural vegetation.

**PROBABILITY OF PERSISTENCE**

The likelihood that that if current conditions prevail, an occurrence will continue to exist for a defined period of time (typically 20-100 years).

**PROCEDURAL AREA**

The area of the procedural feature derived through the process of developing an EO representation.

**PROCEDURAL BUFFER**

Buffer added to any basic feature that is smaller than the minimum mapping unit in any dimension during translation to a procedural feature to produce a polygon on a standard scale map.

**PROCEDURAL FEATURE**

Feature that results from translation of a basic feature to a shape that represents the occurrence and its locational uncertainty as a polygon on a standard scale map. One or more procedural features comprise an EO.

**SEPARATION DISTANCE**

For species, distances defined in EO specifications for intervening unsuitable habitat and suitable but apparently unoccupied habitat, used to separate principal occurrences of the Element. For communities, distances defined in EO specifications for intervening different communities and cultural vegetation, used to separate principal occurrences of the Element.

**SIZE**

EO rank factor that is a quantitative measure of the area and/or abundance of an occurrence.

**SOURCE FEATURE**

Feature derived from the translation of a conceptual feature to a tangible form. A source feature serves as the initial digitized or manuscripted spatial component in an EO record.

**SUB-EO**

Smaller geographically distinct areas nested within another occurrence of the same Element.

**WATCH LIST**

A register comprised of Elements of some current or potential conservation concern for which occurrences are not currently tracked. Watch List status is commonly assigned to Elements of lesser conservation concern than those that are EO tracked.