

SPI-BIRDS NETWORK AND DATABASE

TERMS OF USE AND DATA ACCESS POLICY

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PRODUCED BY:

SPI-BIRDS TEAM

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1 Introduction

The SPI-Birds Terms of Use is designed to guide the use of data hosted at the SPI-Birds Database. We believe the sharing of data will foster collaborative scientific research and educational activities internationally. Each data set hosted at SPI-Birds is accompanied by documentation (metadata), and for each dataset these metadata specify the terms and conditions of data use. SPI-Birds members endorse the principle that data from the SPI-Birds Database can be requested for academic, research, education, and other non-profit professional purposes. We encourage the use of our data sets but ask that users read and agree to our data use agreement below, and adhere to the principle of acknowledging the use of data and its attribution.

2 Data use agreement

Access to SPI-Birds data sets might be granted to the **Data User**, depending on the type of the dataset (*open* or *closed*) and the outcome of the user-owner correspondence for *closed* datasets.

The general SPI-Birds terms of use apply all users downloading data that are not their own. By accepting this document and accessing data from SPI-Birds, the user agrees to the following:

1. To follow the terms defined in the **License Type**, or **License Terms** for each study from which data are accessed.
2. To obtain permission from the data owner for the proposed use prior to downloading data. For studies that are *open* and thus publicly downloadable and have *CC0*, *CC BY* or *CC BY-NC* licenses, permission of the owner is not required for use. However if data will be used for new applications or analyses, we strongly encourage users to make a reasonable attempt to contact these owners about your intended use, and to offer co-authorship or other credit as appropriate for publications or products resulting from the use of these data.
3. To follow SPI-Birds citation guidelines ([Annex I](#)) for citing the use of data. Citation is required for data with *CC BY* or *CC BY-NC* licenses and if specified in the study's **License Terms**. For data licensed with *CC0* or if not specified by the study's **License Terms**, we encourage following these guidelines or providing citation and acknowledgement in other ways as is feasible.
4. Not to hold SPI-Birds or the data owner liable for errors in the data. We do not guarantee the completeness or accuracy of these data.
5. To assess the fitness of these data for the intended use. Allowing the download of these data does not suggest that SPI-Birds or the data owner approve of the proposed use or support the results of your analysis. If you find potential errors or incomplete information within a study, please contact the study owner and/or spibirds@nioo.knaw.nl.

Further, the following guidelines apply:

1. The **Data User** understands that the majority of the data sets are being actively used by others (usually the **Data Owners'** research group) for ongoing research and that communication and coordination is necessary to prevent duplicate publication. The **Data User** also realizes that the data may be misinterpreted if taken out of context. Data are mostly being collected by scientists in academic and other research organizations with the requirement to publish scientific papers. Thus, the Data User must contact the responsible person, usually the **Data Owner**, for each dataset to check on other uses of the data, receive further information on data, and discuss collaboration and/or co-authorship. The contact person (usually the **Data Owner**) is clearly stated for each dataset, in the datasets' metadata. Note that, in some cases, the **Data Owner** opts not to be contacted prior to the data use. In this case, SPI-Birds will provide data upon an acceptable request (please see point 3).
2. Acknowledgement: the **Data User** agrees to acknowledge the use of data, resources, and expertise, in their publication, presentation or other dissemination media, and, where appropriate, agrees to engage the contributors of the data in other professional activities (e.g., co-authorship of papers). Use of the data in publications must always include the minimal terms of use, as stated in the metadata of each dataset, and might include other elements (specific terms), that are agreed upon with the **Data Owner** (e.g., co-authorship). The minimal terms include the following (and are clearly stated for each dataset):
 - (a) acknowledge the **Data Owner(s)** and the SPI-Birds Network and Database;
 - (b) acknowledge the stated funding sources (if any);
 - (c) cite publication(s) describing the population from which dataset was derived (if any);
 - (d) cite the SPI-Birds paper;
 - (e) cite the dataset. Citation guidelines are provided in the [Annex I](#).
3. Acceptable use: use of the dataset will be restricted to academic, research, educational, government, recreational, or other non-profit professional purposes. Any other uses can be discussed with the **Data Owner**. We therefore require a brief description of the purpose of the data request, even for datasets that do not require the agreement on the specific terms of use/explicit approval of the **Data Owner**.
4. The **Data User** agrees to notify the SPI-Birds and the **Data Owner** when any derivative work or publication based on, or derived from, the dataset is distributed. The **Data User** is requested and encouraged to send a pdf of any publications resulting from use of the data to the responsible person for the SPI-Birds Program Coordinator (a.culina@nioo.knaw.nl). We would like to include such manuscripts in our SPI-Birds publications list.

5. The **Data User** agrees not to redistribute original data and documentation without permission from the **Data Owner**.
6. We also advise (but do not require) that data requests are sent prior to grant applications based on data hosted at SPI-Birds. This is to i) avoid failure of funded projects in case dataset use is not granted; ii) establish whether another similar project has been submitted/planned to be submitted. Further, whenever possible, we encourage that projects that are planned based on several of the SPI-Birds datasets also include some budget for the SPI-Birds Network and Database costs, which can be discussed with the SPI-Birds Program Coordinator. Some examples include workshops, conference participation, work on data pipelines, and work on database updates.

3 Disclaimer

By using these data, the **Data User** agrees to follow the guidelines of this agreement. While substantial efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of data and documentation, complete accuracy of datasets cannot be guaranteed. SPI-Birds shall not be liable for damages resulting from any use or misinterpretation of datasets. The **Data User** may be held responsible for any misuse that is caused or encouraged by the **Data User's** failure to abide by the terms of this agreement. **Data Users** should be aware that we periodically update datasets.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Annex I

The following guidelines and examples are provided for **Data Users**, **Data Owners** and publishers to ensure appropriate citation of data hosted at the SPI-Birds Database. Because **Data Owners** retain ownership of their data in SPI-Birds Database, references to “SPI-Birds data” or “data accessed through SPI-Birds” are insufficient. Proper citation or other attribution will depend on the **Data Owner’s** terms of use and applicable data licenses (as stated in the metadata of each dataset).

1. *Cite related papers*

The **Data Owner** might want you to cite related papers or research projects. Refer to the **License Terms** and citations in the metadata.

2. *Cite datasets hosted at SPI-Birds*

To refer to the dataset hosted at SPI-Birds, it is best to include both the population full name (as provided in the metadata) and the “SPI-Birds ID” listed in the metadata and in the SPI-Birds standard protocol, data version, along with the date accessed. For example:

“The data used in this study were accessed from SPI-Birds (study name “Harjavalta”, study ID HAR_Harjavalta_Finland), [version number] on [date].”

3. *Data availability statements*

The following example statement is modelled after those recommended by Springer-Nature and a research data policy framework drafted by the Research Data Alliance (Hrynaszkiwicz et al. 2019):

“The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available in the SPI-Birds Database [study name], [study ID:xx], [version: xx], [Data Owner], [Year].”

4. *Cite large numbers of datasets/publications*

In collaborations involving many studies in SPI-Birds, such as meta-analyses or comparative analyses, the content format or journal might limit the number of references and make it impossible to cite all participating studies and existing papers as described above. Examples of ways to include a longer list of citations or alternative acknowledgements:

- (a) Some journals allow a separate reference list for the methods that might allow a full listing of citations for participating studies.
- (b) Web-based tools or products should include a page of acknowledgements or source information that lists citations as suggested above, or otherwise references participating studies and owners.
- (c) Including a full list in the supplemental materials of a paper should be used only as a last resort. References listed here are typically not recognized by search engines and other automated methods of recognizing data citation and re-use.

We welcome discussion with publishers and others about how to better support attribution for these types of projects. Please contact a.culina@nioo.knaw.nl.

5. *Cite SPI-Birds*

To refer to the SPI-Birds Database itself, and not specific data within it, please use this citation:

Culina et al. 2021. Journal of Animal Ecology. DOI:
10.1111/1365-2656.13388.