BLACK FOXES UK BIOLOGICAL RECORDING SOP

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
Role: Biological Record Coordinator
Objective: To collect, digitize, and manage data on silver fox populations, ensuring accurate entry into relevant databases, developing biological recording protocols, managing data requests, and collaborating with internal teams to promote biological recording.

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1. Overview of Responsibilities

- **Core Tasks**:
    - Collect and digitize data on silver fox populations.
    - Ensure accurate data entry into iRecord and National Biodiversity Network (NBN) systems.
    - Develop and maintain biological recording protocols.
    - Manage data requests from stakeholders (researchers, conservation groups, etc.).
    - Collaborate with internal teams (Policy, Media, Social Media) to promote biological recording.
- **Key Goal**: To maintain and enhance the accuracy and accessibility of biological records to support conservation efforts and research on silver fox populations.

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2. Data Collection and Digitization

A. Collecting Data on Silver Fox Populations

- **Frequency**: Ongoing (depending on data availability).
- **Tasks**:
    - Gather biological records from field reports, surveys, and partner organizations.
    - Ensure data includes important variables such as location, population size, habitat, and behavior.
- **Process**:
    - **Step 1**: Monitor reports from field researchers, citizen science platforms, and other sources for silver fox sightings and population data.

- Step 2: Ensure that all required data fields (species, GPS coordinates, date, observer information, etc.) are filled out.
- Step 3: Validate data for accuracy and completeness before digitizing.

B. Digitizing Data

- **Frequency**: Ongoing (data should be digitized as soon as possible).
- **Tasks**:
  - Input physical or manually collected data into iRecord and NBN databases.
  - Verify that data is in the correct format and follows database guidelines.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Use appropriate tools (Excel, Google Sheets, or database software) to organize collected data.
  - **Step 2**: Cross-check data entries with original records to ensure accuracy.
  - **Step 3**: Upload data into iRecord and NBN systems in compliance with their data entry protocols.
- **Tools**:
  - **Data Collection**: Google Forms, Survey123 (Esri), or paper-based forms.
  - **Data Entry**: Excel, iRecord (for citizen science data), NBN Atlas (for broader biodiversity data).

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3. Data Entry and Management in iRecord and NBN Systems

A. Accurate Data Entry

- **Frequency**: As data is collected and processed.
- **Tasks**:
  - Ensure proper data format for iRecord and NBN system requirements.
  - Regularly check for data inconsistencies or errors.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Review iRecord and NBN system guidelines to ensure compliance with data entry standards (e.g., taxonomic accuracy, location format).
  - **Step 2**: Input data directly into the respective systems using established protocols.
  - **Step 3**: Conduct periodic data quality checks to identify any anomalies or missing information.

B. Database Maintenance

- **Frequency**: Weekly or as needed (to keep data up-to-date).
- **Tasks**:
  - Regularly update data entries to reflect any new findings or corrections.
  - Archive outdated or redundant data appropriately.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Run data audits to find duplicates or obsolete records.
  - **Step 2**: Archive old or non-essential data while ensuring that essential records are preserved.
  - **Step 3**: Back up all important data regularly to prevent loss.
- **Tools**:
  - iRecord, NBN Atlas, Excel, and Google Sheets for data management.

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4. Developing and Maintaining Biological Recording Protocols

A. Protocol Development

- **Frequency**: As needed (typically quarterly or in response to new research needs).
- **Tasks**:
  - Establish standardized protocols for data collection, entry, and management.
  - Ensure protocols align with best practices in biological recording.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Research existing biological recording protocols and best practices in wildlife data collection.
  - **Step 2**: Tailor protocols to suit the specific needs of silver fox population recording.
  - **Step 3**: Ensure protocols cover data collection, data validation, and entry procedures.
  - **Step 4**: Share protocols with relevant stakeholders (research teams, volunteers, etc.) and provide training as needed.

B. Protocol Maintenance and Updates

- **Frequency**: Quarterly or as required.
- **Tasks**:
  - Review and update biological recording protocols to reflect new developments

or technological advances.

- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Collect feedback from users (researchers, data entry staff) to identify areas for improvement.
  - **Step 2**: Regularly review changes in data standards or species tracking technology.
  - **Step 3**: Modify protocols as needed and disseminate updates to all relevant personnel.

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5. Managing Data Requests from Stakeholders

A. Handling Data Requests

- **Frequency**: As requested (typically 2-3 per month).
- **Tasks**:
  - Process data requests from researchers, conservation groups, government agencies, or community organizations.
  - Ensure data privacy and adhere to any legal or ethical guidelines when sharing information.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Evaluate the nature of the request and assess the type of data needed (e.g., population estimates, sighting locations).
  - **Step 2**: Retrieve data from the iRecord, NBN systems, or internal databases.
  - **Step 3**: Share data in the requested format (e.g., CSV, Excel, reports), ensuring sensitive information (like exact locations of endangered populations) is appropriately masked.
- **Tools**:
  - Email for communication, Excel for data exports, Google Drive or Dropbox for sharing large datasets.

B. Communication and Follow-Up

- **Frequency**: As needed (after data has been shared).
- **Tasks**:
  - Communicate with stakeholders to ensure they have received the necessary data.
  - Follow up on any additional requests or clarification needed regarding data

interpretation.

6. Collaboration with Internal Teams

A. Collaboration with Policy, Media, and Social Media Teams

- **Frequency**: Weekly or bi-weekly meetings (depending on project timelines).
- **Tasks**:
  - Share biological data insights with the Policy, Media, and Social Media teams to promote silver fox conservation efforts.
  - Ensure data is presented in a format suitable for public-facing campaigns (infographics, reports).
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Participate in cross-departmental meetings to discuss upcoming campaigns or policy changes.
  - **Step 2**: Provide biological data to the Media and Social Media teams to enhance public awareness initiatives (e.g., population trends, species maps).
  - **Step 3**: Assist the Policy team with evidence-based data for reports, presentations, or policy briefs.
- **Tools**:
  - Microsoft Teams, Slack, or Zoom for virtual collaboration.
  - Google Drive for document sharing.

B. Promoting Biological Recording through Public Channels

- **Frequency**: Monthly or as needed.
- **Tasks**:
  - Collaborate with the communications team to promote citizen science initiatives that encourage the public to submit fox sightings and participate in data collection.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Provide data and insights that can be transformed into engaging content (e.g., social media campaigns or blog posts).
  - **Step 2**: Work with Social Media and Marketing teams to design calls-to-action encouraging public participation in biological recording.

7. Reporting and Analytics

A. Data Analytics and Monitoring

- **Frequency**: Monthly.
- **Tasks**:
  - Analyze collected data to identify trends (e.g., population growth/decline, habitat changes).
  - Report findings to leadership and relevant teams to support decision-making.
- **Process**:
  - **Step 1**: Use data analytics tools (e.g., Excel, R, or Python) to generate population trend reports.
  - **Step 2**: Create visual representations of data (graphs, charts, maps) for easier interpretation.
  - **Step 3**: Present findings in monthly or quarterly meetings to inform research and conservation strategies.

B. Regular Reporting to Management

- **Frequency**: Monthly or as needed for major projects.
- **Tasks**:
  - Summarize key data insights and biological recording efforts in reports for upper management.
- **Process**:
  - Prepare a summary of recent data collection efforts, trends in silver fox populations, and any significant findings.
  - Include recommendations for future data collection strategies or conservation priorities.

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8. Workflow Breakdown (Weekly Allocation)

- Data Collection & Digitization: 3-4 hours/week.
- Data Entry & Management (iRecord, NBN): 3 hours/week.
- Developing & Maintaining Protocols: 2 hours/month.
- Managing Data Requests: 2 hours/week (as needed).
- Collaboration with Teams: 2-3 hours/week.
- Reporting & Analytics: 1-2 hours/week.

Approval & Sign-Off

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