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Scale of Charges

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES:

- *As a not-for-profit company WWBIC's charging policy must be transparent to its users*
- *WWBIC is a service provider. All charges are set to meet the costs of providing data services*
- *WWBIC charges are set on a sliding scale to benefit charities and those who have a long-standing involvement with WWBIC and those who provide financial security through Service Level Agreements (SLAs).*

- WWBIC (West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre) is a not-for-profit company which provides biodiversity and other related information products and services to a range of users. There is clearly a cost to running such a service and, for WWBIC to remain a financially sustainable proposition; these costs must be met by its users.
- WWBIC charges are set to recover the costs of time spent accessing, collating, processing and managing data, as well as supplying data to end users. These costs include staff time and the overheads associated with running WWBIC. No charge is made for the actual data or information which is passed on to users, as WWBIC is not the owner of the data but is authorised to use it.
- The charges (for 2007/08) which are set out in the tables below have been set to take into account the following considerations:
 - Whether the user contributed to the establishment of WWBIC.
 - Whether the user holds a service level agreement with WWBIC.
 - Whether the user has charitable status.

Band	Rate	Who
A	£90.00 (first hour) £65.00 (subsequent hours)	Commercial users
B	£52.50	New non-commercial users (no SLA)
C	£50.00	New non-commercial users (with SLA)
D	£47.50	Non-commercial users with long-standing relationship with WWBIC (no SLA)
E	£45.00	Non-commercial users with long-standing relationship with WWBIC (with SLA)
F	£26.25	New charitable users (no SLA)
G	£25.00	New charitable users (with SLA)
H	£23.75	Charitable users with long-standing relationship with

		WWBIC (no SLA)
I	£22.50	Charitable users with long-standing relationship with WWBIC (with SLA)

- For organisations who do not hold an SLA, a minimum charge equivalent to one hour of work will apply. This is to cover the administrative costs of logging and responding to enquiries. A one hour charge will normally be applied in the event of an enquiry yielding no data, although a discount may be applied at the discretion of WWBIC's Manager.
- WWBIC will review its charges on an annual basis. If any changes are made, all users listed on the *WWBIC Approved Data Users Register* will be informed in writing at least one month before any change comes into operation.
- The following users will normally be exempt from charges (although WWBIC reserves the right to make charges in the event of requests that would take a large amount of staff time):
 - School and University Students.
 - Local natural history societies or groups.
 - Members of the public.
- This policy is implemented through the following 'statement of procedure'.

● PROCEDURE

- WWBIC will operate its charging policy in a transparent manner. All users should be informed of charging rates and estimates of cost prior to confirming data requests. Information on charges will be made widely available including via the website.
- Upon receiving a request for data, WWBIC staff will follow the procedures laid out in *Controlling Access to Data*. This includes reference to providing estimates of cost prior to commencing data searches and invoicing at the time of data supply. In certain cases, especially with large data requests, estimates may need to provide a 'ballpark' figure. Users should be informed if final charges are likely to exceed an estimated figure.
- WWBIC will operate a system of numbered invoices. Payment terms will be 28 days. Payment of overdue invoices may be sought through telephone or written contact immediately after the expiration of this 28 day period.
- All time spent by WWBIC staff in servicing data requests will be recorded, regardless of whether work is being undertaken on behalf of the holder of an SLA or a non-SLA holder. Time spent on specific enquiries will be recorded to the nearest 15 minutes. This time recording system will be used to determine precise charges that should be made. If an estimated figure is exceeded, but the user has not been informed (see 2.2), the original estimated figure should be used for invoicing purposes.
- The time recording system will allow staff to provide fast reports on the remaining credit of partners with SLAs. Printed statements of use will be sent to SLA holders as required (covering the period up to the end of the preceding full month).