

Best practice guidelines for remote access

- The sender of biological materials is obliged to comply with all existing relevant health, transport and customs regulations.
- The receiver needs to be fully informed about the potential risks associated with the transfer of live specimens as far as the spread of alien genotypes, species, or associated contaminants and pathogens (e. g. bacteria, viruses, fungi) to the local environment of the receiving institution is concerned. Experiments carried out within the framework of ASSEMBLE studying containment and biosafety issues have clearly demonstrated that only fully closed culture systems can be recommended when live specimens are transferred to another location close to the sea.
- Animal welfare issues can be important for both vertebrates and invertebrates (including molluscs such as cuttlefish, octopus) as well as regulations on maintenance of wild fauna that the receiver would have to comply with.

Where applicable, materials transfer agreements (MTAs) have to be signed.

These general guidelines will represent a minimum common set of rules for each partner to carry out remote access. It has to be ensured prior to shipment that they are known and agreed by the receiver of the biological material.