

# Policy for Ensembl mirrors

## 1. Background

Ensembl is a joint project between the European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI) and the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute (WTSI) to develop a software system that produces and maintains automatic annotation on selected genomes.

This document presents a policy regarding the implementation of mirror installations of the Ensembl Genomes Browser and relationship between the mirrors and the Ensembl project based in Hinxton, UK. Included in the following guidelines are the minimum requirements of an official, supported mirror of Ensembl. In the following we refer to Ensembl project web servers based in Hinxton, UK, as the “Ensembl main site.”

Additional information in an accompanying policy document titled: “Policy for the use of the Ensembl name and logo” may also be useful. All enquires about the Ensembl project should be addressed to [helpdesk@ensembl.org](mailto:helpdesk@ensembl.org).

## 2. General Policy

This policy is applicable to both official, supported Ensembl mirrors and unsupported mirrors of the Ensembl Genome Browser.

(1) Official, supported mirrors are normally created in close collaboration with Ensembl and used to increase the worldwide accessibility of Ensembl’s services. These mirrors are kept up to date with the Ensembl main site and should render (within the local area served by the mirror) any page at least as fast as the Ensembl main site does in that geographical region and maintain uptime that is comparable to the Ensembl main site. Users may be directed to official mirrors through the use of geographically based redirection of the URL <http://www.ensembl.org>. This category could include mirrors run remotely by Ensembl itself.

The URLs of official mirrors may be posted on Ensembl main site and may be advertised to all users in the event that the Ensembl main site is unavailable.

Official mirrors must ensure their datasets are in synchrony with the Ensembl main site. Whenever possible Ensembl will provide the relevant data updates in advance of the data release to enable both the Ensembl main site and the mirror site to provide new data simultaneously. We expect the mirror to display Ensembl data within a week of data release on the Ensembl main site. During any transition period when the mirror’s data is less current than the Ensembl main site, it should be made clear to users that the datasets displayed have been superseded on the Ensembl main site.

Official mirrors will provide contact information to the Ensembl team so that they can be informed of any data patches and security issues. Data patches will be provided in advance to official mirror sites and are expected to be applied simultaneously (but no more than 24 hours after) the patch is applied to the Ensembl main site.

Ensembl may monitor the mirror site to ensure uptime, data integrity and overall user experience of the mirror sites.

Ensembl may request statistics about data access to the mirror site for our internal reports. To facilitate these reports, Ensembl will assist supported mirror sites in the monitoring of the mirror speed and keeping usage logs.

(2) Unsupported mirrors may or may not be publicly available, complete or regularly updated. Maintainers of these mirror sites are expected to download Ensembl data from the Ensembl FTP site.

Unsupported mirrors are welcome to voluntarily submit usage statistics to Ensembl on an annual basis and are requested to report any experiences that may enhance the overall Ensembl experience for all users. These reports can be submitted to [helpdesk@ensembl.org](mailto:helpdesk@ensembl.org).

### **3. Setting up your Ensembl mirror**

The Ensembl web site contains detailed instructions for setting up an Ensembl mirror site. Every effort is made to keep this documentation up to date. Users may wish to join the Ensembl developers email list by sending the message "subscribe ensembl-dev" to [majordomo@ebi.ac.uk](mailto:majordomo@ebi.ac.uk).

Additional and more intensive support for Ensembl developers (whether or not they maintain Ensembl mirror sites) is available through the Ensembl "Geek for a week" programme. Details about the programme and instructions for applying to the programme are available on the Ensembl web site or by contacting [helpdesk@ensembl.org](mailto:helpdesk@ensembl.org).