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## **CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE GEOPORTAL**

(Led by Antonio Rogmann, resource person from the Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany)  
Held the 13th April 2010 at the Residence Prestige  
Ouagadougou – Burkina Faso

### **REPORT**



*A family picture during the Consultative meeting*

## **Introduction**

The meeting was held on 13th April 2010 at the Residence Prestige, Ouagadougou – Burkina Faso, from 9 am to 3.30 pm.

16 participants representing 13 institutions attended the meeting (see Annex).

The GLOWA Volta Geoportal is a web-based management system providing facilities for geospatial and non-geospatial data and information sharing. A first version was developed at the Center for Development Research (ZEF) in close cooperation with the Department of Computer Science III at the University of Bonn. Since 2008 it was used in the GLOWA Volta Project (GVP, 2000 – 2009, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research) for the management and dissemination of project data.

The GLOWA Volta Project now is followed by the “Sustainable Development of Research Capacities in West Africa based on the GLOWA Volta”- Project. The objective strengthen the research capacity in the region through human capacity development, infrastructural capacity development and institutional support. The human capacity development focuses on training of models and tools developed by the GLOWA Volta project. Part of this project is the transfer of the GVP-Geoportal to the partner institution Volta Basin Authority (VBA). The VBA will be the new owner and host administrator of the Geoportal up from 2010.

The consultative meeting on the GLOWA Volta Geoportal (GVP-GP) with leading representatives of Burkinabe institutions (directors and heads of department) is part of this transfer process, and aims to prepare the establishment of a network of institutions interested in using the Geoportal for data and information sharing among themselves and with the public.

Within the ongoing GLOWA Volta Geoportal implementation process at the VBA, Geoportal workshops and user-trainings together with the institutional stakeholders are of particular importance. The sustainability of the capacity developed by those trainings depends on the appreciation of the benefits by using the

Geoportal as well as on the understanding of certain requirements for data management within the institutions.

This meeting is seen as preparatory for the trainings and dialogues of ZEF and VBA with the prospective users of the Geoportal. In addition to providing information on the Geoportal, ZEF and VBA are very interested in getting a better understanding of potentials and obstacles for greater participation in the Geoportal community.

## **Agenda of the meeting**

The lecturer presented the following key points, which were subsequently discussed with the participants:

- The Geoportal and its functionalities
- Participation of institutions (metadata/ data provider, map provider, etc.)
- Requirements for data management within the institutions
- Motivation and assessment of needs for data exchange
- Possible obstacles to participation in the Geoportal user network
- Description of data sets to be uploaded/exchanged in terms of content, formats, quality, volume, updating (by delivery of a questionnaire)

## **Course of the meeting**

### **Opening ceremony**

The training workshop was opened at 9:15 am with a welcome address by VBA ag. Executive Director Dr. CHARLES BINEY, following by an opening speech given by the Director of the DGRE (Water Resources General Directorate) Mr. OUSSENI THANOU.

On behalf of the governmental authorities of Burkina Faso, he thanked GVP for organizing the meeting. He highlighted the importance of data management and data sharing for an efficient management of water resources as well as for decision making in agricultural and environmental proceedings. He closed his speech by wishing to all participants a good and successful meeting.

The workshop was led by Antonio ROGMANN (lecturer from ZEF, Germany), supported by Theophile MBAKOP from GVP Burkina Faso.

### **Presentations**

The meeting was very interactive throughout. Two presentations have been delivered.

- Presentation of the GVP-Geoportal by Antonio ROGMANN
- Presentation of the VBA Observatory by Dr. Jacob TUMBULTO, Director of VBA Observatory

In the first presentation, the lecturer gave a presentation on the Geoportal. Main focus was on giving an overview about the functions provided by the Geoportal in order to point up possible benefits for the institutions. The presentation shows how the Geoportal provides access to data by catalogue-, mapping-, upload- and download-services. It was explained in particular how the external user is enabled to upload metadata used to describe the available data. The warranty of ownership rights by the user concept was highlighted as well as the advantage of web-mapping services to enhance the information about available data and, additionally, to transmit thematic maps. Furthermore it was noted that the Geoportal currently is under reconstruction in order to improve its capabilities for integration within national and international Spatial Data Infrastructures.

The presentation was finished with an outline of possible use scenarios of the Geoportal by the institutions.

The second presentation introduced the VBA and its programs, like Volta Hycos and the VBA Observatory. During his

presentation, Dr. Tumbulto located the Geoportal in the context of the VBA. He mentioned the background of VBA on data management, and also the various facilities, such as the Geoportal, developed within that institution also by other partners such as UNEP/GEF.

### **Questions, comments and suggestions**

The following are some questions asked (with the given response), comments and suggestions formulated by the participants.

**Q:** *How can we get access to data on the Geoportal?*

**R:** By using the search interface the user is enabled to get information how to access a specific dataset. This information is part of the metadata. When the data set is in public domain it can be downloaded directly from the Geoportal without any further activity.

**Q:** *What is the limit of this Geoportal Project?*

**R:** The data published by the Geoportal covers a lot of topics which are related to the research activities conducted during the GLOWA Volta Project. The themes range from bio-physical to socio-economical data and maps. The geographic extent is the Volta Basin with Burkina Faso and Ghana as the main areas.

**Q:** *The access to the Geoportal is free of charge or not? It's possible to download the data base?*

**R:** The access to the Geoportal homepage and its information about data availability is for everyone and free of any charge. Everyone can look at all of the metadata. In case that the user is interested in a data set restricted due to ownership rights he is enabled to get in touch with the owner in order to ask for the permission to get the data. In case the data of interest is stored on the server of the Geoportal, it is also possible to download the restricted data after a personal registration in the Geoportal as far as the permission from the data owner is given.

**Q:** *Is it possible to generate tendencies?*

It is not the objective of the system to generate user driven statistical outputs based on raw data stored in the data base. Actually, the Geoportal is a tool for sharing of data and information. But in the future it could be possible to integrate such features into the Geoportal.

**Q** *(Asked by the lecturer): What do you think of the advantage of the Geoportal for your institutions?*

**R:** Such a facility is a great opportunity

- to be informed of existing data and how to get access to it. It makes data available
- to reduce time investments to sharing of data
- for institutions visibility and relevance to the public
- to generate economic incomes by using the Geoportal as a selling platform
- to serve scientific interests as being a center of convergency of data

**Q:** *How will the data updating process be organized?*

**R:** It depends on the type of data and therefore the needs for updating. In general a data provider is allowed to upload data to the database as often as needed. There are no predefined rules

**Q:** *How is data exchange on the Geoportal monitored? What are the mechanisms?*

**R:** After updating the Geoportal software the download of data is monitored by emails, which are automatically sent to the data providing institution when a dataset is downloaded. Thus the institution is in the picture about the dissemination of its data at every time.

**Q:** *Do you have clearly defined rules of data in your institutions? What is your level of success in clarification of your data?*

**R:** First of all, protection of ownership rights is of highest importance and thus technically implemented into the system (as explained by the presentations). We also have mechanisms for quality control of our data by clear defined responsibilities and

workflows before its dissemination through the Geoportal. Within a big project it is difficult to force all of the staff to provide information about data and to prepare the data ready for dissemination. But data provided by GLOWA via the Geoportal is of good quality, and data of lesser quality was not included into the system.

**Q:** *How to assure sustainability of the Geoportal?*

**R:** The VBA will need your contributions to maintain and improve the system. Administrators are working at the VBA being in charge of supervising the network of Geoportal users and to assure the communication among the users and the host. Workshops and trainings a part of their job duties. Additionally upcoming new projects in the framework of resp. under the umbrella of the VBA could generate resources to enhance the system and thus to meet new requirements announced by the Geoportal user community.

**Q:** *Are we going to be limited on riparian countries of the Volta Basin?*

**R:** That strongly depends on the goals and objectives of the VBA. For the moment the Geoportal is seen as a data sharing facility in the framework of water management located at the Volta Basin.

## **Closing**

Dr Jacob TUMBULTO Coordinator of the project Volta Hycos and Director of VBA Observatory pronounced the closing remarks. He thanked both all the participants, and the lecturer. He officially closed the workshop around 3.30 Pm.

## ANNEX

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