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# Exchange with other projects and groups

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Acronyms are explained when they first appear in the text. Because the text contains acronyms of GNU partners, a list is provided below.

## GNU Partners

Environment Agency Austria, UBA-A

Agency for Geographical Information Flanders, Belgium, AGIV

European Forest Institute, Finland, EFI

Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, France, MEDAD

Federal Environment Agency, Germany, UBA-D

Informus GmbH, Germany, INF

State Institute for Forestry, Game and Fishery, Germany, TLWJF

Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, Italy, ISPRA

Latvian Environment Agency, Latvia, LEGMA

National Geological Survey, (TNO), Netherlands, TNO

Norwegian Institute for Air Research, Norway, NILU

Transparent World, Russia, TW

Slovak Environmental Agency, Slovakia, SEA

ETC LUSI, Spain, UAB-ETC

GeoVille, Luxemburg, Geoville

Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Sweden, SEPA

British Geological Survey, UK, BGS

Environment Agency of England and Wales, UK, EAEW

Joanneum Research, Austria, JOANNEUM

Wuppertal Institute, Germany, WI

Ecologic, Austria, Ecologic

Siberian Centre for Environmental Research and Training, Russia, SCERT

Environment Protection Agency, Ireland, IEPA (permanent guest of GNU)

# Background to this deliverable

This text provides a list of projects and groups GNU practises or has practised an exchange with. GNU on the one hand draws information from such initiatives, by learning from them and by utilising experiences which its members have made while they participate or participated in them. Likewise, the knowledge GNU generates during its work, is designed to support the activities of other GMES related initiatives, eg in that GNU collates and documents the users' perspective on project work procedures, data product quality, political process design etc., and deduces recommendations how to ideally proceed in order to effectively collaborate with users and achieve their satisfaction.

GMES is a very large process and encompasses many projects and groups. Within the resources that could be mobilised for GNU, it would be impossible to set up links to each of them, and, therefore, a selection had to be made. Mostly, this selection was done in that already existing ties were taken advantage of, that is, persons participating in GNU also already participate or participated in a particular project or group. Additionally, a number of links to GMES projects were newly established by contacting the respective coordinator. Also the two GMES websites were used to obtain information about past and running projects:

[ec.europa.eu/gmes](http://ec.europa.eu/gmes) (operated by the Commission)

[www.gmes.info](http://www.gmes.info) (operated by SWIFT, an FP7 coordination action)

## Explicit and implicit exchange

This text relates explicit undertakings formally designed to achieve an exchange between GNU and another GMES related project or group, eg in that a GNU member, either the coordinator or one of the members of the GNU management team, gave a presentation to the respective group with a subsequent discussion.

Additionally, at a large number of occasions, all GNU members have practised such an exchange implicitly, particularly in that they contributed GNU generated knowledge to sessions and discussions held at other projects' or groups' meetings. Although it is not possible to capture and document such processes, their importance should not be underestimated.

## National and international exchange

The workpackage of GNU which brings about this deliverable, is concerned with the exchange between GNU and other GMES related projects and groups at the European and international level. This workpackage is designed in an ongoing fashion and will last until the end of the project. On top of the events listed herein, several GNU members have presented GNU results within their national GMES related context. These events are, however, not subject of this text.

# ISOWG

In Situ Observations Working Group

*Web: [http://eea.eionet.europa.eu/Public/irc/eionet-circle/gmes/library?l=/isowg/meeting\\_brussels&vm=detailed&sb=Title](http://eea.eionet.europa.eu/Public/irc/eionet-circle/gmes/library?l=/isowg/meeting_brussels&vm=detailed&sb=Title)*

The ISOWG is considered an important initiative within GMES because an effective connection between space and in situ data is essential for GMES products to be incorporated in users' work environments.

At the second meeting of the ISOWG, 18 September 2008, a presentation on GNU was given to outline the commonalities between the ISOWG and GNU, and the future collaboration. The link to the ISOWG was easily established because it is co-chaired by the Austrian environment agencies' director, the same organisation which also coordinates GNU.

The ISOWG will become one of the advisory bodies of the ISC (In Situ Coordination), a pre-defined beneficiary project that will be run by the European Environment Agency EEA, after the currently ongoing contract negotiations will be finished. When this project will start, the new role of the ISOWG will have to be defined, and also its link to GNU.

# Boss for GMES

Building operational sustainable services for GMES

*Web: <http://www.boss4gmes.eu>*

On 10 September 2008, a small workshop was hosted by the Environment Agency Austria to initialise the collaboration between B4G and GNU regarding GMES stakeholder analyses, involving Austrian Environment Agency, European Topic Centre on Land Use and Spatial Information (ETC LUSI), InfoTerra UK, University of West England (UWE), Wuppertal Institute (WI) and Ecologic.

The two projects intended to align their work related to GMES stakeholder analyses. The projects independently of each other have designed methods to work on GMES stakeholders, namely a Business Model (B4G) and a Resonance Analysis (developed by GNU partners WI and ECOLOGIC). B4G and GNU both aim at horizontal issues of GMES, but as to the composition of the consortia, they are different: GNU representing the user side, and B4G the provider side. Thus, by collaborating, the complementary perspectives of the two consortia would enable a quite objective and understanding of the GMES process. Moreover, this collaboration avoided an overlap of work.

Two joint activities were conducted: During a workshop dedicated to soil sealing on 3-4 December 2008, using the example of the Fast Track Soil Sealing Layer, WI and ECOLOGIC conducted an exercise to clarify whether the resonance analysis developed by these GNU partners is suitable as a tool for joint stakeholder related analyses. The outcomes of this exercise are documented in the GNU Stakeholder Methodology Report, Deliverable 1.3, which may be downloaded from the GNU website [www.gmes-network-of-users.eu](http://www.gmes-network-of-users.eu).

On 12 January 2009, in the frame of a GNU consortium meeting, a workshop facilitated by B4G members was conducted to investigate the reception of the B4G Business Model by GNU members, and to conduct an investigation as to whether GMES should be designed in a monolithic fashion or rather as a service network. Subsequently, on 13 January 2009, the same B4G members participated in the GNU Extended Consortium Conference and provided interesting insights in the service provider's positions, which was one of the aim of the conference.

Finally, in the spring of 2009, a questionnaire by B4G was circulated among the GNU management team to obtain even more information on the monolithic question.

# GEO UIC

Group on Earth Observation User Interface Committee

*Web: [http://www.earthobservations.org/ag\\_uic.shtml](http://www.earthobservations.org/ag_uic.shtml)*

Three GNU partners were already participating in the GEO UIC before GNU started. Since this group is within GEO addressing horizontal issues concerning users, it seems sensible to collaborate.

At the seventh Meeting of the GEO UIC, on 26-28 November 2007, a presentation was given on the planning and the objectives of GNU. Feedback received was incorporated in the more detailed planning of the individual tasks of GNU.

GNU uses the GEOSS (Global Earth Observations System of Systems) Best Practices Wiki to disseminate part of its work and as a means of collaboration between GNU and the UIC. GNU was among the first initiatives to take advantage of the Wiki and to fill in content.

At the ninth GEO UIC Meeting, on 22-24 September 2008, which was also a co-location meeting of three Committees, the UIC, the Capacity Building Committee and the Architecture and Data Committee, GNU was, by the owners of the Wiki, mentioned as an example for how this tool can be used. Moreover, by GNU, a presentation was given to demonstrate in detail its utilisation of the WIKI and to show examples of the practices presented therein.

Two GNU members also participated in the GEO UIC meeting on 5-8 May 2009, again a committee co-located meeting. GNU was invited to participate in the UIC project on developing a GEO user typology, and, a presentation was given by GNU in this regard.

At the fourth GNU consortium meeting on 8-10 June 2009, a session was conducted to discuss this draft model on user typology and to refine it, and, thus, to prepare the further collaboration with the UIC in this regard.

# MarCoast

Marine and Coastal Environmental Information Services

*Web: <http://gmes-marcoast.com/>*

The GNU consortium was put together primarily based on contacts which existed at the time the proposal was written in 2005. Unfortunately, other than land use, forest, atmosphere, and geology, the marine topic of GMES is underrepresented within the Consortium. Therefore, an exchange with MarCoast was considered essential to complete the picture GNU has of GMES.

On 7-8 February 2008, at a workshop hosted by ISPRA, with the purpose to discuss the validation results of the individual MarCoast services, a presentation on GNU was given and options for collaboration were outlined. As a consequence of this interaction, a representative of MarCoast was invited to participate in the second GNU consortium meeting on 20-21 May 2008. A presentation on MarCoast was given, and this representative participated in the subsequent plenary and break out sessions. The GNU consortium has, thus, learned about MarCoast, and GNU deliverables were enriched in that information regarding MarCoast could be incorporated.

# PROMOTE

Protocol Monitoring for the GMES Service Element

*Web: <http://www.gse-promote.org/>*

PROMOTE is well represented within the GNU consortium. This project is considered especially important because some of its products are already in a pre-operational or even operational state and are applied by some GNU partners.

The EEA-PROMOTE User Workshop on GMES Atmospheric Services on 12 June 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark, aimed at presenting to the atmospheric user community the model systems developed by PROMOTE, and current developments regarding satellite based atmospheric monitoring. The workshop ended with a GNU presentation on project results and a subsequent discussion.

# National land monitoring groups

Currently, in a series of workshops, national entities conducting land cover and land use monitoring, in collaboration with the European Commission (EC), the European Environment Agency (EEA), and the European Topic Centre on Land Use and Spatial Information (ETC LUSI), are attempting to better align their work. Each event also included representatives of GeoLand (see below).

Several GNU partners are concerned with national and/or regional level land use/land cover monitoring; thus, GNU has a strong interest in the current discussions on bottom-up versus top-down, or, de-centralised versus centralised, respectively, land monitoring approaches in Europe. A number of GNU members participated in either event.

The GMES Nordic Land User Workshop on 26-28 May 2008, a workshop organised by the ETC LUSI encompassing representatives of Scandinavian and Baltic countries and from the GMES community, ended with a presentation on GNU results. This was the first occasion to publicly present and discuss outcomes of the first workpackage of GNU. In this way, the audience, many of whom are not directly involved in GMES, could obtain a view of some of the backgrounds of GMES which may be helpful for them in their endeavour to link national land monitoring with running GMES projects and the GMES process as a whole. Presentations are available at <http://etc-lusi.eionet.europa.eu/activities/announcements/ann1212050983/>

GNU participation at the GMES-INSPIRE (Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community) workshop 29 June to 1 July 2009, hosted by the National Geographic Institute of Spain (IGN), enabled, in the frame of a presentation of the planned Austrian national land information system, to also present some ideas generated by GNU on how to better link national undertakings with the GMES process in a decentralised manner. Presentations are available at [ftp://193.144.251.14/tldt/INSPIRE-GMES\\_Workshop\\_LC\\_Madrid/](ftp://193.144.251.14/tldt/INSPIRE-GMES_Workshop_LC_Madrid/)

Cf the lessons learned section.

# GeoLand

Integrated GMES Project on Land Cover and Vegetation

*Web: <http://www.gmes-geoland.info/news.php>*

Several GNU members participated in GeoLand I, and one GNU member (ETC Lusi) participates in GeoLand II. This project is designed to prepare the GMES Core Service regarding land monitoring, and is, thus, among the central GMES projects.

At the GeoLand kick off meeting on 16-18 November 2008, the description of the objectives of the GNU project as well as the main achievements after one year of work were presented in a dedicated session regarding the “User involvement and user stakeholder platform”.

Moreover, at the GeoLand Forum on 12-14 May 2009 in Berlin, Germany, a presentation was given on GNU activities and results with a subsequent discussion. The link between GNU and GeoLand also is important in the frame of the above mentioned groups concerned with national level land monitoring.

The GNU project has also been presented in the GMES Land User Newsletter (issued by GeoLand II) in January 2008 (issue 5), with further contributions in subsequent issues and already foreseen new contributions to the next issues, given the ongoing important discussions being currently held on land use/land cover related issues.

# GSE FM

GMES Service Element Forest Monitoring

*Web: <http://www.gmes-forest.info>*

GSE Forest Monitoring is well represented in the GNU consortium, and several organisations concerned with forest monitoring participate in the Extended Consortium of GNU. The GNU Project was introduced at the GSE Forest Monitoring progress meeting 7 in Graz in October 2007.

Updates on the project were regularly given at all following progress meetings as well as in the teleconferences of the GSE FM User Executive Body. The GNU project was also introduced in July 2008 the third issue of the GSE FM newsletter.

GNU experiences were and will be inserted in potential downstream proposals, the coordinator of GSE FM has approached the GNU coordinator in this regard as the only service provider ever doing so.

Cf the Lessons learned section.

# POINT

Policy Influence of Indicators

*Web: [point/pbworks.com/](http://point.pbworks.com/)*

On March, 16-18 2009, a working meeting was carried out by the members of the project POINT with some invited experts at the Smolenice Castle, Slovakia. The overall aim of the project POINT is to help find better ways of using indicators in all aspects of policy, by enhancing the understanding of the factors that condition the successful use and influence of indicators in policymaking. There is an increasing demand to basing policies, including those for R&D and innovation, on evidence underpinned by regular monitoring and evaluation.

The programme GMES and the project GNU were presented at this meeting. There is a need for more integration of the environmental indicators to the policy. The Programme GMES can fill this gap and the project GNU can help to better define the needs of the end users and policy makers.

# GNU International Stakeholder Group

*Web: <http://www.gmes-network-of-users.eu/who-is-gnu/europeaninternational-level-stakeholder-group/>*

This group is mentioned here although it is not addressed by the workpackage this document relates to. However, since high-ranking persons representing the European Commission, INSPIRE, the GMES Bureau, the European Space Agency (ESA), ECMWF, the Core Services Implementation Groups, GEO, etc., participate, this large group serves an essential role within the dissemination concept of GNU. The Group held its first meeting on 11 March 2009 in Vienna, Austria, and will hold its second meeting approximately one year later. The GNU deliverables produced thus far were presented and discussed, and advice was solicited for the remaining work of GNU. The outcomes of these meetings will in detail be documented in the GNU deliverables D4.1 and D4.2a.

Also for this group, besides the formal meetings, some ongoing exchange happens, because at various political events and bodies (eg, GAC, GMES Advisory Council), members of this group meet with GNU members.

## Lessons learned

Exchange is easily established but difficult to be maintained. The common practice of one project/group visiting another, thereby giving a presentation and holding a subsequent discussion, is suitable to spread information on the respective project/group and to raise an interest in its outcomes. Indeed, such exercises likely are a prerequisite for the project/group that intends to be linked, to stand a reasonable chance that its outcomes will be considered at all by the other project/group. People rarely at their own initiative browse project websites in search of interesting materials. On the one hand, a website is the perfect medium to make materials quickly and easily available to already interested parties, but considering the large amount of existing project websites, it is completely unsuitable to get attention.

Typically, only after this attention is achieved, eg, through such a visiting practice, or through other practices, project websites will be accessed at all. Therefore, visiting practices fulfil a dual role as to an effective results dissemination, namely spreading basics directly, and attaining an interest to get the more specific outcomes.

Thus far, this exchange is merely unilateral. As described above, in several cases, a counter-visit was practiced as well (eg, GNU visiting MarCoast, and, subsequently, MarCoast visiting GNU). This definitely increases the depth of the exchange, because each party clearly demonstrates their interest in an exchange with the other one.

Nevertheless, up to here, no lasting relationships were established. Some informal channels did form, but they have not been sufficient to enable a lasting exchange between GNU and the respective project/group at this stage. The amount of existing projects/groups within GMES is too large for this to occur.

A critical reconsideration of the exchange practices of GNU with other projects/groups shows that the originally articulated target of doing more than effective dissemination exercises, namely creating a number of ongoing and active communication channels, was not met and, indeed, appears impossible to be met, because the efforts involved in such an ongoing communication and the coordination needed between all the people involved in either project/group were much underestimated.

There are, however, exceptions to this.

Repetition is key for setting up sustained communication channels, which appears self-apparent, when considering any kind of human interaction. With the project B4G, after two physical joint undertakings, for some time an ongoing exchange was established, but then, sending back and forth documents, thereby asking for input, went rather sluggishly, and interest waned on either side.

However, frequent participation of GNU members, who are also members of GSE FM, in the telephone conferences of the GSE FM User Executive Body, including GNU items on the agenda, brought about a different result. GNU members who participated in GSE FM, frequently reported about GNU during the project meetings, and, likewise, during GNU project meetings regularly mentioned GSE FM. As a result, for either project, the other one was permanently present. GNU members who also participated in GSE FM are EFI, INF, TLWJF, JOANNEUM, and UBA-A.

An alike experience was made with the GEO UIC. Several GNU members (ISPRA, UBA-A, MEDAD and GNU's permanent guest IEPA) more or less regularly participate in that body, so again, without setting up formal links at all, an ongoing exchange was easily established with several previous presentations. Currently, the GNU coordinator is a member of a GEO UIC working group on user

typology, and has to the GEO UIC presented input to this effort which was based on previous GNU work. At the subsequent GNU meeting, a dedicated session was held, in which the consortium further advanced these findings, which will, at the upcoming GEO UIC meeting, flow into the ongoing work of the working group, etc. This allows, again, for either project/group a permanent presence of the other one.

GeoLand II may become a similar case, although only one GNU member (ETC LUSI) participates in that project, but in a very prominent role. At this stage it would be too early to predict the success of the exchange to come.

Owing to the number of GNU members involved in Land Use/Land Cover monitoring, at each pertinent meeting, several of them are present, including the upcoming workshop on object oriented data modelling, 21/22 September, probably in Copenhagen. So GNU is permanently present to these groups, however, since they are neither a permanent entity, nor always show a similar composition, the situation as to ongoing exchange is very different than with a clearly defined project/group. Nevertheless, GNU is very well aligned with the groups' core members who attend most the various meetings, so, again, repetition of contact is enabled and, therefore a lasting communication channel created.

Concluding, the herein described effort brought about:

- (1) A substantial number of effective project results dissemination efforts
- (2) A small number of continuing inter-project/group communication activities

The latter concern the projects/groups anyway characterised by a very active participation of GNU members.

Thus, in spite of an outcome different than expected, the workpackage thus far cannot be considered unsuccessful. For the remainder of GNU, exactly this combination may actually be a target to aim for, within a realistic planning of resources that can be allocated.

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This report and the other reports by GNU  
can be downloaded at the project website:

[www.gmes-network-of-users.eu](http://www.gmes-network-of-users.eu)