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Organisation of training courses about the use of freshwater biodiversity databases

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Partners: RBINS, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Belgium
BOKU, Universität für Bodenkultur Wien, Austria
ICLARM, International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management, Malaysia
IRD, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, France
UDE, Universität Duisburg-Essen, Germany
IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Switzerland
UOXF.AC, Oxford University, UK
UB, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain
UFZ, Helmholtz Zentrum für Umweltforschung, Germany
UCL, University College of London, UK
EAWAG, Eidgenössische Anstalt für Wasserversorgung, Abwasserreinigung und Gewässerschutz, Switzerland
UCBL, Université Claude Bernard - Lyon 1, France
UPS, Université Paul Sabatier- Toulouse 3, France
ECOLOGIC, Ecologic GmbH Institut für Internationale und Europäische Umweltpolitik, Germany
EC-ERC, Commission of the European Communities - Directorate General Joint Research Centre, Italy
UD, University of Debrecin, Hungary
NRM, Naturhistoriska riksmuseet, Sweden

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BIOFRESH

Biodiversity of Freshwater Ecosystems: Status, Trends, Pressures, and Conservation Priorities

Project no. 226874



Large scale collaborative project

D8.3

Organisation of training courses about the use of freshwater biodiversity databases

Deliverable number	D8.3
Deliverable name	Organisation of training courses about the use of freshwater biodiversity databases
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PU	Public	✓
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

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In case the report consists of the delivery of materials (guidelines, manuscripts, etc)

Delivery name	Delivery name	From Partner	To Partner

Introduction

BioFresh WP8: Training needs assessment and strategy

D8.3: Organisation of training courses about the use of freshwater biodiversity databases

Preamble

The proposal for stakeholder training is given in the DoW can be summarised as follows:

1. The organisation of a **summer school** for those engaged in the use of freshwater biodiversity databases
2. **Two 1 day training courses** for a diverse range of stakeholders (eg Administrators; NGOs etc) on *topics of Freshwater Biodiversity*
3. **Two 1-day training courses** for a diverse range of stakeholders (eg Administrators; NGOs etc) on *models and tools developed in BioFresh*
4. **Two 2-day training courses** for young scientists and post docs on *the statistical exploration of BioFresh databases*

The commission is now resolving issues on how this training could best be provided:

- a) **Selection of the stakeholder groups for each summer school and training course:** how will stakeholders be selected? Who will make the selection? Will there be an open invitation or will only selected people be invited? How many will be invited?
- b) **Content and purpose of each course:** currently being formulated and depends on the development and output of the data portal and other BioFresh research projects.
- c) **Structure and presentation of each course:** currently assessing the relative merits of a series of lectures, workshops/seminars and web e-training?
- d) **Who should organise, prepare and present the course:** members of BioFresh and/or invited external lecturers?
- e) **Where will the courses be held?**

Training strategy

The WP8 training meeting at the BioFresh meeting in Barcelona (21-25 Feb 2011), yielded a clear set of objectives for the training strategy. The training working group comprised: Paul Jepson (Oxford University), Rob St John (Oxford University), Aaike De Wever (RBINS), Hendrik Segers (RBINS), Mathias Scholtz (UFZ) and Klement Tockner (IGB Berlin).

- 1) **The need to revise and expand new training plan**
 - To research and explore the potential for electronic training. E.g. Development of a screencast training programme for the data portal
 - To develop BioFresh as a best-case example study of ecoinformatics for others to model
- 2) **The identification of three models for training**
 - Hands on demonstration augmented by online training
 - Presentation at BioFresh conference side event
 - Add-on workshop at the end of a conference
- 3) **Emphasis on the need to target appropriate international meetings for training events**
 - *Possible:* IUCN (Sept 2012, Korea), International Society for Limnology, Society for Conservation Biology (November 2011, Canterbury, NZ)
 - To develop an appropriate and effective training booth design.
 - To organise the bookings and decide on BioFresh attendees

Training plan

Appraisal and development

The training requirements for WP8 outlined in the DoW are currently being appraised ahead of the 18 and 36 month deadlines for their implementation.

Two key aspects to this appraisal are:

- a) *The identification and needs assessment of different stakeholders.* As part of this process, an online survey is scheduled for June with a sample of policy makers to understand the perception and relevance of freshwater biodiversity to their work, and to assess the most effective channels of communication through which to disseminate the BioFresh project to them. This will give an indication of: i) training needs and ii) suitable channels for training for this key network of stakeholders.
- b) *The development and resulting output from the BioFresh data portal and other research projects.* Much of this work is still in progress, and as such, its eventual output will inform the planning and delivery of training provision.

Identification of needs for training provision: three key areas:

1) Training for network of freshwater biodiversity scientists

The concept of a 'summer school' has been revised to a series of scientific workshops associated with key research and development questions being addressed by each work package. These bring together BioFresh scientists, Post Docs and PhD students. Four such workshops have been convened so far, and will continue during the project life.

23-26 Feb 2010: BioFresh meeting, Berlin

Initial presentation and discussion of the meta-database, data needs, Freshwater Biodiversity Atlas, BioFresh Biodiversity Matrix, freshwater biodiversity models, competitive catchment analysis of the Ebro, Elbe and Danube and the communication and dissemination strategy.

Attended by BioFresh partners plus representatives from GWSP, ALTER-NET, UNESCO-IHE, LifeWatch project, PESI/SMEBD, WWF Dams Initiative, GBIF.

12th to 14th July 2010: Species modelling workshop, Toulouse

18 scientists from nine BioFresh partner institutes and two external institutes discussed available data, possible approaches, modelling methods, and collaborative publication projects within BioFresh.

13th-15th October 2010: Focal catchment biodiversity trends workshop, Barcelona

A workshop discussing analysis of biodiversity trends within the BioFresh focal study catchments: Danube, Ebro and Elbe. Attended by 16 scientists from seven Bio-Fresh partner institutes and one external institute.

21-25 February 2011: BioFresh meeting, Barcelona

Meeting attended by all BioFresh partners, along with representatives from DIVERSITAS, GWSP, UNESCO-IHE, GEO BON, WWF US, University of Maryland, RESTORE and Wetlands International. Working groups run by all work packages.

2) Training on models and tools developed by BioFresh

It is anticipated that this will take place in 2012 and have two dimensions:

- i. *Workshop training* in the same style as mentioned above
- ii. *Development of online training.* Among the online techniques that can be considered are:
 - a. **Web tutorials** (see for example: Gbif 'Virtual Classroom': <http://www.gbif.org/participation/training/virtual-classroom/>)
 - b. **A series of How-To articles**
 - c. **Live webcast seminars** (potential to tie in with iTunes U)

- d. **Database of tips and FAQs**
- e. **Forum discussion boards:** where students and educators can take part in online discussions of the learning material, see for example see UNESCO online courses <http://www.unesco-ihe.org/Education/Short-courses/Online-courses>

3) Wider stakeholder training on topics of freshwater biodiversity

The concept in deliverable 8.3 of the DoW , the “Organisation of training courses about the use of freshwater biodiversity databases” is currently being revised. We need to clearly understand how the output from the data portal and other research influences training needs before its provision can be designed. Part of this process is building the issue relevance of freshwater biodiversity within policy and public networks, through the WP8 Communication and Dissemination strategy, and undertaking impact assessments of this work to understand any emergent training needs within such expanded issue networks

This component of wider stakeholder training will be planned and designed at the 2012 BioFresh meeting.

Strategic training partnerships

BioFresh will provide one of a number of eco-informatics portals available, many of which have similar training and capacity building initiatives in place. It was agreed that WP8 would explore opportunities for training collaboration with GBIF and UNESCO in the first instance