

Report on Pre-AFRICAGIS conference Workshop and GEONETCast activities at AFRICA- GIS2009

Pre-conference workshop: GEONETCast for natural & water resources management, Makerere University, Department of Geography, Kampala, Uganda (22-24 October 2009)

The aim of the workshop was to bring participants up to speed with recent developments with respect to the GEONETCast data dissemination and ground receiving system, freeware toolbox to import the data, associated (multi-temporal) modelling and GIS applications. Furthermore it stimulated the participants to further develop and strengthen educational and research activities and collaboration in these fields.

The workshop was built on the GEONETCast system installed at the Department of Geography, Makerere University Kampala. It utilized the various data sources provided focussing on water and natural resources at a basin and continental scale. The workshop equipped the participants with up-to-date knowledge and skills (through computer practicals) using (real-time) image and data disseminated via GEONETCast. Tools used are freeware and have been provided to the participants after termination of the workshop.



Figure 1: Some of the workshop participants posing in front of the GEONETCast Receiving antenna at Makerere University Kampala

Further information on the workshop can be obtained through the course coordinators:

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AFRICA GIS 2009 Conference: GEONETCast activities at the conference venue

Just prior to the start of the conference, the antenna was moved from the University to the conference venue of AfricaGIS09 (at Munyunyo Speke Resort) and the antenna was pointed. At the start of the conference, on Monday morning, the ground receiving and processing computers were installed at the Makarere University booth in a tent that was available for the exhibitors.

Due to some heavy rainfall and associated wind the tent that hosted the exhibition area was transformed into a disaster area later in the week. The exhibitors - vendors moved to a slightly different place but the cable from the antenna was not long enough to allow a new setup. Therefore the GEONETCast exhibition activities had to be cancelled.

The GEONETCast activities also attracted the attention of the media resulting in articles published in the newspaper and interviews given on television.



Figure 2: Some pictures taken from the Makarere University booth during AfricaGIS09



Figure 3: Antenna outside the tent, before and just after the rainfall event

Govt acquires machine to detect weather

Uganda has acquired a satellite machine that will be used to detect weather patterns and natural resources information in a move to monitor the environment throughout the country. Mr Yazidhi Bamutaze a Geography Expert at Makerere University said arrangements to secure the Geonetcast have been finalised. Mr Bamutaze, said the acquisition of the technology would help to get timely information at short intervals for analysis and give accurate and timely information to the public about disasters like drought, floods and available mineral resources in the country. The cost of the system was not revealed.

Figure 4: Local Newspaper "Daily Monitor", 19 October 2009, page 5



Figure 5: Antenna setup at Makarere University, Kampala, Department of Geography. Normal operations have been resumed after AFRICAGIS09