



WEMAST TRAINING ON EARTH OBSERVATION PRODUCTS VALIDATION AND GEOPORTAL USE

BACKGROUND, RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL), as the lead of the Wetland Assessment and Monitoring Platform for Transboundary River Basins in Southern Africa (WeMAST) consortium, together with its technical partners from leading academic institutions (Midlands State University, Zimbabwe, University of Botswana, University of Western Cape, South Africa and University of Zambia) and satellite-service providers (South African National Space Agency and Zambia National Remote Sensing Centre), has the pleasure to announce two Earth Observation (EO) training courses on satellite-based product development and validation and WeMAST geoportal applications and usage.

The training courses are tailor made to capacitate stakeholders on how EO data can be used to monitor wetlands as well as available spatial-explicit online-based wetland EO and in-situ data and products. The courses are made possible with funding from the GMES and Africa Support Programme, an initiative of the African Union and the European Commission.

WeMAST aims to design, develop and operationalise an integrated EO based platform that can provide wetland information services to target groups and end users. The target basins are the Cuvelai, Limpopo, Okavango and Zambezi, covering the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

As an important component of this deliverable is ensuring human and institutional capacity in accessing, processing and utilizing products of this service, in line with the project concept 'with the Users for the Users.' In addition, the course aims to achieve the training strategy of GMES & Africa support programme which highlights that EO deserves continuous training and capacity building of specialists because:

- a) EO technology is dynamic in terms of infrastructure and instrumentation,
- b) data specifications vary with changing instrumentations,
- c) processing software are changing or being updated on a continuous basis,
- d) the need to satisfy a dynamic user community and effective ingestion in daily decision making process and,
- e) the need to develop EO based spatial explicit wetland products from various environments in Southern Africa.

After wide consultations, through a questionnaire survey and a regional workshop in Harare, stakeholders identified wetland indicators and recommended for WeMAST service development at basin scale and wetland level. This feedback informed the subsequent development of the WeMAST geoportal. Therefore, this training course will focus on **two key aspects**:

1. Satellite-based Earth Observation product development and validation.
2. Southern Africa WeMAST Geoportal development, applications and usage.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS/LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the training courses participants should be able to:

- Familiarise with earth observation product development and validation as well as linkages to the

development of WeMAST geoportal.

- Understand the wetlands components that can be visualised on the WeMAST geoportal.
- Access wetland information and products via the webportal.
- Make recommendations on improvements that can be made on the WeMAST geoportal in relation to their work experience and user needs.

PARTICIPANTS

The courses are targeting:

- River Basin commissions
- Water authorities
- Conservation authorities
- Government departments
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Universities and Research Institutions
- Private sector
- Local authorities
- Local communities' representatives

TRAINING DATES AND PROGRAMMES

| Training One: Satellite-based Earth Observation product development and validation | |
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| Date: 20 th – 22 nd April 2021 | |
| Day 1 (20 April 2021) | • Recap – the journey to WeMAST products and services development |
| Day 2 (21 April 2021) | • Satellite-based EO product development |
| Day 3 (22 April 2021) | • Satellite-based EO product validation |
| Training Two: WeMAST Geoportal development, Applications and Usage | |
| Date: 18 th – 21 st May 2021 | |
| Day 1 (18 May 2021) | • WeMAST geoportal development |
| Day 2 (19 May 2021) | • WeMAST geoportal applications and usage |
| Day 3 (20 May 2021) | • Stakeholder(s) experience in Wetlands and EO applications (The Environmental Management Agency, Zimbabwe) |
| Day 4 (21 May 2021) | • Re-cap • Users' feedback on the WeMAST geoportal • Way-forward |

