

GAF and partners awarded contract to map European riparian zones

A European consortium headed by GAF AG has been awarded a contract by the European Environment Agency (EEA) to implement the geographic extension (2012) and complete update (2018) of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service's Riparian Zones dataset. The project team consists of four experienced European service providers: GAF (Germany), e-Geos (Italy), GeoVille (Austria) and Indra (Spain). The consortium has signed a €4.2 million framework service contract with the EEA.

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As part of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service's Local Component, the consortium will provide mapping and consultancy services to EEA, delivering a consistent spatial extension and thematic update (for the reference year 2018) of the very-high resolution characterisation of riparian zones for most of Europe, including Turkey (i.e. the 39 EEA member and cooperating countries). Based on optical satellite imagery with very high spatial resolution, the consortium will produce the following, complementary riparian data layers:

- Very-high-resolution land cover/land use in a riparian buffer zone for the reference year 2012, extending the existing riparian zones product further upstream by adding all Strahler level 2 rivers;
- Very-high-resolution land cover/land use update of the entire pan-European riparian zones coverage of Strahler level 2-9 rivers for the reference year 2018.

Riparian zones are among the most sensitive ecosystem and biodiversity hotspots in Europe. The extended and updated dataset will assist with the systematic assessment and monitoring of related freshwater ecosystems and riverine habitats. It will specifically provide support to the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and the related Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES) as well as the associated Green Infrastructure and Restoration objectives, the Habitats and Birds Directives, the Water Framework Directive and the European Floods Directive.

Markus Probeck – GAF's programme manager for Copernicus services - remarks: "By also adding small river categories, this initiative will significantly increase the added value of the EEA's unique riparian zones dataset across Europe. GAF and its partners are very pleased to be entrusted with this latest Copernicus Land Monitoring Service implementation."

GAF is responsible for the overall project and quality management as well as for producing the very-high resolution land cover/land use product update.

About GAF

GAF is an e-Geos/Telespazio company based in Munich, Germany. It is a leading solutions provider with an international reputation as a skilled and reliable supplier of data, products and services in the fields of geo-information, satellite remote sensing, spatial IT and consulting for private and public clients. GAF is one of the most experienced European service providers in the EU/ESA Copernicus Programme and covers all thematic domains: Land, Marine, Atmosphere, Climate Change, Emergency Management and Security. GAF also provides solutions in the sectors of natural resources management, water and environment, renewable

resources, mining and geology. Over the past 30 years, GAF has been active in more than 100 countries throughout Europe, Africa, South America and Asia. Further information is available at www.gaf.de.

About EEA

The European Environment Agency (EEA) is a European Union public body based in Copenhagen, Denmark. It supports the European Union with the development and implementation of environmental policy by providing relevant, reliable, targeted and timely information on the state of the environment and future prospects, as well as independent scientific knowledge and technical support. The European Commission entrusted EEA with coordinating the implementation of the Copernicus Land service's continental (pan-European) and local components, as well as the cross-cutting in-situ coordination. Currently, the EEA has 33 member countries (the 28 Member States of the European Union, as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey) and 6 cooperating countries. Further information is available at www.eea.europa.eu.

About Copernicus Land Monitoring

Copernicus is the European programme for establishing an independent capacity for Earth Observation and Security. The objective of its Land Monitoring Service is to provide users in the field of the environment and other terrestrial applications with consistent and up-to-date information based on space data and other sources. It addresses a wide range of policies such as the environment, regional development, agriculture, transport and energy at the EU level, as well as European commitments to international conventions. It consists of three main components: global, continental (pan-European), and local. Further information on the Copernicus programme is available at www.copernicus.eu. Information on the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service can be found at land.copernicus.eu. The existing (Strahler level 3-8) Riparian Zones datasets are accessible via land.copernicus.eu/local/riparian-zones.

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