

GAF and Partners Contracted to Map European Riparian Zones



A European consortium headed by GAF AG has been contracted by the European Environment Agency (EEA) to implement the latest element of the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service's Local Component: the Riparian Zones Project. The project team mainly consists of four experienced European service providers: GAF AG (Germany), INDRA (Spain), Metria (Sweden) and GeoVille (Austria). The consortium has signed a EUR3.7 million framework service contract with the EEA and conducted a successful project kick-off in Copenhagen in July 2014.

As part of the Copernicus Initial Operations, the consortium will provide mapping, modelling and consultancy services to EEA in order to provide a consistent and very-high resolution delineation and characterisation of the

riparian zones of major and medium-sized rivers for most of Europe and Turkey (i.e. the 39 EEA member and cooperating countries) for the first time ever. Based on optical 2.5m spatial resolution satellite imagery, the consortium will produce three separate riparian data layers by mid-2015:

- very-high-resolution land cover/land use mapping within a riparian buffer zone;
- fine-scale spatial delineation of riparian zones based on a GIS modelling approach, incorporating various geo-information layers and the latest scientific research;
- and delineation of small green linear elements as part of the European green infrastructure.

Additionally, the consortium will provide consultancy services to EEA in relation to these three data layers.

By focusing on riparian zones, which are among the most sensitive ecosystem and biodiversity hotspots in Europe, the project will enable a systematic assessment of freshwater ecosystems and riverine habitats. It will serve as a complement to the pan-European Land component (CORINE Land Cover (CLC) and High-Resolution Layers (HRL) on land cover characteristics) and to the other Local Component project, i.e. the Urban Atlas. Among other things, it will also 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.

In this project, GAF AG is responsible for the overall project management as well as for creating the very-high resolution land cover / land use product for Central Europe and the British Isles. Additionally, the company will be implementing the Riparian Zones Delineation for all EEA-39 countries and be responsible for consultancy coordination and overall quality management.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/gaf-and-partners-contracted-to-map-european-riparian-zones>
