



**GMES  
AND AFRICA**



Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Service for  
Transboundary Basins in Southern Africa

## Communication Strategy

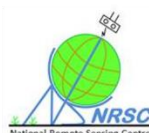


*ensuring sustainable wetland use*

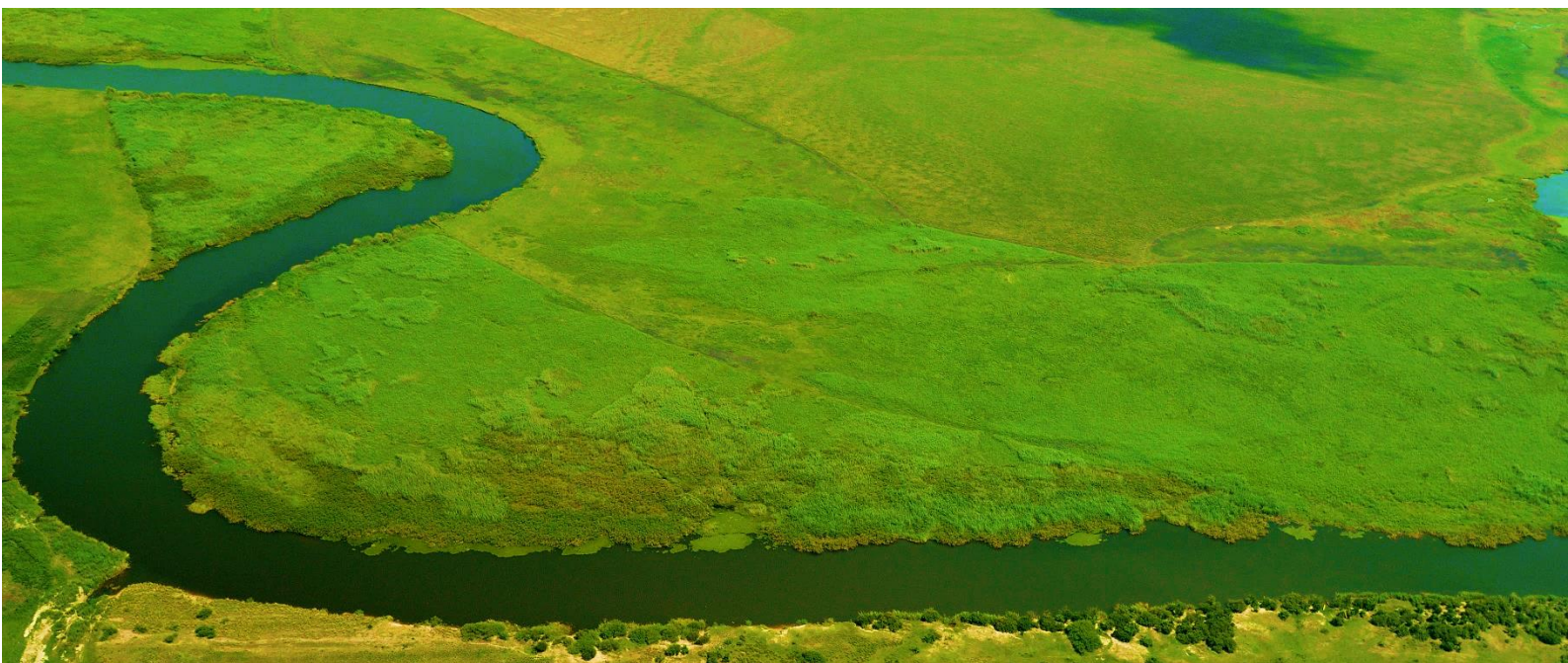
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## Introduction

The **WeMAST** (Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Service for Transboundary Basins in Southern Africa) Project has been awarded to the SASSCAL-led consortium by the GMES and Africa initiative. GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) and Africa aims to promote sustainable management of natural resources with the use of Earth Observation (EO) data and derived information.

WeMAST will develop and implement an EO-based online platform that supports sustainable wetland assessment and monitoring services, promote policy implementation and management practices in the SADC region, utilizes free satellite-based EO data and existing free software.

WeMAST will focus on transboundary river basins in southern Africa, with special emphasises on the Cuvelai Basin, Okavango River Basin, the Limpopo River Basin and the Zambezi River Basin.

The specific objectives of the WeMAST project are:

- to identify existing assessment and monitoring methods applicable to southern Africa
- to design, develop and operationalise an integrated platform that can provide wetland information service to target groups and end users
- to extend existing EO capabilities to SADC decision makers for wetland assessment and monitoring through capacity building and leverage awareness

Moreover, the WeMAST consortium aims to create products and services in line with the concept “with the Users for the Users”.

*Wetlands in Southern Africa are highly productive and biologically diverse ecosystems that contribute significantly to livelihood and economic development. However, they are under significant pressure from both human activities and natural phenomena, including agriculture, land cover and land use change, human settlements, water harvesting, invasive species infestation, climate change and unsustainable development practices. The future of these wetlands is therefore dependent on effective assessment and monitoring that can inform policy and decision making to promote sustainable management. Inadequate human and institutional capacity, conventional hydrological and wetland data, as well as the lack of suitable and applicable spatial data, constrain effective wetland management efforts.*

## Background

The WeMAST Communication Strategy builds on the GMES and Africa Communications and Engagement Strategy (CES)<sup>1</sup>, which guides communication activities and stakeholder engagement within the context of the GMES and Africa Support Programme. The GMES and Africa CES has the following objectives

- to create awareness about the existence, mandate and objectives of the GMES and Africa Support Programme and
- to sustain the support and commitment of stakeholders towards the realization of the goals of the GMES and Africa Support Programme.

<sup>1</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34412-file-20180608\\_communication\\_and\\_engagment\\_strategy.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34412-file-20180608_communication_and_engagment_strategy.pdf)



Against this background, communication is key to ensuring that the products and services produced by the WeMAST project will be used efficiently and effectively to drive decision-making processes on ensure sound and sustainable management of the wetland systems in major transboundary river basins in southern Africa.

## Objectives of the WeMAST Communication Strategy

Notwithstanding the objectives of the GMES and Africa Communication and Engagement Strategy, the WeMAST Communication Strategy aims to promote and put in place a communication strategy

1. *to ensure active and effective collaboration and communication with the WeMAST stakeholders*
2. *to ensure the efficient use of the products and services produced by the WeMAST consortium*
3. *to ensure that communication guidelines and requirements set out by the GMES and Africa Communication and Engagement Strategy are adopted in support of the goals of the GMES and Africa Support Programme*

## GMES and Africa guidelines and requirements

The GMES and Africa Communications and Engagement Strategy proposes policy guidelines and sets forth requirements for the GMES and Africa consortia, that should be implemented in their respective communication strategies:

### ***Communication as a key component of the implementation of the GMES and Africa Programme***

In order to efficiently raise visibility and create awareness of the GMES and Africa Support Programme and moreover, to ensure that useful information that is derived from EO products is also used to drive policy and decision making at all levels, the GMES and Africa Communication and Engagement Strategy (GMES and Africa CES) is a key component of the programme.

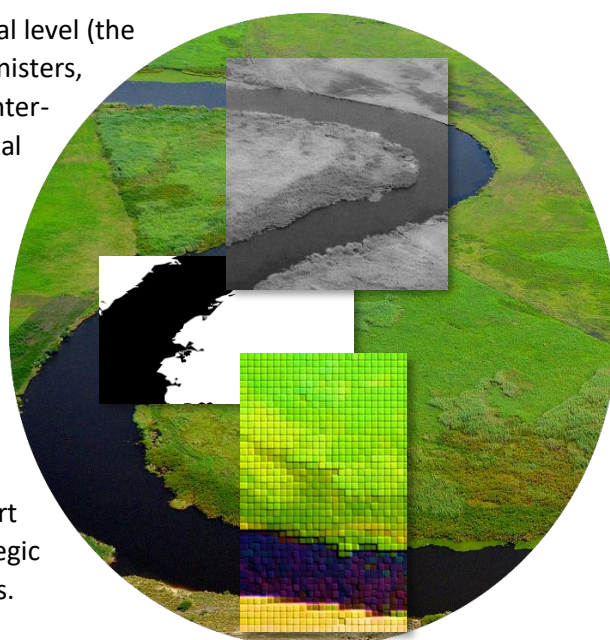
To this end, the GMES and Africa CES identifies outreach at at national level (the directorates in charge of planning), at state level (governors, ministers, members of parliament etc.), Regional level (regional and inter-governmental organizations and institutions, etc.), at the continental level (UN-ECA, UNEP, Specialized Technical Committees, etc.); and for the private sector and the civil society.

### ***Objectives of GMES and Africa Communication and Engagement Strategy***

The GMES and Africa CES aims to drive notions of participation and ownership amongst the stakeholders, to ensure the sustainability of the programmes. In order to maximise the effectiveness of the Support Programme, it further promotes active information sharing, strategic publicity and outreach strategies using effective communication tools.

The GMES and Africa CES aims to ensure that the following key messages are conveyed:

- Earth Observation for the Africa we want
- Earth Observation for the development of the green economy in Africa
- Innovating and sustaining the management of Africa's water resources
- Marine and coastal areas services for Africa's blue growth



## ***Proposed Communication Channels***

The key audiences and target groups identified by the GMES and Africa CES are:

- **The African Union Commission (AUC)**
- **African Regional Economic and Development Communities**
- **African local governments and national institutions**
  - **Businesses/private sector**
  - **Policy makers**
  - **Academic, scientific and research institutions**
  - **Journalists, communicators and media organizations**
  - **Civil Society, Non-Governmental and Community-Based Organizations (NGOs & CBOs)**
  - **International partners**

The key communication needs and interests can be categorised into the following categories:

- **Research & Capacity Development**, in order to establish how EO can benefit, support and enhance the monitoring and assessment of Africa's natural resources and to ensure capacity development of the established methodologies and techniques.
- **Products & Services**, that establish the status of Africa's natural resources using EO data (different levels). In addition, assimilation and establishment of standardized, high quality and updated EO data; information and project reports, the creation of updated information and decision making tools (maps, early warning, etc.) to address post-disaster situations and the assimilation and creation of EO data and products. Moreover, to ensure that developments are communicated visibly with regular news and information updates.
- **Progress of GMES and Africa Support Programme, its activities and concrete results**, to ensure the objectives of the GMES and Africa Support Programme are continually supported.

To this end, the communication channels that have been identified by the GMES and Africa CES make use of current mainstream communication media and tools:

- Newsletters
- Website
- Meetings
- Reports
- Social Media & Mass Media
- Press Releases & Press Conferences

## ***Communication media versus their benefits***

The GMES and Africa CES discusses different communication media and tools and highlights their benefits:

- Television and radio remain strong impact media for communicating to and in particular reaching wide audiences at all stakeholder levels.
- Conventional printed media such as newsletters are strong brand carriers.
- Websites have extensive potential for reaching a wide and diverse stakeholder audience, are strong brand carriers and allow for data and information sharing as well.
- Social media platforms allow for the dissemination of information, allow for stronger community engagement, provide an opportunity to receive feedback, allow for instantaneous alerts, and allow for a measure of success for campaigns.

## ***Internal communication***

The GMES and Africa CES, whilst focussing on supporting the objectives of the GMES and Africa Support Programme, also suggests internal communications amongst the GMES and Africa team, which will underline the values of tactfulness and consistency.



## GMES and Africa Support Programme Graphic Charter

The visual identity of the GMES and Africa Support Programme is achieved with a logo. The GMES and Africa CES prescribes, amongst others, the following visual requirements for all public and visibility materials of GMES and Africa projects:

- All visibility materials shall contain the GMES and Africa, the AUC and the EC Commission logos, with *mandatory* proper placement,
- Before publication, all visibility and communication materials should be validated and approved by the GMES and Africa Coordinator and Communication Officer,
- All visibility events should be preceded by a concept note.



# GMES AND AFRICA



Figure 1: GMES and Africa logo at the top, with AUC logo at the bottom left and EU Commission logo at the bottom right (with bottom two logos at the same size and on the same horizontal line)

## WeMAST identity

The WeMAST consortium aims to create products and services in line with the concept of “with the Users for the Users”.

To this end, the WeMAST *identity* should both graphically and conceptually promote the goals and objectives of the project:

- The two overarching strategies in WeMAST, being wetland assessment and monitoring and earth observation, are both highly graphical themes and therefore allow for limitless graphical exploration.
- The strategy of the WeMAST identity is promoted by its strong user focus, that will systematically and continually ensure an active interaction and collaboration with the user, and more specifically, the stakeholder.

With the strong user orientated focus of WeMAST, it is crucial to ensure that any association with WeMAST promotes a sense of trust in the products and services produced and that a strong identity makes these products and services recognisable.

The WeMAST identity will fully exploit the three blue colours of the WeMAST logo.

## The WeMAST logo

The WeMAST logo aims to meet the following objectives:

- To underpin the relevance of wetlands as natural resources for humans in the region
- Be distinctive, unique, yet simple
- Meet the needs for a successful implementation on hardcopy corporate materials, as well as online media
- Visually connect to GMES and the objectives of WeMAST

The logo comprises three different blue variations. The blue clearly represents the element of water, as the main wetland characteristic. The blue colour in itself is a powerful marketing tool in that it

- is the universally favoured colour of people, according to a YouGov survey,



Colour codes used for the logo are the GMES and Africa blue in the central pillar and text ( $R=46$   $G=49$   $B=146$ ), the left pillar is  $R=0$   $G=129$   $B=196$  and right pillar is  $R=0$   $G=106$   $B=128$ .

Figure 2: WeMAST logo



- blue conveys sentiments of calm, serenity and safety,
- it is non-intrusive,
- it is often linked with innovation and associated with productivity,
- dark blue in particular is associated with intelligence, strength, reliability and sophistication.

The logo furthermore contains the following representative elements:

- The text and central pillar are in the GMES blue, therefore complementing and symbolising clear connectivity.
- The water and the mokoro (typical wood canoe used particularly in the Okavango and Zambezi areas of southern Africa) cross over two pillars respectively, represent the close connection between the people and their livelihoods in and around wetland systems which are similar across the transboundary river systems. The person on the mokoro and the straw and clay hut further symbolise the human-wetland interaction and the reliance on the wetland resource.
- The water reed represents the wetland ecosystem and its biodiversity.
- The cloud symbolises regional atmospheric conditions supporting the existence and functioning of wetland systems in terms of rainfall, also in the context of a changing climate.

## Graphic Elements

The WeMAST identity is further conveyed with the use of a number of reoccurring graphic elements, that will be augmented and build upon, as the project progresses. These will ensure that the following key project components are conveyed successfully:

- Graphics that underpin the relevance of wetlands as natural resources for humans in the region and that demonstrate the human dependence on the wetland resource,
- Graphics that underpin the relevance of the fauna and flora interaction in wetland ecosystems and
- Graphics that suggest the strong focus on Earth Observation technologies in the project methodology.



*Figure 3: Three images that reoccur in the WeMAST outreach and communication materials to convey the human-wetland reliance, the fauna-flora reliance on the wetland and the earth observation technology*

## Strategy specifications

The specific objectives of WeMAST are

1. to identify existing assessment and monitoring methods applicable to southern Africa
2. to design, develop and operationalize an integrated platform that can provide wetland information service to target groups and end users
3. to extend existing EO capabilities to SADC decision makers for wetland assessment and monitoring through capacity building and leverage awareness

The **WeMAST** consortium aims to meet the above objectives in line with the concept of “with the Users for the Users”. This concept warrants a continual and regular engagement between the WeMAST work package leaders and the identified stakeholders of the WeMAST project.



Expected products		Stakeholders	Awareness raising mechanism	Users feedbacks mechanism
<b>WETLAND INFORMATION SYSTEM</b> Extent, type, classification status, status and dynamics, zoning, statistics, change	<b>INTERACTIVE ONLINE SYSTEMS MAKING AVAILABLE DATA, VISUAL AIDS, GRAPHICS &amp; MAPS</b>	<b>Basin commissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital communication media:</b> email, website, newsletters and information brochures</li> <li>• <b>Broadcasting media:</b> social media, local, national, regional and international television and radio networks</li> <li>• <b>Direct engagement</b> (stakeholder at all levels): roadshows, meetings, workshops, symposia and conferences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Regular and consistent engagement</b> with the stakeholder community and groups with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Electronic communication media</li> </ul> <p>to ensure a <b>dynamic evolution of product and service</b> provision in line with user needs</p>
<b>FLOOD INFO SYSTEM</b> Flood history, regime, extent & flood risk		<b>Water management authorities</b>		
<b>VEGETATION PHENOMETRICS</b> Net primary productivity, cover, density, dynamics		<b>Fishery authorities</b>		
<b>WATER QUALITY</b> Seasonal dynamics, human-induced hotspots, chlorophyll, suspended sediment, algal bloom, aquatic vegetation & early warning		<b>Conservation sector</b>		
<b>WETLAND USE</b> Wetland utilization and land cover information		<b>Health sector</b>		
		<b>NGO organisations</b>		
		<b>Regional authorities, Communal authorities &amp; Municipalities</b>		
		<b>Communities</b>		
		<b>Researchers &amp; academics</b>		

Figure 4: The identified products for the WeMAST project, with its corresponding stakeholder groups

## Target audience

Different stakeholder levels (national level, state level, regional level, continental level and private sector and civil society level) can be expected to warrant different communication media. In particular in the southern African region, some communication media are not effective and conventional communication strategies need to be implemented.

Accordingly, the target audiences, aka WeMAST stakeholders, can be subdivided into the following groups:

### 1. The decision makers and policy makers

Most of the stakeholders identified by the WeMAST consortium fall into the category of decision-makers and policy-makers. These would commonly be governmental authorities, affiliated commissions, water management authorities and NGO's, that require information of the flooding of the wetland, the water quality of the wetland, the use of the wetland, the changes and drivers of change in the wetland etc., to ensure timely and effective decisions for the population residing and relying on the wetland resource, but also for ensuring the sustainable exploitation of the wetland ecosystem.

### 2. The scientist, researcher or academic

A key component of the GMES and Africa Support Programme is the exploration and utilisation of EO products and resources, in particular those provided by the Copernicus programme. The GMES and Africa initiative aims to explore how best earth observation can be used for monitoring and assessing land resources. Accordingly, a training and capacity development component is associated with this research to inform applied science.

### 3. The people living around the wetlands and/or people depending on wetland ecosystem services and goods

The residents of the wetland are, in southern Africa, often the communities that rely on the wetland and the natural resources that the wetland fuels and provides, be it for human and livestock consumption, for fisheries, for harvesting building materials, for agriculture or for tourism enterprises. The resident has a direct stake in wetland management, by their dependence on the resource. All policy and decisions implemented for the wetland will affect this group.

The WeMAST Communication Strategy aims at creatively, flexibly, yet effectively meeting the needs all of its stakeholders, regardless of the user level, to ensure that the products and services that are developed by the consortium are used efficiently and do inform decision and policy processes, to ensure the sustainable exploitation of the wetland resource.



## Communication media

The following communication media will be exploited to ensure that all stakeholder groups, at all levels are reached effectively:

Communication media	Target group	Consideration
<p>WeMAST website (and SASSCAL website)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>• scientist, researcher or academic</li> <li>• some wetland residents</li> <li>• all SASSCAL partner institutions, stakeholders and collaborators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A website is not only a powerful marketing tool that creates widespread visibility and that can be accessed by every person that has access to a smart mobile device, it also provides mechanisms by which data and information resources can be distributed and made available.</li> <li>• Websites can ensure that stakeholders on all levels are catered for.</li> <li>• The most effective mechanisms of promoting open data and information platforms, is with the use of website portals.</li> <li>• Notably, websites are not going to reach a majority of the wetland residents, as these often do not have access to internet services and mobile technology.</li> </ul>
<p>Newsletters (digital &amp; printed) and email campaigns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>• scientist, researcher or academic</li> <li>• some wetland residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As opposed to a website, where the user has to consciously visit the website, a newsletter ensures that all stakeholders are informed regularly of developments, findings and new products and services</li> <li>• Urgent news can be distributed by email campaigns to the newsletter distribution list, and newsletters can contain a summary of many months' of developments</li> <li>• Newsletters can be printed, but it is not feasible and environmentally justifiable to do so in large volumes.</li> </ul>
<p>Publicity materials (banners, flyers, posters etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>• scientist, researcher or academic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity materials are very visual materials that normally draw the attention of the stakeholder with big and bold designs</li> <li>• They are powerful marketing media at conferences, workshops or meetings and on-the-ground activities</li> <li>• Certain occasions targeting local authorities or communities may</li> </ul>



Communication media	Target group	Consideration
		warrant the translation of these materials into local languages
Policy briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy briefs are mediums whereby research results are communicated to decision makers and policy makers at all levels, in digestible and understandable language</li> </ul>
Television and radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>scientist, researcher or academic</li> <li>most wetland residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For ad-hoc awareness raising campaigns, television and radio allow for inexpensive wide-reaching publicity</li> <li>These can be used if special announcements are made on milestones reached</li> </ul>
Press releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>scientist, researcher or academic</li> <li>some wetland residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar to television and radio, press-releases will be made if special announcements are made on milestones reached</li> </ul>
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>scientist, researcher or academic</li> <li>few wetland residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Announcements, developments and milestones will be announced on Twitter, but due to limited internet connectivity and also limited awareness of social media platforms, these media are not likely to be useful for reaching residents and local authorities in some areas</li> </ul>
Conferences, workshops and outreach events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>decision makers and policy makers at all levels</li> <li>scientist, researcher or academic</li> <li>few wetland residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A schedule for conferences, workshops and similar will be created to ensure that all WeMAST developments are “with the Users for the Users” and to engage stakeholders actively throughout the development of the project</li> <li>Moreover, such events ensure knowledge, data and technology exchanges with the research community and also with other relevant consortia</li> </ul>



## The WeMAST Website (and SASSCAL Website)

The WeMAST Website will be the main communication tool with the stakeholder. It will convey information and progress on the project, celebrate the achievement of milestone, and moreover, will make available the WeMAST products, services and associated deliverables. It will also ensure that base data, thematic and in-depth data and information of the relevant transboundary basins is made available indefinitely.

<http://wemast.sasscal.org/>

The Website will evolve, as the project progresses and achieves milestones. The stakeholder engagement will drive the process of establishing specific user needs and it may influence the study areas and influence the way in which products and services to stakeholders at different user levels are provided. It can be foreseen that some users, for instance, may be interested in online information portals, whilst others require printable reports, that inform policy and decision processes.

It is understood and foreseen that the WeMAST consortium remains mindful to different user needs and it will aim to address these creatively and flexibly through, amongst others, the WeMAST Website.

Refer to [Annex 2](#), for screenshots of the WeMAST website.

It is expected that by the end of 2019, sections on capacity development can be added that gives insight into the research that Master and PhD students are doing, in the context of their WeMAST scholarships.

In addition to the WeMAST website, the SASSCAL Website will also report on WeMAST activities and will have a project description of the WeMAST project under its projects section.



### Newsletters and email campaigns

The communication of milestones relies on the achievements of the respective work packages ([Annex 1: WeMAST Work Packages](#)) of the WeMAST project.

The Newsletters and email campaigns will be distributed mainly by electronic media and will ensure that stakeholders remain informed on progress.

### Publicity materials

The development of publicity and outreach materials will go hand-in-hand with the progression of the project's work packages and the achievement of milestones.



Figure 5: A snapshot of the WeMAST website - more are available in Annex 2

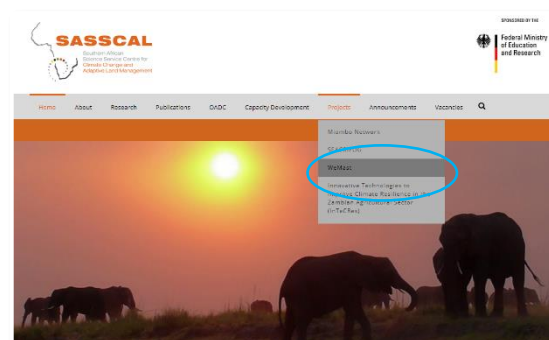


Figure 6: The encircled drop-down menu shows the project description of the WeMAST website on the SASSCAL website



A WeMAST project flyer has been created. It is expected, that as the products and services of the WeMAST project are developed, at least one additional flyer will be developed, outlining the products and services.

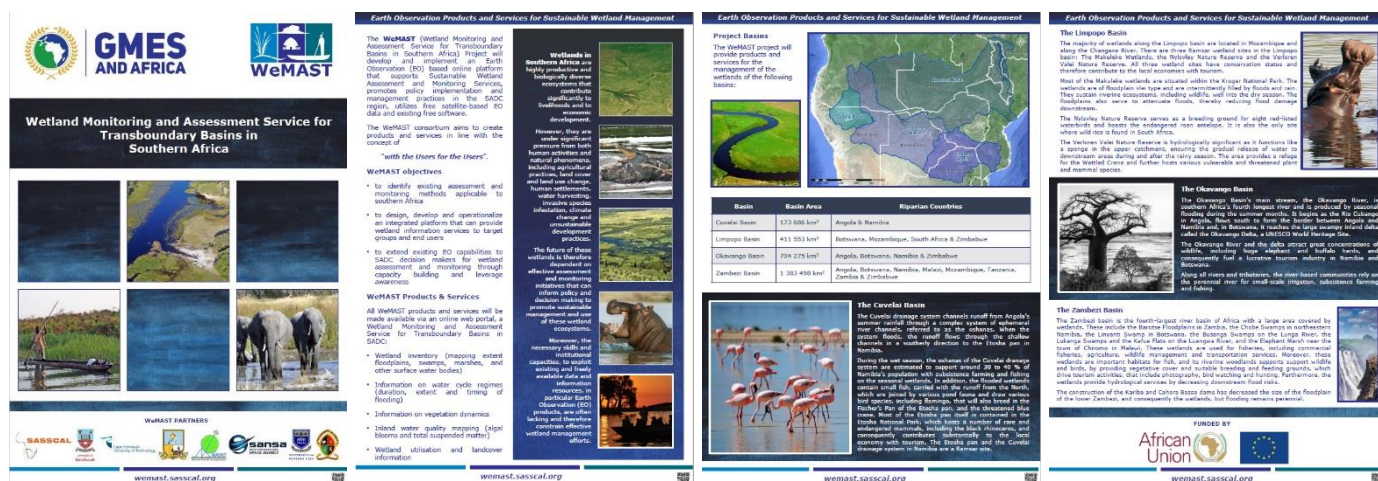


Figure 7: General WeMAST project flyer

A general WeMAST poster has also been created.

## Policy Briefs or Fact Sheets

In particular in the south African Region, data, information and knowledge-based products often fail to inform policy. Decision-making processes often show no regard of scientific developments or findings. Policy briefs are a medium whereby information and knowledge-based results may be communicated to decision makers and policy makers at all levels, in a more digestible and understandable language, thereby ensuring that knowledge-products and services can effectively inform policy and decision-making processes.

The WeMAST consortium aims at producing at least three policy briefs:

- Integration of Earth Observation into decision support
- Human-wetland aspect & stakeholder perspective
- Technical report on Earth Observation technologies

Whilst policy briefs support decision-making processes, the WeMAST consortium recognises the importance of assimilating information into fact sheets that are tailored to the needs of stakeholders at all levels. Fact sheets can address the challenges of various stakeholder groups, ensuring customisation to their specific needs..

## Television, radio and press releases

Television, radio and press releases will be considered as the project progresses and achieves milestones.

## Social media

A Twitter account for WeMAST has been created and is updated during events.

## Conferences, workshops and outreach events

In line with WeMAST's policy, to develop services and products "with the Users, for the Users", three outreach events will be hosted that will ensure that WeMAST actively engages the stakeholders throughout the project:



Outreach Event	Purpose	Attendees	Timing	Location
<b>WeMAST Project Public Launch Workshop</b>	Introduce the workplan to the WeMAST stakeholders	Consortium & Stakeholders	Early 2020	Windhoek
<b>WeMAST Mid-Project Workshop</b>	Present and deliberate the progress made with the WeMAST stakeholders	Consortium & Stakeholders	End 2020	Windhoek
<b>WeMAST Final Project Presentation</b>	Present the results of the WeMAST project to the stakeholders	Consortium & Stakeholders	Full day Apr – May 2021	Windhoek

The user needs assessment conducted during the stakeholder engagement of work package 6.2 (WP 6.2) by MSU ([Annex 1: WeMAST Work Packages](#)), will ensure that a stakeholder engagement framework is created for the consortium partners to engage stakeholders during their field work and to compile a stakeholder list. This will form the basis for all further stakeholder engagement during the WeMAST project. Moreover, MSU will hold two stakeholder engagement workshops in Zimbabwe to pilot the stakeholder engagement strategy of the WeMAST project.

Further, in line with field work to be conducted by the consortium members, responsible for specific wetland study sites, active root-level stakeholder engagement will take place in the respective wetlands.

The WeMAST consortium will moreover endeavour to engage with other GMES and Africa consortia, to ensure the sharing of best practices and to maximise the visibility of the project.

### *Other communication materials*

All communication materials will ensure alignment with the GMES and Africa Support Programme identity and the WeMAST identity. Communication materials will develop as the WeMAST stakeholder engagement proceeds, and products and services are developed and will be designed and adapted for specific user groups.

Communication materials will include banners, flyers, posters etc., similar to **Figure 6** on the next page.

### *Communication platforms*

Communication extends beyond conventional communication platforms and media such as websites and outreach materials.

A successful project execution also relies on efficient *internal communication* platforms:

- The WeMAST consortium will endeavour to regularly meet during **SKYPE** meetings to ensure the sharing of ideas, the reporting of progress and that potential challenges are addressed in a timely manner.
- A WeMAST **email group** ([wemast@sasscal.org](mailto:wemast@sasscal.org)) is established to ensure that the WeMAST consortium can communicate efficiently for day-to-day matters and that all involved parties are up-to-date and informed.

### *Publication clearance*

All publication and visibility materials have to be validated and approved by the GMES and Africa Coordinator and Communication Officer. For the WeMAST consortium, all publication and visibility



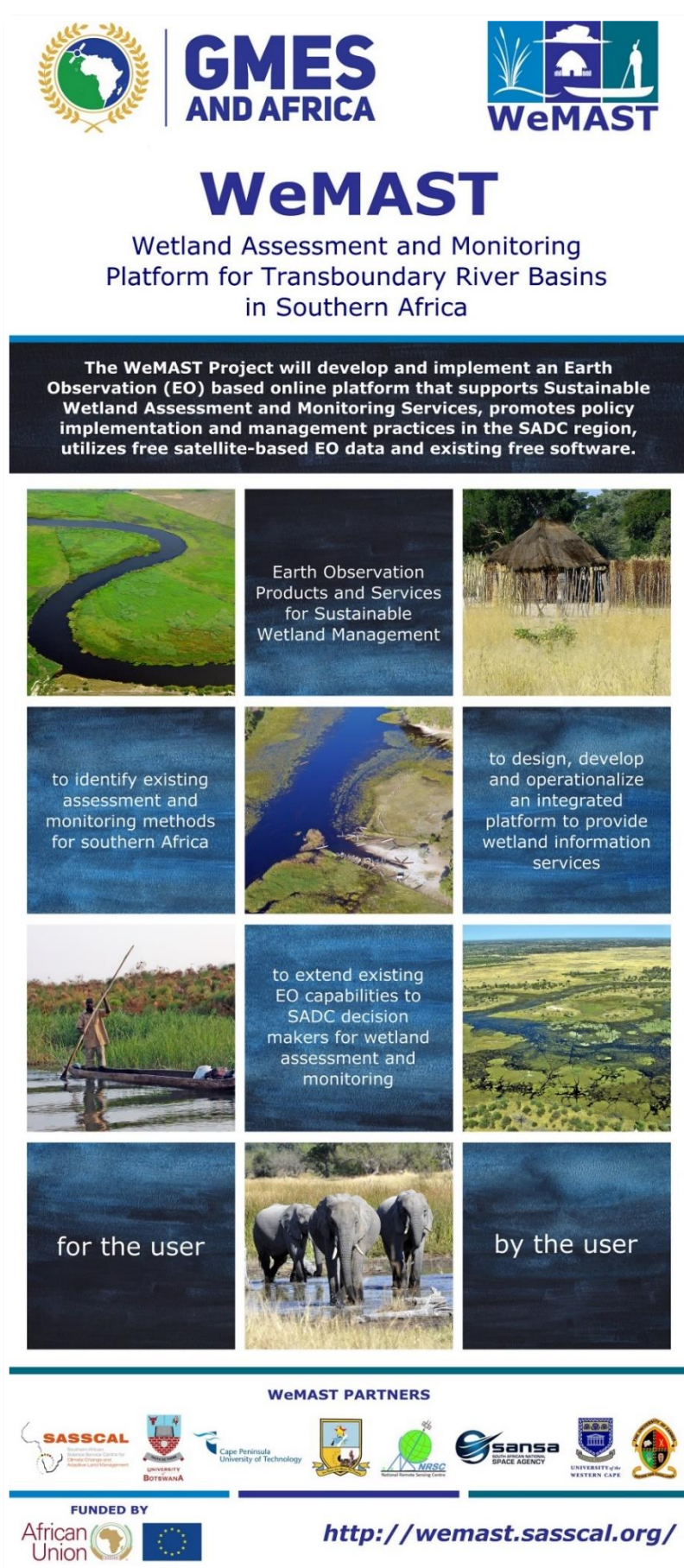
materials have to be approved by the WeMAST Communication Team ([info.wemast@sasscal.org](mailto:info.wemast@sasscal.org)) and ultimately the Head of the WeMAST Consortium, Dr Jane Olwoch the SASSCAL Executive Director.

## Communication challenges

The WeMAST communication strategy cannot always affect all user levels directly and will have to rely on creative and effective communication strategies to reach all users at all levels. For the southern African region, in particular the wetland residents cannot always be reached directly by modern communication media. In these instances, the consortium will rely on the mandate and the support of the water commissions, the local authorities and the NGO's active in such remote areas.

In the southern African region however, most countries report that at least 50 %, some more than 70%, of their populations do not have access to internet. This of course being even higher in the communal areas of the region, which often coincide with the study sites of WeMAST project. Accordingly, the wetlands resident's stakeholder group is most likely to not benefit from many digital communication media. Consequently, a strong emphasis will be given to develop adequate and relevant information material.

It goes without saying that the WeMAST Communication Strategy relies on the full cooperation of the WeMAST consortium and on the success of the project.




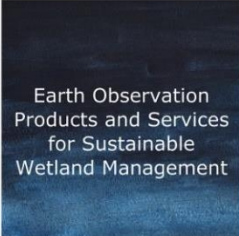

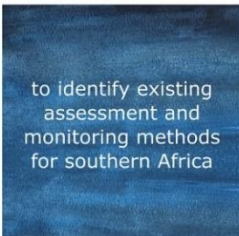

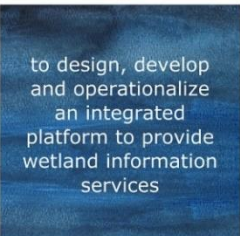

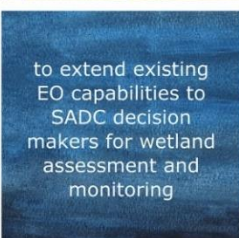
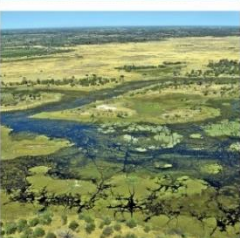
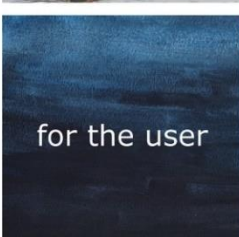

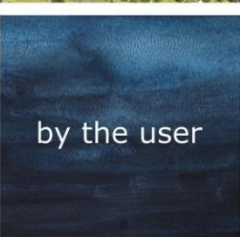
**GMES AND AFRICA**

**WeMAST**








### WeMAST

Wetland Assessment and Monitoring  
Platform for Transboundary River Basins  
in Southern Africa



**The WeMAST Project will develop and implement an Earth Observation (EO) based online platform that supports Sustainable Wetland Assessment and Monitoring Services, promotes policy implementation and management practices in the SADC region, utilizes free satellite-based EO data and existing free software.**

**WeMAST PARTNERS**

**SASSCAL**       

**FUNDED BY**

<http://wemast.sasscal.org/>

Figure 8: Communication materials will develop as the WeMAST stakeholder engagement proceeds. Communication materials will include banners, flyers, posters etc.



## Annex 1: WeMAST Work Packages



## WeMAST Project Deliverables



**SASSCAL:** Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management

**MSU:** Midlands State University

**NRSC:** National Remote Sensing Centre

**SANSA:** South African National Space Agency

**UB:** University of Botswana

**UWC:** University of the Western Cape

**UZAM:** University of Zambia





Figure 9: The WeMAST website complements the identity of the GMES and Africa Support Programme.



## Services & Products

You are here: Home / Services & Products



### Our Mission

Wetlands in Southern Africa are highly productive and biologically diverse ecosystems that contribute significantly to livelihood and economic development. However, they are under significant pressure from both human activities and natural phenomena, including agriculture, land cover and land use change, human settlements, water harvesting, invasive species infestation, climate change and unsustainable development practices. The future of these wetlands is therefore dependent on effective assessment and monitoring initiatives that can inform policy and decision making to promote sustainable management. Inadequate human and institutional capacity and traditional data sources, as well as the lack of suitable and applicable spatial data, constrain effective wetland management efforts.

The WeMAST project will develop and implement an Earth Observation (EO) based platform that supports Sustainable Wetland Assessment and Monitoring Services, promote policy implementation and management practices in the SADC region, utilize free Satellite-based EO data and existing free software to explore:

- › hydrological and wetland Models applicable to the selected basins across Southern Africa
- › in situ data gathered from the four basins (Cuveta, Limpopo, Okavango and Zambezi): flood regime (duration, extent, and timing), wetland inventory and land use, vegetation dynamics (cover, density, and phenology)
- › weather and climate information from free and operational climate services
- › archived satellite-based EO data e.g. provided by the Copernicus missions, Landsat series, MODIS Aqua/Terra products

### Work Packages



#### FRAMEWORK & REQUIREMENTS ASSESSMENT



#### DATA HARVESTING & MODELS



#### PRODUCTS & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT



#### CAPACITY BUILDING & OUTREACH

- › User needs assessment
- › Conduct a comprehensive analysis of available satellite-based EO data and identify the most suitable EO data products to be used in the WeMAST framework design and development
- › Conduct a comprehensive in-situ data assessment
- › To identify, assess and prepare a comprehensive readily available/existing free open source software and tools inventory
- › To characterize the wetlands in the selected river basins that will be considered in the action
- › To assess human-wetland interactions

Figure 10: The Services and Products section of the WeMAST Website will develop continually as the project evolves. It will ensure that WeMAST caters for different user levels creatively, yet efficiently.

