

**2nd CPF – GFIS Implementation
Group Meeting**
January 12-13, 2005

MINUTES

Global Forest Information Service - GFIS
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1.0	New document, items 1-4	Rebecca Tavani, FAO	20/02/2005
1.1	Amendments, items 5-7	Eero Mikkola, IUFRO	21/02/2005
1.2.	Amendments	Joris Siermann, CIFOR	24/02/2005

CPF - Global Forest Information Service (GFIS)

2nd CPF – GFIS Implementation Group Meeting,

January 12-13, 2005

FAO in Rome, Italy

MINUTES

Participants:

Eero Mikkola (IUFRO)

Magnus Grylle (FAO)

Peter Holmgren (FAO)

Joris Siermann (CIFOR)

Rebecca Tavani (FAO)

1. Opening of the Meeting

Eero Mikkola chaired the meeting and thanked all implementation participants for their contributions and for meeting the January 2005 deadline for all GFIS tasks outlined in the November 2004 meeting. It was agreed that members would follow the agenda of first reviewing the GFIS production version by going through the pre-established milestones and deliverables followed by further discussion of metadata standards, partners, other ongoing initiatives as well as Brisbane goals.

2. Review of GFIS Production Version

Each implementation participant explained what he/she was responsible for since the time of the last meeting and displayed the work accomplished. Technical functionality, content and design/layout were all discussed. CIFOR (Siermann) suggested that we coordinate the design efforts in order to modernize the look of the site. After further review, it was established by all that the gateway welcome page could be improved by immediately presenting the user with all three options (metadata search, browse & Google search) at the outset. It was agreed that the new gateway welcome page should consist of: A) a brief introductory paragraph on GFIS and its capacities, B) a basic metadata search, C) browsing categories and D) the Google search all on the same page.

FAO (Tavani) presented a browse/partner grid summarizing available information for each provider, which was then reviewed and agreed as a good feature to have on the site to readily view available partner information in order to assess existing gaps in partner

information. The group provided feedback on particulars such as browse design and presentation. Logos, pictures and a “search page” component were all discussed. It was agreed that FAO would look into this and modify/modernize the pages.

CIFOR (Siermann) described the process through which he updated the user interface of the existing prototype metadata search, which searches a total of 130,000 records from 25-30 information providers. He informed participants that the advanced search had been removed. It was noted by both CIFOR & IUFRO that approximately 95% of records searched are publications.

Regarding the Google domain search, CIFRO (Siermann) noted that its functionality is still in the process of being developed. He displayed the current search tool which allows the user to search amongst any of the 47 partners. It was decided that the Google bar should also appear at the top of the search page after a search is conducted and that the appearance should be identical to that of Google’s listings.

It was agreed that there should be the “What’s New” site on GFIS, on which brief GFIS news will be published. In this context it was concluded that the GFIS forum would be up and running once the Implementation Group has defined clearly purpose of the GFIS Forum. It was discussed that the GFIS Forum could be implemented on the FAO Forestry discussion forum.

FAO (Holmgren) agreed to have the copyright/ownership statement looked over by FAO’s legal personnel. IUFRO (Mikkola) informed that the current version of the copyright/ownership statement has been approved by the chairman (Mayer) of the Steering Committee.

The new graphic design was discussed by CIFOR (Siermann), FAO (Tavani) and FAO multimedia specialist (Roberto Cenciarelli), who decided to change the site design through minor modifications and the development of an initial gateway page that presents both the search tools and the browse tool. FAO agreed to work on this new design and send the draft on to CIFOR within a couple of weeks.

The domain change of gfis.net to FAO was also examined and is currently pending a formal request from IUFRO (Peter Mayer). The issue of when to formally publish GFIS was raised. It was concluded that IUFRO (Mikkola) will formally announce the switch in IUFRO’s newsletter once it is ready to go. The Implementation Group agreed that the production version of GFIS should be finished on Friday January 28th in order to announce formally, but the coordinator will do the final decision, when the formal announce can be done.

3. Documentation of GFIS

Regarding documentation and formalization, it was agreed that the GFIS Working Paper series will be established and IUFRO will draft the first version of GFIS Working paper and standardize the rest. All documents of the production system are to be made available to the public through “Documentation” link on GFIS Documentation site including minutes, policies, meetings, promotional material and correspondence between IUFRO and information providers.

4. Metadata specifications

Participants had differing concepts of the metadata standards. FAO (Grylle) drafted metadata standards for one of the DC types, ‘meetings’. IUFRO and CIFOR considered the standards to be slightly too narrowly defined, possibly limiting the information users can retrieve. FAO maintained that there should be precise standards for each DC type available on GFIS. An agreement of the least common denominators was reached with the following mandatory fields decided upon: coverage (country(txt), from(date) and to(date)), date(when published), identifier(url), publisher(txt), subject(txt), title(txt) and type(txt). FAO (Grylle) agreed that a draft metadata specifications site for meetings could be achieved in 2 weeks. When the site and xml-template for the type “meeting” are available CIFOR, FAO and IUFRO should provide sample metadata for meetings and then draft metadata standards will be tested and completed.

5. GFIS Partners & other ongoing initiatives

The minutes of 1st CPF –GFIS Steering Committee meeting was sent in advance by email to the Implementation Group and IUFRO (Mikkola) informed the participants of the first GFIS Steering Committee meeting which was as a telephone meeting on 12th November 2004.

IUFRO (Mikkola) informed that there are some previous GFIS partners by whom IUFRO has discussed GFIS recently, and they have shown the interest in contributing to GFIS development/implementation e.g. National Biological Information Infrastructure Program NBII (Jennifer Pollock) and Oxford Forest Information Service (Roger A. Mills). In this context it was recall that new partners can be invited to the Implementation group but they would be asked to clearly express how they would contribute to the further development of GFIS. It was agreed that IUFRO (Mikkola) continues discussion with potential partners in terms of their contribution to GFIS.

Last time in November it was discussed that GFIS has different types of partners and the GFIS Partner can be linked onto GFIS e.g. in the following functions: information provision, system development, marketing, and capacity building. Based on the

development process during last two months it has been realized that the GFIS partner is too broad concept and different types of GFIS partners has to be defined more accurate. Partner size was also discussed, since this may prove to be cumbersome if it is not limited to those who can add to the GFIS database. FAO (Holmgren) observed and participants agreed that perhaps the word “partner” is too strong and a bit of a misnomer. “Information provider” was deemed more appropriate in this context. It was agreed that the Implementation Group has to review GFIS Information provider criteria.

The process how an organization can become as a GFIS Information provider and start to provide information about its forest-related information resources onto GFIS was discussed. It was agreed that there is no need to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between IUFRO and such an organization, but proceeding has to be formalized through standardized correspondence between IUFRO and such an organization. IUFRO (Mikkola) will draft standardized letters.

IUFRO (Mikkola) informed that IUFRO has provided the prototype of the GFIS education component in collaboration with the International Partnership for Forest Education (IPFE) last year. The prototype has some sample metadata and data about forest education resources provided by IPFE network. IUFRO (Mikkola) informed too that IPFE is willing to continue the cooperation with GFIS. Due to shortage of time it was agreed that FAO (Grylle) and IUFRO (Mikkola) will discuss this after the meeting and prepare a proposal of the cooperation.

It was discussed, if GFIS and an existing gateway initiative AGRIS/CARIS could find way to cooperate in terms of forest related literature/publication and it was agreed that Grylle should arrange a side-meeting with FAO-GILW next day.

6. Milestones and deliverables & working plan until World Congress 2005

The milestones, deliverables and responsibilities prepared by the Implementation Group in the last meeting were reviewed and updated. It was agreed that the first milestone “Production system with limited functionality” was reached quite well although the new GFIS site has not yet been officially published. The Implementation Group updated the milestones “Metadata standards website” and “Implementation of search/browse functionality” in the following way:

Milestones and deliverables	Responsible	Date
1. Production system with limited functionality		15.12.2004
a. Gateway	FAO/RT	
b. Browse links to partner information resources (CPF members and current information providers)	FAO/RT, IUFRO/EM	
c. Metadata search (current prototype)	IUFRO/EM, CIFOR/JS	
d. Google domain search (demo)	JS	
e. Partner info	RT,EM	
f. Feedback	MG,RT	
g. Forum	MG,RT	
h. Copyright/ownership statement	EM,JS	
i. New graphic design	JS	
i.1 Follow-up portal graphic design	RT, RC, JS	25.2.2005
j. Move www.gfis.net to FAO	EM/MG	
From each action (a-j) documentation should be provided		
2. Documentation of production system	EM	15.1.2005
a. Website: minutes, system development, presentation etc.		
b. Working papers to indicates progress	EM	
3. Metadata standards website		
Draft metadata specification and xml-template for meetings	MG	28.1.2005
Draft metadata specification xml-template for news	MG	11.2.2005
Draft metadata specification xml-template for jobs/vacancies	MG	25.2.2005
4. Implementation of search/browse functionality		
Implement initial data type standards for meetings, news and jobs at CIFOR/FAO/IUFRO	Center’s own responsibility	15.4.2005
Service operable for initial data types in GFIS gateway:		
a. News Harvesting & Discovery Service	CIFOR/JS	4.2.2004
b. Event Harvesting & Discovery Service	CIFOR/JS	18.2.2005
c. Jobs Harvesting & Discovery Service	CIFOR/JS	4.3.2005
5. Implement standards in (3) for other providers		
6. Develop standards for additional information resource types		
7. Migrate old data from prototype		
a. Organize existing metadata repository (on PINE)	CIFOR/JS	29.4.2005
b. Prepare integration with 3 rd party search tool (AGRIS?)	IUFRO	

8. Google deal + implementation

a. Google search version 2	CIFOR/JS	28.1.2005
		8.-
Release in World Congress 2005 - Brisbane, Australia		13.8.2005

MG= Magnus Grylle, FAO
EM= Eero Mikkola, IUFRO
JS= Joris Siermann, CIFOR
RT= Rebecca Tavani, FAO

It was agreed that the coordinator drafts a plan how GFIS should be promoted in the World Congress 2005 - Brisbane, Australia

7. Future meetings

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Implementation Group will be arranged if needed in April.

Other matters

A side meeting was held with FAO-GILW, see Annex 1

Annex 1

Notes from side-meeting with FAO-GILW

A side meeting with Margherita Sini was made to exchange views related to potential cooperation with AGRIS Application profile.

Grylle and Mikkola informed Sini that the GFIS Implementation Group is developing a GFIS application profile. They informed too that because 95 percent of current 130,000 GFIS metadata records are related to publications and one GFIS information type which should further developed is “publication”, FAO’s AGRIS Application profile (international information system for the agricultural sciences and technology) could be a relevant option of developing GFIS Application profile in terms of publications/literature. Based on brief discussion IUFRO (Mikkola) and FAO (Grylle and Sini) agreed that this option is worth of further development, and Mikkola and Grylle will prepare a proposal for the cooperation between GFIS and AGRIS.

In this context need for the GFIS thesaurus was recalled and it was agreed that the development of GFIS thesaurus should be launched this year, if funding for that work can be arranged.