Motivation and Project Aim

Facilitate access to geodata for research and education

There is an increasing demand for geodata in different academic disciplines such as earth sciences, cartography, architecture, spatial planning and many others. However, until today, there is no central academic geodata infrastructure in Switzerland. The project Geodata4SwissEDU (Geodata for Swiss Education) will fill this gap by establishing a nationwide access platform to geodata for research and education.

Project Partners

The project is funded by swissuniversities (Rectors’ Conference of Swiss Higher Education Institutions) and carried out in collaboration between three partners to ensure the expertise needed to establish such a service with the necessary infrastructure. Project partners are:

- Institute of Cartography and Geoinformation at ETH Zurich (IKG)
- University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil (HSR)
- ETH-Bibliothek (central library of ETH Zurich)

The National Geoportal geodata4edu

GeoVITE (IKG)
- Web-based access
- Graphical user interface
- Access to selected part of data
- Less experienced GIS-users

HSR-Services for Geodata
- Client direct access
- Access to complete datasets via Webservices
- Experienced GIS-users

Use cases

Geology
Simulation of rainfall runoff and its effects on land cover

Biology
Analysis and visualisation of habitats of animals

Archeology
Creation and analysis of excavation maps

Spatial Planning
Development of land use strategies

Challenges

- Scalability of the technical infrastructure
- User-friendliness of the national service
- Dealing with legal issues
- Establishing a customer base
- Developing a sustainable business model ensuring a long-term, efficient operation of the service
- Recruitment of experts to support the project work and the sustainable operation

Opportunities

- Bundling of resources to acquire data and obtain licences
- Expansion of user groups to different academic disciplines
- Easy access to geodata for researchers and students throughout Switzerland
- Combination of federal, cantonal and project-based data in a centralised metadatabase
- Setting up and running a technical infrastructure helps to maximise synergies between project partners and thereby results in lower costs
- The platform allows to integrate extensive geospatial data in the future

More information: www.geodata4edu.ch