

SWALIM Opens Liaison Offices in Somaliland and Puntland

To improve access to its products and services, SWALIM is opening two liaison offices in Somalia, one in Hargeisa to serve Somaliland and the other in Garowe to serve Puntland. We are also examining potential locations for liaison offices in the Central and Southern regions of Somalia. The two liaison offices will take SWALIM a step further towards improving its services to clients and will develop to become the focal point for all water and land information products. The offices will also facilitate collaboration with partners in Somaliland and Puntland.

Functionally, the liaison offices will provide a platform for Somalia clients to request and access water and land information. To facilitate information access, the liaison offices will host an archive of water and land information products, served through a digital catalogue and a reference library. The reference library will mainly hold key water and land reference documents such as reports of pre-war studies and FAO water and land documents.



New FAO Somaliland support office at Hargeisa. SWALIM liaison office will be housed here. Photo by Simon Mumuli Oduori

Further, the liaison offices will support the development of regional water and land datasets and contribute to build capacity to collect, manage and maintain water and land data.

Continued on page 2

Somalia Interagency Mapping and Coordination (SIMaC)

SIMaC is an electronic list aimed at technical personnel working in the diverse fields dealing with spatial data and information in Somalia. The list is intended to provide subscribers with a forum to post questions regarding data, software and related technical problems. The idea is similar to that of the Sudan Interagency Mapping (SIM) list, that has been extremely successful in minimizing duplication of mapping activities in Sudan. Currently there are 68 members subscribed to the list from about 20 different agencies.

To subscribe, go to: <http://lists.eogeo.org/mailman/listinfo/simac>, type your email address and click subscribe. To post a message to all the list members, send email to: simac@lists.eogeo.org

Although the list strategy is to build an active electronic forum, two physical meetings have been held at the request of members. The meetings have been very well attended and have proved very useful in highlighting and exploring the different ways that the list can serve the spatial information processing needs of the represented agencies. Thematically, key priority focus areas have been identified and results are forthcoming. Subscribers are not required to attend the meeting and short minutes of the meetings proceedings are distributed to all subscribers. The current arrangement is to hold one meeting approximately once a month, at different agencies on a voluntary basis. The next meeting is tentatively planned towards the end of August at the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD).

News & Events

Inauguration of SWALIM Liaison Office in Hargeisa

SWALIM will officially open its liaison offices (see article above) for Somaliland and Puntland within the events of the World Food Day celebrations of October 2006. The ceremony will be conducted in Hargeisa. The office for Somaliland - in Hargeisa - is already operational, while the Puntland office in Garowe will be operational by mid-August.

Launching of SWIMS

SWALIM will soon launch the Somalia Water Sources Information Management Systems (SWIMS). See article on page 2 for further details.

Children's Drawing Competition

SWALIM is organizing a children's drawing competition with the theme: "Children's dreams of the Somali future". The competition will be open to all primary school children in schools in Hargeisa and Garowe and their surrounding areas. Information will soon be distributed to schools. Heads of interested schools should apply before the registration deadline.

World Food Day

This year the World Food Day celebration will be held in Hargeisa in October 2006. For SWALIM, the keynote activity will be the judging of the drawing competition entries.

SWALIM Opens Liaison Offices in Somaliland and Puntland

The offices will be open to clients every day from morning till lunch break, and clients will also be able to make queries or requests for information by telephone and email. Information products will be provided both in electronic and hard copy format. Products in electronic format will be provided free of charge, except on CDs, in which case a fee will be charged to cover costs. All hard copies requests will be provided at a nominal fee, again to cover costs.

To provide meaningful information, land and water data collection needs to have a long-term focus. In other countries, land and water data collection is managed by government ministries to ensure long-term continuity. SWALIM aims to explore opportunities for closer collaboration with government ministries as potential institutions to take up land and water data collection networks in the future, and the liaison offices will play a key role in building partnerships between SWALIM and government ministries. Through this collaboration, SWALIM will explore opportunities for developing the capacity of relevant ministries to maintain and manage respective land and water datasets. To encourage participation and involvement of all relevant ministries, inter-ministerial coordination committees are

being set up in the different regions. These committees will guide and coordinate government ministries' collaboration with the liaison office. A coordination committee has already been set up in Puntland, with members drawn from four participating ministries.

In the long term, SWALIM aims to transfer the functions of the liaison offices to Somali authorities or institutions with the capacity to manage water and land information, and will continuously explore the modality and format for the transfer.

Liaison Office Contacts:

Nairobi:	Christine Kenyao Kalsion Towers, 3rd Floor ckenyao@faoswalim.org enquiries@faoswalim.org
Somaliland:	Ali Ibrahim Ismail Aismail@faoswalim.org
Puntland:	Osman Haji Abdulle OAbdulle@faoswalim.org

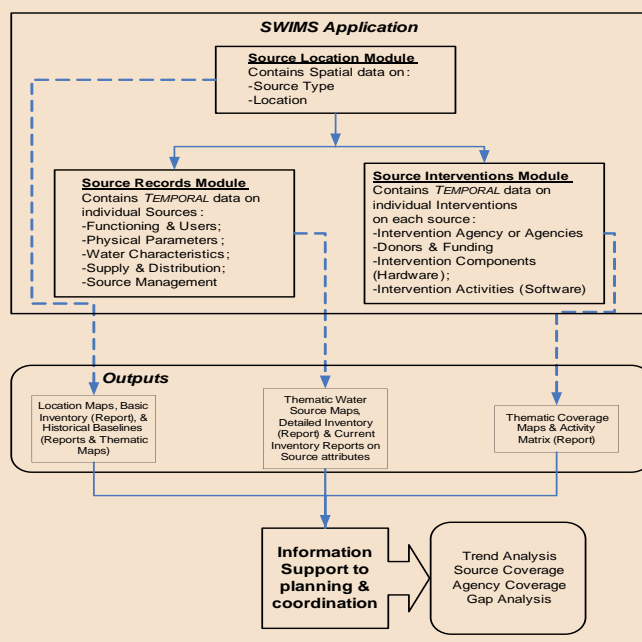
SWIMS – Forthcoming Release

In the previous issue of SWALIM Update (April 2006), SWALIM announced that it produced a water sources information management system. SWIMS – Somalia Water sources Information Management System – is now in its final stages of testing, and is expected to be released at the end of August. In the meantime, here's a preview of what users can expect. SWIMS is a relational database application designed to store and manage data for the five principal types of water sources in Somalia: boreholes, dams, berkads, dugwells and springs. It has three core modules:

The **Source Location module** holds the primary table to which all other data are linked (see diagramme, right). Each Source Location is uniquely identified by name, type and GPS coordinates. Among other things, these unique identifiers will facilitate mapping of all water sources throughout Somalia.

To track the changes in a source's attributes (status, uses and users, water characteristics and scores of others), the **Source Records module** is designed to provide a record that can be used to build as comprehensive a history of the source as the user needs or desires. To use this feature, the user is required to collect data regularly on the source. Once these data are entered, the user can easily query them and build a variety of histories of the water source.

The **Source Interventions module** provides project managers and planners with the means to answer questions about what work was done on a source, when and by whom. It gives users the ability to record summary information on their programme and project activities, past, present and future. For future activities, the module allows users to store information about what is planned, and update each record once the work has been carried out. The number of **standard reports** designed in SWIMS is limited – the broad diversity of the data that SWIMS can hold makes it impossible to anticipate all the types of reports users would need. Instead, SWIMS offers a feature to export any data to Excel, and users are then limited only



by their imagination and spreadsheet skills in the types of analysis and reporting they can do.

SWIMS cannot produce **maps**, but SWALIM can produce all types of maps. Mapping software is licensed, and prohibitively expensive for many organisations. However, partners who send their data to SWALIM have only to submit their requests to SWALIM, and SWALIM will produce the maps for them, charging a nominal fee to cover the costs of production and shipment.

With SWIMS and SWALIM support, partners will have a powerful tool for data analysis, reporting, planning, programming and coordination within the water sector! You will hear shortly from us on training that we will be organising around the application, which will also come with a user's manual and a field data collection manual.

SWALIM on the Ground

In addition to opening liaison offices in Somalia, SWALIM is nearing completion of its first major field activity – a two-month reconnaissance and ground survey of the DurDur and Gebiley areas in Somaliland. The main purpose of the survey is to validate the results of the remote sensing work done in Nairobi over the past year from satellite images of the area. Supplementary data on land attributes, particularly soils and erosion, are also being collected. The direct result of this work will be a series of reports – land form, land cover, land use and soils. These reports will ultimately lead to one of the project's major outputs, a land suitability assessment of the DurDur and Gebiley areas of Somaliland, due for release in June 2007.



The survey started on 14th May and was organized in two phases. The focus of the first phase was capacity-building and reconnaissance, involving seven members of the SWALIM land theme team

and ten Somali experts from the Somaliland Ministries of Agriculture, Water and Mineral Resources, and Pastoral Development and Environment. A four-day training course was conducted in Hargeisa using a Field Survey Manual prepared by SWALIM, which describes approaches and methods for surveying and assessing land form, soils, land degradation, land use and land cover. After the course, the group went to the field, the SWALIM team concentrating on the reconnaissance of the area and validation of the preliminary land form and land cover maps produced through photo-interpretation, while the Somali team tested the methodologies learned and gained practical experience in their use. The SWALIM team returned to Nairobi after the reconnaissance survey, and the experts split into three teams to conduct the actual survey. Data collection focused on soils, erosion, land use, land cover and land form.

Continued on page 4

SRTM 30-metre resolution datasets

SWALIM is pleased to announce a major data acquisition! In April, after a six-month process involving three U.S. government agencies, SWALIM was given a number of products derived from the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) dataset for the Juba and Shabelle river basins. Our thanks go to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the United States National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and in particular to their staff who were instrumental in SWALIM's gaining access to these important data: Robert Glenn, Larry Tieszen, Tom Farr, James Slater, Matthew Cushing, Guleid Artan and Eric Van Praag.

The SRTM 30-metre dataset is the highest resolution digital elevation model at global coverage. It is a nine-fold improvement compared to the previous global dataset at 90 metres of resolution, and particular provides much more detailed information on areas of interest to SWALIM where physical access is difficult.

The processed SRTM data can be tailored to meet the needs of the military, civil, and scientific user communities. Uses of these data are very diverse, and include improved water drainage modeling, more realistic flight simulations, navigation safety, better locations for cell phone towers, and even improved maps for backpackers. Just about any project that requires accurate knowledge of the shape and height of the land can benefit from these data. Some examples are flood control, soil conservation, reforestation, volcano monitoring, earthquake research, and glacier movement monitoring.

SWALIM is just beginning to explore the uses of this rich data source. In the immediate term, we'll feed it in to our models for predicting and assessing the extent of soil erosion, as well as for flood forecasting and assessing flood risk.

To learn more about the SRTM 30-metre derived products, go to the following websites:

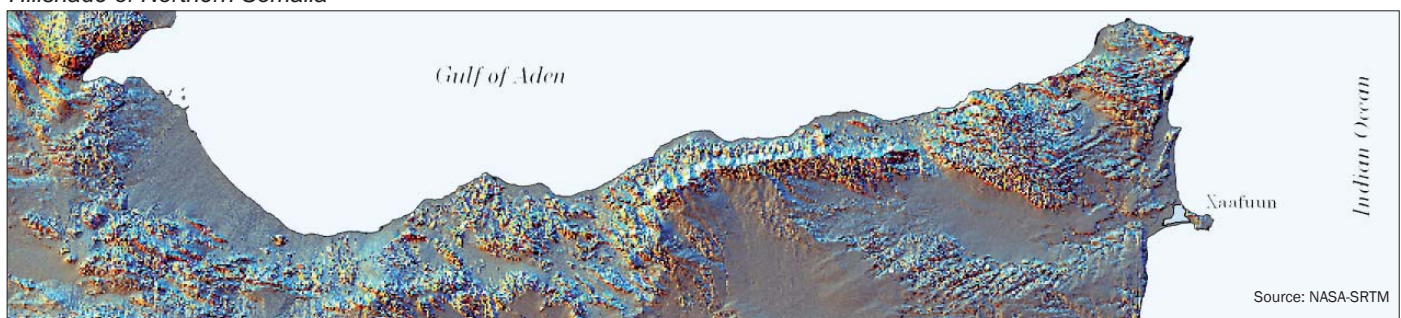
<http://www2.jpl.nasa.gov/srtm/>

<http://srtm.usgs.gov/index.html>

http://hurricanes.nasa.gov/missions/satellite_5.htm

http://edcintl.cr.usgs.gov/iabin_datadownload.html#eastafrica

Hillshade of Northern Somalia



SWALIM on the Ground

The reconnaissance part of the survey produced 490 geo-referenced photos and 170 landform annotations. As expected, consistent correlation between land forms and lithology was observed. In particular, the observed landforms reflect the presence of two different types of rock, sedimentary near Hargeisa and metamorphic from Gebiley to Borama. The landforms underlain by sedimentary rocks show a sharper morphology, while those underlain by metamorphic rocks show a smoother profile. The soils correspond in general to very young- to medium developed soils, and the main soil forming processes in the area are erosion and deposition. A large number of soil profiles have been described, soil samples for laboratory analysis have been collected, and the results of both will be used to complete the final land resource inventory of the area.

Land degradation was observed to be a widespread problem in the area. Poor land husbandry seems to be an increasingly significant factor – land once protected by vegetative cover is being laid bare, and exposed to the full erosive force of water and wind. Currently, large volumes of soil are lost through water erosion, even after short rains. Corrective measures are urgently needed to reverse the processes.

In addition to the excellent data collection results of the survey, the experience of collaborating with the team of experts and the participating ministries went beyond SWALIM's expectations. We express our gratitude for the tremendous support provided by them, and look forward to the next time we can work together.



Soil profile preparation and description



Land Use interview group discussion with community elders near Borama

SWALIM team with guides from Somaliland ministries



(Photos by SWALIM)

Comments?

The Editorial Board of SWALIM Update invites letters, comments and opinions from readers that will help SWALIM to provide wider coverage on Water and Land Information Management issues in Somalia. Kindly address your comments to The Editor, SWALIM Update, 3rd Floor Kalsion Towers, Parklands, P.O.Box 30470-00100, Nairobi Kenya
Tel: +254 (0)203743454/64/86, Fax: +254 (0)203743498, E-mail: enquiries@faoswalim.org

Subscribe/Unsubscribe?

To subscribe, send a blank e-mail to enquiries@faoswalim.org with the word "subscribe" as the subject. To unsubscribe, send a blank mail to enquiries@faoswalim.org with the word "unsubscribe" as the subject.

The Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) project is funded by the European Commission and UNICEF and implemented by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

