

IPGRI Online Communication Strategy

Online Project Web site

Rome, 21 September 2004

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IKONOS New Media

This is the print version of the Online Project Web site for the IPGRI Consultation process held at:

<http://www.ikonosnewmedia.com/ipgriweb/>

The process, facilitated by IKONOS New Media, is headed to build the guidelines to define an Online Communication strategy for the IPGRI organization.

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IPGRI Online Communication Strategy

Journal of the IPGRI Web Re-Design Project

Report of 1st Consultation

Paul Neate opened the meeting with a brief overview of the background to and objectives of the consultation. “The IPGRI Web site is about 5 years old, and it is time to take a fresh look at it in light of developments in technologies and the institute’s new overall strategy.” IPGRI’s media and public awareness strategies and its draft communications strategy all emphasize the importance of the Web site as a medium for engaging a wide range of audiences globally. This study will help us evaluate the site’s strengths and weaknesses and plan its development over the coming years.

Luigi Canali and Massimo Curatella of IKONOS outlined the overall consultation process, and elaborated on 16 key issues that have been identified through initial consultations with IPGRI staff, an initial analysis of the site and background documents provided (see IPGRI Web Presentation below). “The outcome of the process will be a strategic action plan for the development of the IPGRI Web site, and an assessment of alternative technologies, tools and resources needed to make it happen.” The focus of this first step is on identifying the key issues. As Massimo Curatella said, “Let’s pretend that everything is possible and focus on what is desirable.”

The key points raised during the discussion are outlined below, organized by the issue number used in the Web questionnaire.

1. Publishing workflow/team issues

Writing for the web is different from writing for print
- Need to educate and guide Web authors

Content going stale – content lifecycle issue

Publishing workflow
- “Empowering” workflow
- Need to engage authors
- More editors
- Better quality control
- Need a Web editor

Need more internal communication between different groups (scientists, editors, librarians, IT, focal points) to develop and improve content
- Communities of practice

2. Separating content from design

Reusability of content

Visual messages
- Strategic approach required

3. Understanding, monitoring and evaluating end user needs

Small usability tests with IPGRI staff, visitors, at meetings

7. Content organization

How do we go about doing this better?

- Need to understand user needs better – better monitoring of visits, user surveys (e.g. Americas office survey underway), usability tests etc (see Issue 3)
- Clearer definition of audiences, and decision on which we will prioritize (but must recognize that some people will be ‘left out’ – provide feedback mechanism to engage them)
- Iterative, participative approach, brainstorming sessions to visualize and test structures
- Look at what others are doing
- Neighborhood pages to group content by audience
- Importance of metadata (But how will authors handle this?)

Personalized content is desirable

11. Building loyalty – linking the audience

Newsletter, RSS feeds etc to pull visitors back to the site (related to user needs assessment and content organization)

Need for more interaction with audiences – provide them with opportunities to contribute content, e.g. through “Discuss this article” threads

16. Other distribution channels

Need more distribution options – e.g. e-mail newsletters

New issues

17. Decentralization issues

Key needs for (external) (sub) sites

- Responsiveness
- Timeliness
- Speed
- Flexibility

Opposition to centrally imposed tools, framework, approach -- want to do it their way

But organization needs to maintain a coherent corporate image and knowledge base

Quality control issues

Focal point accountability

Need for web editor

18. Support for multiple languages

Support for multiple languages needed

- More resources
- Cooperative win-win partnerships

Technical issues

How to manage legacy content? (More than 1000 pages in current site)

Importance of flexibility of new CMS

July 14, 2004 by Paul Neate at July 14, 2004 05:40 PM

Comments

Some additional comments on IPGRI's Web site from a recent visitor (a public relations specialist):

- he had difficulties to understand what IPGRI wants to communicate.
- he did not get the main message from IPGRI.
- wish list: 1 - a document repository for scientists; 2 - a tool to communicate to donors and the rest of the world with clear messages, simple words etc.
- to support fund-raising activities, the Web site should provide three types of communication: 1 - public relations; 2- policy papers; 3 - public awareness of scientific matters.

Posted by: Paul Neate at July 15, 2004 11:02 AM

Contribute to the Re-Design

1. View the Issues

Download the slides prepared by Luigi Canali and Massimo Curatella of IKONOS New Media and delivered by them during the first meeting held at IPGRI on 14 July 2004: IPGRI Web Presentation (ZIP 2.5MB)

2. Take the survey

Comment and rate each of the issues raised during the first meeting held at IPGRI on 14 July 2004: IPGRI Web Survey

3. Discuss each critical issue

Provide your extra thoughts and considerations on all the issues collected so far before, during and after the discussion process. Each link is supposed to provide a discussion forum to create a thread where all stakeholders can participate: members present at the meetings, IPGRI staff, external staff.

In parenthesis: number of replies.

1. Usability and accessibility
2. Compatibility
3. Publishing workflow
4. Separate content from design
5. Content organization
6. Understanding user needs
7. Customer support
8. User participation
9. Building Loyalty
10. Visibility, exposure
11. Updating the audience
12. News publishing
13. Other distribution channels

14. Transparency, credibility

15. Institutional identity

16. Comparative analysis

17. Decentralized Web sites

18. Multiple languages

July 15, 2004 by ikonos at July 15, 2004 03:45 PM

How many pages in IPGRI Web site?

According to Massimo Buonaiuto that the IPGRI Web site consists of over 8000 Web Pages (without considering P.A. web site), linked together by more than 12,000 internal hyperlinks. There are more than 550 PDF files, and more than 120 tables of databases published on line.

One interesting thing is the huge difference in the number of pages under the different categories and Regional Offices. The "champion" is the APO Office, with over 3000 pages.

What causes this difference? Is it the amount of information there is to share, or the nature of the information or the audiences? Is it the amount of time dedicated to Web work? I would like to hear more about this.

Web pages hosted by IPGRI:

Main web site 1,224
Agrobiodiversity 142
CAS 14
Events 7
Geneflow 21
Institutes 140
PgrNewsletter 70
Publication 180
Reports 12
COGENT 275
ECPGR 62
Euforgen 271
GRST 74
INIBAP 167
SGRP 5
Americas 678
APO 3,342
CWANA 1,224
Europe 174
SSA 100

Total 8,182

July 16, 2004 by Paul Neate at July 16, 2004 01:12 PM

Comments

On my experience, many times it can happen that a report is fragmented in many web pages and tables detached in separate html files. I think this is the case of APO web site.

The reference to 1224 web pages for the Main Site comprehends the core of the web site.

About the GFU not included above: about 55 html web pages, 20 aspx files, and 57 pdf files.

Posted by: Massimo Buonaiuto at July 16, 2004 03:09 PM

Dear all,
Here is our APO web-based outputs.

The analysis of the 2787 pages as listed from HQ

887 from newsletters 31.8%

141 from Edukit 5.1% - not functional on the IPGRI web, available on GD

1586 from Infobase 56.9% - accessible via CD, not activated on web
(development on WIKI currently, to be hosted by NPs in the near future)

The bulk is from APO products 2614 pages 93.8%

Our web pages is around 173 or 6.2% within normal range as other RO.

Regards
Paul Quek (IPGRI-APO)

Posted by: Paul Quek (IPGRI-APO) at July 19, 2004 09:53 AM

New Feature: Post your General Comments

Among the other dedicated discussion forums now you have a new facility to add your general comments or any other contribution you think does not fit anywhere else.

Post your General Comments

NOTA BENE: the General Comments forum is always accessible from the side bar of any page of this Web site.

July 20, 2004 by Massimo Curatella at July 20, 2004 04:04 PM

Prioritizing the priorities (report of 2nd meeting)

Final Map of the Action Plan for the IPGRI Online Communication Strategy



We need to rework the IPGRI Web home page NOW (and maybe the regional home pages too) – this was one of the strongest reactions coming out of the second consultation workshop. But more of that later. Read on....

After a few false starts, we managed to get the video link with INIBAP headquarters up on the screen and get the show on the road – thanks to Dario, Warren and Carlo for their efforts (which Paul then promptly managed to mess up!). And thanks to Claudine, H el ene, Thomas and Elizabeth for joining us by video link.

Luigi opened with an outline of the process: a recap of the previous week’s meeting, the Web questionnaire and the Web forum to discuss the issues highlighted. “We had received 27 responses to the questionnaire by yesterday afternoon,” he noted, “with hundreds of comments and suggestions.” This feedback clearly separated the issues into ones that people feel are most important, and those that are less important. Details of the Web questionnaire responses are posted on the Web forum.

Luigi and Massimo (Curatella) started with the issues that respondents gave the lowest priority to: Comparative analysis, Other distribution channels (nice to be able to do, but not an immediate need) and Community building (important but not urgent) – no real surprises or argument there.

But then came “Managing a decentralized Web publishing system”, ranked only 15th. Several people in the meeting expressed surprise at this lowly ranking. Ruth said she felt that this is one of our most important problems, but that it is intimately linked with the publishing workflow (which ranked at number 5). Massimo C said that he felt that adopting a common set of tools, together with a clear workflow, would largely take care of this issue. Ruth stressed that this is an issue of coordination, not control. The Web “team” needs to market the services it can provide to encourage content providers to work with the team on the core Web site.

“Customer support”, ranked 14, also caused some surprises – many of the group felt it should have ranked higher. Massimo Buonaiuto pointed out that some sub-Web sites provide support to the users, but there is room for a lot of improvement. “User participation” came in at number 13, with a lot of comments on the Web survey. Ruth raised concerns about the stated goal of making the IPGRI Web site a portal to genetic resources information generally, questioning whether IPGRI really has the capacity or mandate to do this.

For some of us, the biggest surprise was that “Understanding, monitoring and evaluating end-user needs” was ranked 11th – “Fundamental,” said one Web survey respondent.

“Updating the audience” (9) raised many comments, especially on different audiences and their needs, but Luigi summed it up by saying, “Users expect to be able to “pull” information from the Web – our job is to help them pull what they want.”

There was general consensus that “Separating content from design” is a “must do”. Maria raised the need for an inventory and analysis of what we already have on the Web site, to help decide what should go into the new system. Much of the material there is out of date or needs to be revised before being put on a new Web site, she said.

But of all the issues discussed, the one that provoked the strongest, most urgent response was “Institutional identity” – Ruth stated that she had not realized how much of a problem our graphical home page was for users with poor Internet connections (Luigi’s figures show up to 90 second load times). “We need to change the home page TODAY,” she said, a suggestion that most people agreed with.

Putting the priorities in order

The last part of the meeting focused on putting the 11 “high priority” issues in a logical sequence to address them (and the addition of one priority issue that we had overlooked – the Project Brief, with mission statement etc to guide the process).

This sequence goes something like this: Project brief; User needs assessment (with Comparative analysis), Content organization and inventory, Separating content from design (considering Language and Compatibility issues), followed by a whole bunch of related areas – Luigi and Massimo took photographs of “plan” or “map” as they called it, which I hope they will put on the Web Forum – it made some sense there!

Luigi and colleagues will be translating this into another questionnaire, to verify the work we all did today – and I look forward to everyone’s participation in the next phase.

July 21, 2004 by Paul Neate at July 21, 2004 05:31 PM

Comments

Dear Paul,

thanks for this very precise and concise report. As you can see I inserted the map just at the beginning of your post.

I felt like being there! 8-)

See you at next meeting.

Massimo Curatella
IKONOS New Media

Posted by: Massimo Curatella at July 21, 2004 06:57 PM

Dear All,

as kindly requested by Paul I have uploaded the First Survey Report
http://www.ikonosnewmedia.com/ipgriweb/ipgri_survey1_results20040721.pdf

You can download it also from the side navigation bar of this Web site.

Regards,
Massimo Curatella
IKONOS New Media

Posted by: Massimo Curatella at July 21, 2004 07:24 PM

Dear Imke,

Thank you for you comments. I just read the report at
<http://www.ikonosnewmedia.com/ipgriweb/>.

Paul, can we provide you further feedback to be added at the report? Is it a formal or informal document?

Indeed, I was not meaning that the customer support is well supported in the web site, but that it needs a lot of improvements, even if we have some sub website that provides some support to the users.

I invite all of you to post your comments at
<http://www.ikonosnewmedia.com/ipgriweb/>

I have to say this process of renew of the web site is very very useful. We agreed on many issues.

Compliments to Luigi and MassimoC for facilitating our exchange of ideas.

Kind regards,
Massimo

Posted by: Massimo Buonaiuto at July 22, 2004 03:44 PM

Dear All, here the message, to which Massimo Buonaiuto's comment posted 22/07 3:44 PM refers to:

Dear Paul,

Thanks a lot for the report that gave me the opportunity to catch up with what was said in the second part of the meeting that I unfortunately was not able to attend. Here one comment I would like to make.

I was one of the persons that wondered about the low ranking of customer support, due probably to different understandings and interpretations people had of this point. Indeed we had to look again at the definition to be clear about its meaning. Massimo's comment, to which you refer in your report, for example was related only to one particular aspect of customer support, i.e. to the fact that most of our web pages provide a contact email to the user, and not to the issue of customer support as such.

Kind regards

Imke

Posted by: Imke Thormann at July 23, 2004 08:01 AM

Hi everyone

I don't have time to give comments now--anyway I have already talked too much. I just wanted to say that I am really enjoying this process. Congrats to all involved. It's both participatory AND fun!

Posted by: Ruth at July 26, 2004 10:38 AM

Take the Second Online Survey

The goal of the Second Online Survey is to validate the Action Plan Map collaboratively build during the Second Meeting.

Before replying to the survey be sure to have carefully reviewed:

The Issues Presentation (ZIP 2.5MB)

First Survey: Results (PDF)

Prioritizing the priorities (report of 2nd meeting)

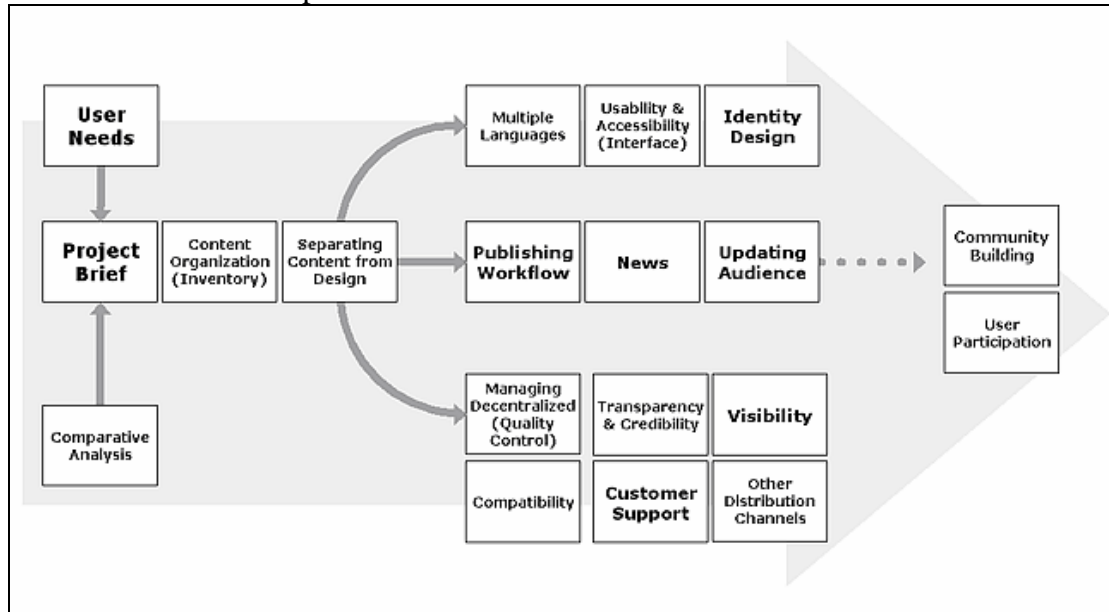
When you are ready:

[Click here to take the Second Online Survey](#)

July 22, 2004 by Massimo Curatella at July 22, 2004 02:42 PM

The Action Plan Map: follow the flow

IPGRI Action Plan Map



To better allow you to understand the flow of the process outlined in the Action Plan Map, here is an updated map with the process tree.

If you have already replied to the Survey questionnaire: no problem! Use the General Comments Forum to share your comments, opinions and feedback with the group.

July 22, 2004 by Massimo Curatella at July 22, 2004 07:45 PM

Second survey: a success!

Dear all,
the second online survey closed successfully yesterday with an incredible amount of participation.

If you want to know more don't miss the third and last meeting IKONOS will hold tomorrow at IPGRI Roma.

Remember that anybody can contribute using the general comments forum here available and that another opportunity to give your final opinion will be given to all after the last meeting.

Thanks to everybody for your generous and precious contribution.

See you live/online tomorrow.

July 27, 2004 by Massimo Curatella at July 27, 2004 11:44 AM

Migrating to a Content Management System: suggestion

Massimo Buonaiuto sent me this e-mail:

Dear Massimo and Luigi et al.,

I am sending you a document I prepared more than one year ago about a possible migration of the content from IPGRI Web site to a CMS.

It was just a draft, and probably the migration would cost less in terms of resources, but I think it could arise good points to discuss.

Of course, comments are very welcome in the meanwhile...

*Regards,
Massimo B.*

Download Massimo Buonaiuto's CMS Report and send-in your comments.

July 27, 2004 by Massimo Curatella at July 27, 2004 07:02 PM

Comments

When I was at IWMI last September I met with their Web support team. In March 2003 they implemented a simple Web CMS system. This was an open source system and although it did not offer workflow support they decided to proceed with using it as it was a low cost option.

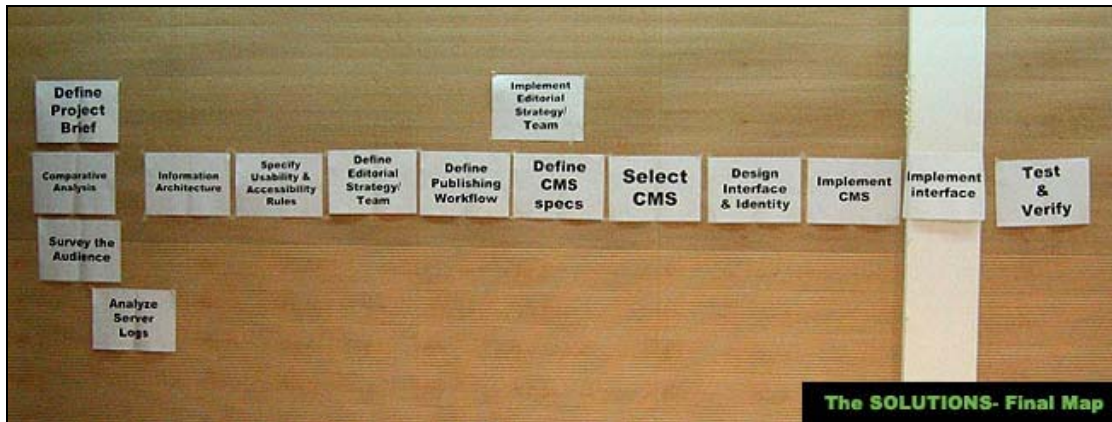
To migrate their 'old' Web site (approx. 2000 pages) into the CMS it took 2 Web 'technicians' two weeks. During this period they worked with a PA specialist/writer who helped reorganize the information and checked the quality of the reworked pages.

I appreciate that our Web site and IWMI's old one possibly have different technical 'requirements' but I thought this might be a useful comparison.

Posted by: Jennie Drew at July 28, 2004 03:46 PM

User needs to the fore – Third consultation workshop

The FINAL Action Plan Map



Feedback from the second online survey and the third consultation workshop both heavily stressed the central role of identifying users and their needs in the continuing development of the IPGRI Web site. Read on. . .

The revised and approved ISSUES Map



The second survey invited IPGRI staff to comment on the “Action Plan Map” (revised and approved ISSUES Map) developed during the second consultation meeting. Overall, two thirds of the 46 respondents fully agreed with the ISSUES map developed by the participants in the second consultation meeting. Most of those who disagreed felt that the map did not give sufficient importance to “support for audiences” or understanding user needs. Others were not sure about the sequence of actions in the map; “I am not sure how the bulk of [issues] (centre of the graph) are organized. Will actions be carried out step by step from left to right, or simultaneously?” asked one respondent. Another respondent said, “‘user’ participation should come in much earlier ... I am not sure I agree with the word ‘user’. I think the whole process should be more participative ... and ‘users’ are actually ‘contributors’...”.

When asked for possible solutions, several respondents focused on the need for more resources to be given to work on the Web site, and the development of a broad-based “Web team”. (Two of the respondents gave virtually identical responses – I suspect collusion!)

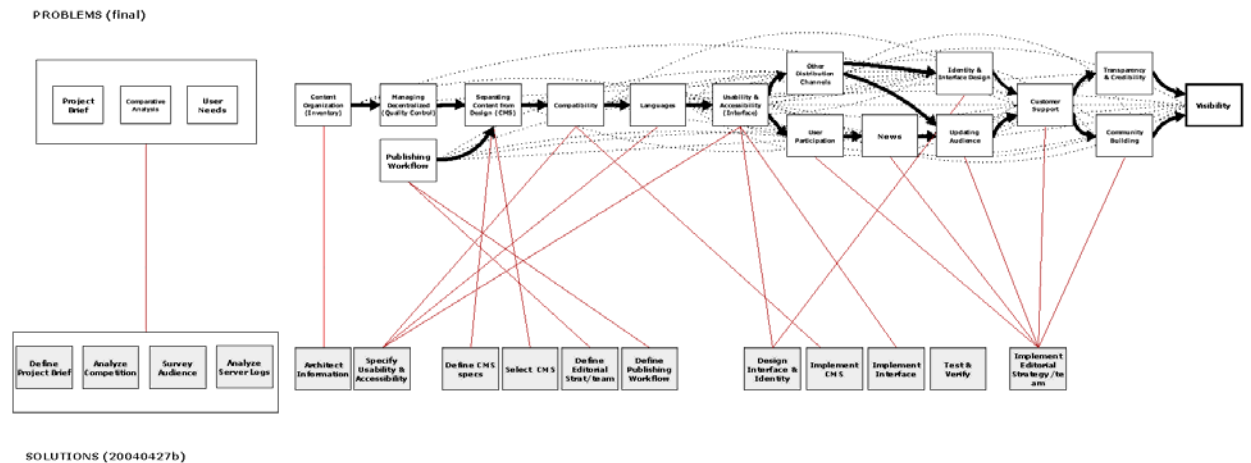
Luigi opened the third consultation workshop with a review of the steps taken to date, and of the process used in the consultation. He revisited the “ISSUES map” developed in the previous workshop and touched on the responses of the survey. The objective of this third meeting, he said, was to translate the “ISSUES map” into an actual sequence of steps, an Action Plan Map, that need to be taken (addressing some of the queries raised in the survey).

Luigi and Massimo Curatella then went over the key issues laid out in the map, verifying people’s understanding of them and their relative importance. Again, the issue of users and their needs raised a lot of discussion. Ruth made the point that we have no control over who visits our Web site – we could be attracting school kids looking for help with their home work or truck drivers with an interest in conservation. “Should we try to address the needs of all these different groups?” she asked. Luigi replied that people these days generally do not reach Web sites by random browsing, as they once did; they arrive there because they are looking for something specific (often through a Web search or a link from another Web site). “We can try to group information by the type of use that can be made of it, rather than by user-type as such,” he suggested, “and meet the needs of various user groups.” Massimo C stressed that this issue of which audiences to address is a key element of the “editorial policy” of the Web site.

“Identity design” raised several comments, with some participants wanting it to be addressed earlier in the process. Luigi again stressed that until we have rules for the content – what we want to present, to whom, how etc – we cannot address how the pages should look.

In looking at the group of user-related issues – user participation, community building, updating the audience and others – Jennie stressed the need for this to feed back into the identification of user needs and content organization.

Linking issues to actions



Massimo C then took to the floor, showing a “linkage map” among the issues laid out in the “Action Plan Map”. “This confirmed what we had come up with on the wall last week,” he said.

The next step was to superimpose actions or solutions to the issues, in a logical sequence. Apart from a couple of steps that, I suspect, Luigi and Massimo C had deliberately put out of sequence (to see if we were awake and listening!), the participants agreed with the “critical path” this presented.

“What is the timeframe for this plan,” Maria asked, to which Massimo C helpfully replied, “It depends.” Ultimately, it is up to us, IPGRI, to decide what we want to achieve by when – Luigi and Massimo C will provide the pointers and help guide our choices but this is our Web site and we will have to drive the process.

Next steps

The next step is another Web survey to gather reactions to the “critical path” arising from the third consultation workshop. Then it is down to Luigi and Massimo C to develop two critical documents: an action plan that outlines the steps we need to take and the resources needed to take them, and an analysis of a range of technical solutions to the issues facing the Web site. They should have these ready by early September. After that, we hope to have Luigi and Massimo C back with us to present the outcomes of this exercise to IPGRI management and staff.

July 28, 2004 by Paul Neate at July 28, 2004 05:53 PM

Discussion Forums

Verbatim copy of what have been contributed to the discussion forum attached to each of the issues raised during the consultation process.

Empty forums have been omitted

General Discussion

Malgrand, Karine

07-20-2004

10:08 AM

"From: Malgrand, Karine (IPGRI - Rome)

Sent: 13 July 2004 14:17

Subject: RE: IPGRI Web Consultation Study -

Mr Sharrif, chief public relations for IFAD, visited IPGRI this morning. I took this opportunity to ask him what he thinks of IPGRI Communication. He seemed to be surprised that IPGRI is not making the best use of electronic media (internet, TV, other forms of electronic communications,) more efficient and less expensive than publications and brochures.

He reminded me the basics of a communication strategy:

a- What do we want to achieve

b- Who do we want to reach

c- What information

d- How (and the web site is one tool only)

Re. the web, he said he had difficulties to understand what IPGRI wants to communicate. He said he did not get the main message from IPGRI. He recognized that writing science and scientific publications is one thing, communicating an other one. He wishes the web site would be 1- a document depository for scientists 2-a tool to communicate to donors and to the rest of the world with clear messages, easy words, etc...

He said that to support fund raising activities we need 3 types of communication : 1- Public relations 2- policy papers 3-public awareness of scientific matters

Have a good meeting,

Karine

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

10:11 AM

From: Buonaiuto, Massimo (IPGRI - Rome)

Sent: 16 July 2004 12:10

Dear Karine,

I was re-reading your email and I found it very useful for our review process.

I will take it for the next meeting as a valid starting point for our discussion.

I also recognize the usage of the web site for many different purposes:

- A window to present IPGRI image, describing what IPGRI does, which is our mission, etc. (Public Awareness material)

- A valid, dynamic, solid tool for our fund raisers

- A repository of our scientific material: databases, documents, images, etc.

The web site should represent easily all these different views and this consultancy can provide us useful suggestions about how we can organize the web site.

During the first session of the meeting, I was totally wrong with the size of this web site.

At the moment, we have already 8182 Web Pages (without considering P.A. web site), linked together by more than 12.000 internal hyperlinks, 550 PDF files, and more than 120 tables of databases published on line.

Since, this process is fundamental for all of us to understand better how to tailor the content we have (and we are going to publish in future), I want to invite all of you to answer the survey and provide us what you really think about the current web site and how it should be.

I will try to meet all the key people in the Institute, to collect feedback about the new vision of the web site.

Regards,

Massimo

Web pages hosted by IPGRI:

<i>Main web site</i>	<i>1,224</i>
<i>Agrobiodiversity</i>	<i>142</i>
<i>CAS</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Events</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Geneflow</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Institutes</i>	<i>140</i>
<i>PgrNewsletter</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Publication</i>	<i>180</i>
<i>Reports</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>COGENT</i>	<i>275</i>
<i>ECPGR</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Euforgen</i>	<i>271</i>
<i>GRST</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>INIBAP</i>	<i>167</i>
<i>SGRP</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Americas</i>	<i>678</i>
<i>APO</i>	<i>3,342</i>
<i>CWANA</i>	<i>1,224</i>
<i>Europe</i>	<i>174</i>
<i>SSA</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>8,182</i>

Salas Carole

07-20-2004

10:21 AM

Dear Massimo,

First of all, I wish to thank you for the great job done with regard to IPGRI's web site. Based on my experience with the web publishing, I think you should have more support for the maintenance in order to improve the quality of the content.

I feel our web site has been greatly improved since you have been appointed Web Master of IPGRI's website.

I am keeping receiving positive comments even from Partners.

The information available has been made more accessible.

However, I would venture to say that I feel direct access to GRST should be made available.

I hope this helps.

Regards,

Salas Carole (Web Focal Point)

-----Original Message-----

From: Buonaiuto, Massimo (IPGRI - Rome)

Sent: Friday, July 16, 2004 12:22 PM

To: IPGRI-Web Focal Points

Cc: Neate, Paul (IPGRI - Rome)

Subject: FW: IPGRI Web Consultation Study -

Dear Colleagues,

As you may aware, we are going to review the web site through the valid help of IKONOS Company.

During this process, it is fundamental for all of us to understand the direction we should consider for the new vision of the web site.

We want to change entirely the web site, and we want to collect as much as possible feedback from all IPGRI staff.

But I consider as high valuable your personal experience with web publishing during last 5 years.

I am requesting you to have feedback about the web site.

Send me suggestions, ideas and describe me how we could improve the image of IPGRI with the new web site.

Regards,

Massimo

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-21-2004

11:46 AM

Active Internet Users by Country, May 2004

http://www.clickz.com/stats/big_picture/geographics/article.php/3373021",

Thormann, Imke

07-23-2004

08:40 AM

Dear Massimo,

Regarding publishing on the web, personally I had no problems thanks to the excellent collaboration with you and your valid support and help.

In general I think separating content from design, one of the points raised during the ongoing consultation study, would make the work easier and accessible to more people.

In the workflow as it is at the moment I see a lack in the editing step of the published pages. New workflows within the institute will hopefully be established based on the result of the consultation study and the web master will get strong support from a editing unit or a web editor.

I see it as extremely important for an organization like IPGRI to make the best use of the opportunities the internet technology offers today to provide data and information to our partners and our audience in general and to communicate with them.

I am looking forward to our new web site, where it will be easy to find your way around, that provides news and much more concrete data and information than it does actually about our work and in the ideal case, also news about what happens in the PGR world in general at a global level.

Kind regards

Imke (GRST web focal point)

Aixa Del Greco

07-26-2004

09:42 AM

Dear Massimo,

in your message in response to Karine (edited 16 July) you gave a summary of the number of Web pages hosted by IPGRI.

Regarding ECP/GR, I would like to confirm this figure, specifying that these are all our asp pages, including contacts, collaborating organizations, DBs, etc...

Other than those pages, ECP/GR Web site consists of 608 Web pages (excluding pictures), most of which have been revised in the past year.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continuous professional assistance and very helpful and instructive advises you provided me with, in modifying those Web pages.

Regards,

Aixa Del Greco (Web focal point, ECP/GR –

Separating Content from Design - Forum

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:26 AM

Separating Content from Design

Clear distinction between the content authoring/editing, overall design and look and feel, and IT infrastructure

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

06:00 AM

I think the content should be separated from layout only for items that have a life cycle implemented.

Open issue for discussion: for static web page, maybe we have a limited need to separate content from design ("about IPGRI", locations, info about programmes, etc. etc.).",

Jennie Drew

07-28-2004

10:40 AM

Would not separating content from design on even static pages ensure updates were quick and easy to implement, facilitate future style changes, and allow easy management of translations? Even pages such as 'About IPGRI' and 'Locations' need updating from time to time.

Further, a CMS incorporating even static pages could ensure coding is consistent, of good quality and compliant with Web standards and usability guidelines. And, as for all other pages, it would allow authors to focus on the content of these pages rather than layout.

Content Organization - Forum

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:27 AM

Content Organization

The effective organization of content according to end user expectations, tasks, needs. Optimization of terminology and labeling. Restructuring and improvement of content categories and hierarchy of subdivision. Ability for readers to access content according to multiple organization viewpoints.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

05:57 AM

About content update, I satisfied about 600 requests (emails), during last year to support web content providers and Web Focal Points.
The web activity is huge at the moment and include not only Internet but also Intranet.

Last year, two training courses have been held for 16 Web Focal Points, potential publishers and providers of content and services. The courses were targeted at those specifically involved in the preparation of web pages for the Institute, for both IPGRI Internet and Intranet websites.

In the web publishing, some Groups/Regional Offices produced relevant amount of content:

- "1. Europe/Euforgen"
- "2. SSA (regional office)"
- "3. APO (regional office)"
- "4. DIT Training, Publications"
- "5. GRST/SAFORGEN"
- "6. Global Facilitation Unit (GFU)"

Need more improvements in web publishing other groups and regional offices.

Web trends reports have been released during last year, but the inaccuracy of the data sources made it not quite useful for statistics (<http://webusage.cgnet.com/ipgri/>).
For this reason the production of stats about web usage has been stopped.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

06:09 AM

In this issue it is important to discuss about the web publishing of several databases.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

06:11 AM

In this issue it is extremely important to discuss about the web publishing of networks and groups that are autonomous, NOT part of IPGRI, but only hosted here: GFU, ECP/GR (www.ecpgr.org), Euforgen (www.euforgen.org), etc. etc. etc.
Massimo

Jennie Drew

07-28-2004

10:52 AM

Deleted by author 07-29-2004 07:33 AM

User Participation – Forum

luigi

07-14-2004

05:09 PM

I think this is THE most important thing. The IPGRI web site should be something to which partners can contribute, not just a place where IPGRI makes available the kind of information it thinks people need.",

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:34 AM

User Participation

Ability for the end users to actively participate and contribute to the information provided by IPGRI. Feedback options. Ability to contribute original content. Comments.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-17-2004

10:08 AM

I agree with Luigi: the IPGRI Web site should be a tool for everybody to publish relevant content about our work.

News Publishing - Forum

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:41 AM

News publishing

Ability to originate, select, republish and aggregate from qualified sources top news stories on critical issues and topics of relevance to IPGRI

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

04:04 AM

At the moment the tools used to publish news on the web site is the IPGRI CMS, I developed last year. This is the text file I prepared to introduce this technology.

IPGRIWEB AS CONTENT PORTAL

The Content Management System can publish articles, news, electronic documents on IPGRIWeb website, and produce and distribute outputs for web, databases, RSS, Web Services, XML, email systems, using templates and procedures available on request.

Each item is fully indexed and searchable by any internal/external search engine, via web or through SQL queries.

The CMS uses a database to generate web content. The database holds the content to be placed on the web site. When a page is uploaded, you actually update a database with the information - and the page is generated dynamically.

IPGRI Content Management System

The IPGRI CMS collects items written in plain text or HTML files and can manage different kind of items:

- *Articles*
- *News*
- *Documents*
- *IPGRI publications*
- *Vacancies announcements*
- *Training materials*
- *Events*

All languages are supported and an item can be easily translated in many languages.

This flexibility reflects another feature of the CMS: a template can be filled out with the items of the selected language and published immediately on the client

An item can be linked to many contexts:

- *IPGRI Regions, IPGRI Networks, IPGRI Networking programmes and Working Groups*
- *Generic Genus/Species, Crops*
- *Existing IPGRI publications*
- *IPGRI Events*
- *Existing Training Materials*

The item can be also linked to existing databases as:

- *SINGER*
- *InHouse*
- *Germplasm Database*

The CMS integrates easily new services as the Newsletter Portal: all the web focal point can send items via email as newsletters to their contact lists members.

Indeed the database structure is fully compatible with the Institutional Databases directives and analysis.

THE CMS INTERFACE

The input interface is intuitive and fully customizable. Only one page is used to add new items. During the first access, login and password are required and they can be stored as cookies in the client browser.

*Web address: <http://web.ipgri.cgiar.org/ipgriweb/CMS/>
(To enter in the web intranet ask me login and password.)*

The logon is useful to customize the input interface.

According to the web policy, each web focal point will be able to insert items related to his/her group only.

Each item is composed by different parts and a set of attributes can catalogue it better.

The attributes can be customized and are the following:

- *Theme (compulsory field): Each item can be catalogued by theme:*
- *Title (compulsory field): contains the title of the item*
- *Optional image with its caption: user can associate an image to the current item. CMS uploads it immediately at CGNet web server*
- *Introduction: this contains the first part of the item*
- *Full Content: full content of the item*
- *Options:*
 - *Active and visible: the item will be released and available for queries and publishing*
 - *Publish in my sub-website: it publishes the item in the homepage of the user*
 - *Publish in Weekly News: the weekly newsletter could benefit of the items inserted in CMS (not yet implemented)*
 - *Publish in IPGRI What's New: (not yet implemented)*
 - *Send request for publishing in IPGRI Homepage: the user can request the publishing of the item in the homepage. A workflow can be implemented for the acceptance. Each item published in the homepage will be sent via email, for information, to the Publication Committee.*
 - *Starting Date (dd/mm/yyyy): the item is published after this date.*
 - *Expire Date (dd/mm/yyyy): the item can expire. After this event it will be not published anymore*
 - *Copyright: Copyright text can be included in the item*
 - *Set Priority: 3 levels of priority can effect the layout*
 - *Links Table: user can include up 4 links in a table that will be published at then of the item text. The text for each link can be printed in different languages*
 - *Internal Notes: remarks for internal purpose*
 - *Advanced Categorization*
 - *Authors and Author Details: it associates authors to the item*
 - *Bibliographic Reference*
 - *Publication ID: the item can be linked to publications already published by IPGRI.*
 - *Additional Options: these options can be customized and are used to characterize better the item. The user can select one or more items from the following lists:*

- *Genetic Resources Themes*
- *Regions*
- *Networking Programmes, Networks, Working Groups: the web focal point will have lists related to his/her group.*
- *Countries*
- *Training*
- *Events*
- *Crops / Species*

Further links can be made with Genus/Species table.

WORKFLOW FOR APPROVAL

CMS can implement workflow to approve or reject an item before its release. Each item can be published in the homepage. In order to check if the content is appropriate and pertinent for the homepage, an approver accepts or declines the request for publishing the item. The policy behind this process is not yet defined, but the workflow proposed and implemented is depicted below.

Being an Open Knowledge Organization

With CMS, IPGRI is able to export and communicate easily with other institutes using different types of standards. The format can be HTML, XML, plain text. The supported protocols are HTTP, SMTP, SOAP. The tools used to send the content via web are HTML web pages, email system (with CGNet support), Web Services, database views, and other interface applications. The CMS is platform independent and is in keeping with software quality attributes: scalability, maintainability, reliability, usability, security, availability .

- Scalability, maintainability, reliability, security, availability are ensured by IPGRI Computer Services*
- Usability is guaranteed by the E/R structure of the database and the usability attribute applied directly to the output devices.*

Behind of this system, there is the huge effort made by ITC from IPGRI to harmonize standards, and structures to avoid redundancy and promote integration among groups and areas.

One-to-one marketing

A CMS system may also provide tools for one-to-one marketing. One-to-one marketing is the ability of a Web site to tailor its content and advertising to a user's specific characteristics using information provided by the user or gathered by the site (for example, a particular user's page sequence pattern).

What can I do with IPGRI CMS?

The first consequence is IPGRIWeb will become a News Portal: fresh content will be sent by media devices as Web, Email, databases, Web Services and XML. The update will be easy and flexible. As we already know, IPGRI publishes volumes of information for multiple audiences. For this reason, the content will be customized and published via web, emails, electronic services using different formats and layouts. Users will be able to publish articles, news, newsletters, and create views of the content without any knowledge of

HTML. They will be able to export data to your partners and send them via email, web, etc. It will be possible to associate content to keywords, databases, etc. and perform structured queries to print data in a very straightforward manner. News will be published depending on the user needs as well.

IPGRI will open its window of knowledge using international standards as XML

The system can be replicated in many regional offices to improve performance and response time.

Other Distribution Channels - Forum

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:41 AM

Other distribution channels

Enhanced ability to publish, repurpose content across multiple formats and information products.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

05:44 AM

This issue is quite important for us, since there is the need to centralize data and information o produce services and distribute data using web services, xml, etc. There is a strong need to have content available for multiple usages: for example, the database of publications (printed on the web site) is exported in xml to feed the CGIAR/FAO infofinder web site.

About the RSS, maybe only the news could be exported through the rss.

Managing a decentralized Web publishing system - Forum

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:46 AM

Managing a decentralized Web publishing system

Critical issues related to management of multiple publishing units geographically distributed which presently operate often according to their specific needs and requirements. Lack of effective quality control and web publishing standards coherency.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-19-2004

06:35 AM

Comments about

Opposition to centrally imposed tools, framework, approach -- want to do it their way

The "imposition" is due to:

- the content has to be published on the web using the corporate image of the institute
- the institutional content has to be accessible and available to EVERYBODY for multiple purposes (a news should be available for the web, for an newsletter sent via email, for the RSS system, etc.) and this requires centralization in a unique data source (our databases)
- there is huge effort to centralize data within a single centralized "Institutional Databases", and decentralization process could run against it.
- different technology/framework, etc. require support and definition of its institutional life cycle: installation, customization, maintenance (backup, human resource allocation to support it, updates, training, etc.).
- approval process tools could not work on decentralized systems
- web master could find problems accessing decentralized systems
- several decentralized systems could create confusion of roles: content providers that spend time trying to find out bugs, customizations that produce content not compatible with institutional image, etc. etc. etc.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-19-2004

06:40 AM

Comments about:

Need for web editor

At the moment each group is responsible of the content it publishes.
What kind of duties should have this person?
Should this person ensure a sort of quality control?
How? As it is now, the author knows about the content published on the web site...
Should the web editor write articles for the web? This means centralization of inputting process, right?

Paul Neate

07-19-2004

09:02 AM

Re: the Web editor

I see the Web editor as having oversight for the content of the Web site as a whole. At present, as Massimo has said, each group is responsible for the content it publishes, but no-one really has responsibility for the content of the Web site as a whole, for monitoring new directions, gaps, overlaps etc. There is a step in the publishing process that requires the attention of an editor, but this rarely happens.

Jennie Drew

07-28-2004

10:16 AM

In a decentralized publishing system I would see a Web editor's role as not just being a quality control step (that could potentially create a bottleneck to publishing content) but someone who could support regional and programme offices in producing content.

As Paul mentions this could be in monitoring new directions, gaps etc., but also in helping staff to plan and write material for the Web.

A web editor could also have a role in ensuring the Web is seen as one of a range of communications tools we have at IPGRI. This is not just a case of ensuring consistency of image across publications (CD, Web and print), but also considering the advantages or complementarity of 'publishing' on the Web rather than viewing it as an afterthought.",

Support for Multiple Languages - Forum

Massimo Curatella

07-16-2004

06:47 AM

Support for multiple languages
Ability to publish content on the Web in multiple languages.

Massimo Buonaiuto

07-20-2004

05:36 AM

The web site should be able to manage some content in several languages. For each language there should be at least a content provider and the amount of the content published should be more than one single item!
Anyway, this choice should depend on our audiences.

Massimo

Jennie Drew

07-28-2004

09:59 AM

As this topic was ranked as high priority but we have limited resources for translation, I was wondering about memory translation software. I don't know if any CMS (content managements systems) for the Web have this built in (as do some enterprise CMS)

Memory translation software 'remembers' phrases or words that have previously been translated -- a kind of computer-assisted translation. Obviously a human still needs to check the text, but over time the 'memory' bank of translations is built up requiring less and less effort to produce translations. Translators can also use the software as a check of terminology, which could improve consistency across the site.

I don't have experience of using this software or any idea of costs, but thought it might be worth considering.

Jennie

