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Local Community Reports

Francophone Local Chapter Update

by the local chapter members

Introduction

The creation of the Francophone Local Chapter (OSGeo-fr) started in October 2006, following the FOSS4G 2006 meeting in Lausanne. As of July 2007, we are close to its creation and about to send a proposal to the OSGeo Board (expected in July or August 2007).

Since October, a huge work in the Francophone mailing list [1] has been performed in order to share ideas about the missions of the local chapter. The Francophone local chapter missions are now separated into three main committees: organisation, open geodata and open source software. For each committee, a chair will manage communication between contributors and will send information to the local chapter about the progress of the project.

Some other important details need to be clarified, i.e. how OSGeo-fr is organized (only the main structure is currently drawn), how to manage and hold elections? etc. This is the main purpose of the new local board which has been elected at the end of june (see subsection below).

During this time some small projects has been engaged:

- OSGeo got a booth in an Open Source village at the main geospatial tradeshow in France (see http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/GeoEvenement2007)
- we translated a document which presents OSGeo missions and projects,
- we ran a poll to discover people's motivations and to know whether they would be consumers or actors in the upcoming Francophone local chapter,
- we initiated the translation work of the OSGeo Journal Vol. 1.

Election

As of 6th of July, the first round of the election is finished and a second round to elect the Data Committee chair will start the 9th of July. The first round results are:

- **Local chapter president:** Yves Jacolin
- **Organisation Committee chair:** Gwenael Bachelot

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[1] http://lists.osgeo.org/mailman/listinfo/francophone

- **Software Committee chair:** Vincent Picavet

The next step aims at writing the proposal for the Francophone Local Chapter creation as well as writing an RFC about the organization of elections and how to manage them. In other words, we need to formalize the structure of the Francophone Local Chapter in order to be efficient and start on solid bases.

Poll

A 15 days poll was published at the beginning of June. 54 persons answered the poll. 37 persons out of the 54 had subscribed to the Francophone mailing list.

From the poll results, we realized that communication of the OSGeo missions will be a key point of the future Chapter: what is OSGeo for? Which project people can be interested in? This could be one of the main purpose of the Francophone Local Chapter organization committee.

The reasonably large amount of answers to this poll allows us to see the creation of the future Francophone local chapter positively. Once this will be done, the visibility of the OSGeo-fr will be greatly improved and we expect to see more contributors joining us.

Finally, the translation of OSGeo Journal Vol. 1 showed us that we are ready to manage projects and this will help to improve OSGeo-fr's visibility.

OSGeo Journal Vol. 1 Translation

A French translation of OSGeo Journal Vol. 1 is, at the time of writing this article, about to be published. Only two articles need to be finalized (proof readers). 7 persons have contributed to this project and have translated 27 articles (70 pages). 5 persons have proof read the translated articles. Some of them both have translated and read articles.

This is the biggest project OSGeo-fr managed by itself so far, and some details of the process need to be clarified. Managing 27 articles in a process of translating, proof reading, and back to the translator for finalization appeared to not be a so easy task. The working process has to be clarified and a RFC has been drafted for this purpose.

Written by Francophone Chapter Members
http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Francophone

Activity Report of OSGeo Taiwan

At the 5th Taipei International Digital Earth Symposium (TIDES-07) and FOSS4G.tw Summer Training 2007

Dongpo Deng

OSGeo Taiwan, founded on March this year, is a new and vibrant social network in Taiwan. OSGeo Taiwan actively participated in local GIS-related conferences and meetings to advocate open geo-data, promote Open Source GIS and introduce OSGeo to Taiwanese GIS communities. OSGeo Taiwan further collaborated with Academia Sinica Computer Center GIS Team, and Chinese Culture University Digital Earth Research Center, to organize a session for Free/Open Source Software for Geoinformatics (FOSS4G) at the 5th Taipei International Digital Earth Symposium (TIDES-07) which is held at Chinese Culture University from May 15 to 18. Moreover, OSGeo Taiwan started to conduct Summer Training courses for Open Source GIS on each Friday during June 29 to August 3 at Academia Sinica Computer Center.

A Session for Open Source GIS in TIDES-07

The FOSS4G session in TIDES-07 was conducted on 18th May, during the morning session. There were four talks and a panel discussion in this session. The aims of talks are to deliver introduction of FOSS4G and demonstrate how the FOSS4G works. First of all, Dr. Victor T.S. Horng, general manager of OSS Integral Institute Co., Ltd., gave the attendees a clear and interesting summary for the benefits of using FOSS. Even the advantages of using OSS is obvious, the intellectual property rights issue of the OSS is often doubted in Taiwan GIS communities. Ms. Tung-Mei Ko, project manager of Open Source Software Foundry (OSSF), is familiar with legal topics of FOSS.

In her talk, she delivered an overview of FOSS

characteristics and the FOSS authorization model. Her experience is useful for encouraging the use and development of FOSS4G in Taiwan.

Mr. Hsiung-Ming Liao, initial member of OSGeo Taiwan and project instructor of GIS Term of Computing Centre of Academia Sinica, demonstrated a web-based geospatial application constructed by MapGuide Open Source and Web 2.0 techniques. He considered that the development of the Geo Web cannot lack FOSS4G and that more successful experience of FOSS4G is important to FOSS4G progress in Taiwan. However, the prevailing commercial GIS solutions absorbed the public attention toward alternatives like FOSS4G. There is urgent need to provide more alternatives to deal with geospatial information in Taiwan.

The final speaker in this session is Mr. Dongpo Deng who is coordinating, and also the initial core member of, OSGeo Taiwan. He introduced the OSGeo Foundation, global rapidly forming OSGeo communities, and OSGeo Taiwan, with further explanatory discussion of crucial software aspect of FOSS4G. The talk gave the attendees a roadshow of current geospatial open source software applications, guiding them with the freedom of choices of appropriate tools for their own applications.

Figure 1: Dongpo introduced OSGeo Taiwan and gave a tour of FOSS4G

The final panel discussion focused on *Encouraging Development of OSGeo Activities in Taiwan*. Panelists not only shared their experiences of FOSS and FOSS4G, but also provided some suggestions for future development of FOSS4G in Taiwan. Most panelists agreed, Open Data is the first and most urgent task on the list of priorities of OSGeo Taiwan. Enthusiastically discussed by panelists, the OSGeo Taiwan should make concerted efforts to lobby the government releasing the geospatial data and providing useful resources, and co-developing tutorials, technical notes, training courses, workshops and conferences to assist novices of OSGeo & FOSS4G to influence & support local geospatial professional communities. For instance, Taiwan's Ministry of The Interior Information Center promised to start releasing map data to facilitate the learning and exchange among geospatial communities & industry.

FOSS4G.tw Summer Training

FOSS4G.tw Summer Training is held on each Friday during June 29 to August 3, 2007, at Academia Sinica Computer Center, Taipei. The free courses aim to provide technical and practical introduction for beginners, especially students and research assistants. We hope the attendees will use these tools in their homework or projects, gaining a deeper understanding, and we anticipate them to be seeds for future promotion of FOSS4G. The serial courses cover several heavy-weighted applications such as GRASS, PostgreSQL/PostGIS, MapServer, GeoTool and MapGuide, for example. Every instructor has his/her own rich experiences for FOSS4G, and can apply to local scenarios to best demonstrate the usage of it. The series of courses is sponsored by Institute of Information Science, Academia Sinica and Academia Sinica Computer Center.

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Nascent UK Local Chapter Update

5th July 2007

Jo Cook and Leif Isaksen

After returning from FOSS4G in 2006, several UK attendees felt there was an interest in setting up a UK local chapter for OSGeo. The following mission statement was derived:

- To provide a forum for discussion and promotion of Open Source Geospatial Software in the

UK

- To help more UK organisations discover the opportunity of open source geospatial tools
- To support the development of a fully featured UK SDI[2]
- To provide a starting point for people from the UK who are new to the Open Source Geospatial movement
- To raise awareness of the benefits of public access to geodata in the UK
- To work with OGC members in the UK to promote the implementation and development of open standards for geodata exchange
- To, maybe, one day, act as focal point for a UK-hosted and organised FOSS4G conference

To date we have had 13 expressions of interest on the wiki page.[3] This may not seem like a lot of people, but they are from a range of different organisations and disciplines. There has been attendance at a number of functions and conferences, most notably the Open Knowledge Foundation's Open Knowledge 1.0 conference in March 2007. There is some overlap with the OpenStreetmap Project, which is growing in popularity and held it's own conference in Manchester 14-15th July 2007[4], and discussion between the two groups has been interesting! In the UK there is also a campaign being run by the Guardian newspaper on free access to data of all kinds,[5] and again there is a degree of overlap of interests that will be worth investigating further.

Activity

Other than gathering expressions of interest, a specialised forum for discussion has not yet been implemented, and interaction is mainly informal, via related discussion groups and mailing lists, along with attendance at geospatial conferences. Individual members are planning attendance at FOSS4G 2007 and have submitted ideas for presentations, awaiting the peer vote in mid July [at least one proposal was accepted].

Individual members have also been involved in a number of initiatives that relate to the specified missions: Oxford Archaeology[6] have begun to release data on the location of their excavations via WMS/WFS, and are working on a number of software ideas such as GIS on a USB stick. They have also begun to arrange training courses for their staff in GRASS and QGIS as part of a programme of evaluating open source geospatial tools within their day to day work.

Overall – more work is needed to build on these promising beginnings and to gain more expressions of interest, along with a specialised forum for discussion. Many of the issues that a local OSGeo chapter would hope to raise are gaining public awareness within the UK, and we should seek to be more involved in this.

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[2]UK SDI: http://wiki.OSGeo.org/index.php/UK_SDI
[3]UK Wiki page: http://wiki.OSGeo.org/index.php/United_Kingdom
[4]OpenStreetmap conference: http://www.stateofthemap.org/
[5]Free our data campaign: http://www.freeourdata.org.uk/
[6]Oxford Archaeology: thehumanjourney.net

Spanish Local Chapter Update

Jorge Gaspar Sanz Salinas, Lorenzo Becchi, Lluís Vicens, Marc Compte, Pedro-Juan Ferrer

The Spanish Local Chaper is not yet official but recently started taking its first steps. Actually it is basically identified by its mailing list.

Introduction

The Spanish Local Chapter started on March 2007 in Girona within the first Spanish FOSS4G[7] Meeting called **I Jornadas SIG Libre**.[8] An unplanned meeting was organized by Luis W. Sevilla (gvSIG development Chief[9]) and Lorenzo Becchi (Ominiverdi.org[10]) and many meeting participants joined the debate.

After this first meeting a mailing list was been created and some activities started as an effort to have a Spanish language community with the main objective to spread the word about FOSS4G and share ideas, technical problems, etc.

The Spanish Chapter is not yet an official organization.

Activities

Mailing list

The creation of the list, at the beginning of March 2007, was the first activity of the starting group and will serve as a point of discuss for Spanish speaking FOSS4G users and developers. At this moment the list counts 134 subscribers and we hope, as other activities become better known, the Spanish speaking community will get more involved in the list.

Spanish GIS Book

The biggest effort has been focused to create a Free GIS Book in Spanish. At this time a **PSC** (Project Steering Committee[11]) has being defined and some important steps have being accomplished. There is an almost stable **table of contents**[12] for the first version of the book, a small group of people[13] contributed, led by Víctor Olaya (SEXTANTE[14]) and some technical facilities provided by OSGeo (a mailing list and SVN repository for the book sources).

The book will be written in LaTeX and the timetable is expected to be followed.

Of course, more authors are always welcomed. If you have some Spanish material that fits some chapter or section of the book, or you think that new contents should be added, please, feel free to join the mailing list.[15]

OSGeo portal translation

Since May 2007, the main web pages of the OSGeo site were translated into Spanish. This effort from the Spanish Local Chapter tries to bring the Foundation to Spanish speaking people. If you want to help with the translation, improving pages, or translating new ones, contact Jorge Sanz. You can see the progress of the translation at the Portal Translation Status page of the OSGeo wiki.[16]

II Jornadas de SIG Libre

The GIS & Remote Sensing Service (SIGTE[17]) of the University of Girona, Spain is working to organize and prepare the **II Spanish FOSS4G Meeting** that will be held in **Girona** during **March 3th, 4th and 5th 2008**. The previous meeting [18] was without doubt an unprecedented success, pointing out the high level of participation and also the high level and quality of the communications presented during the event.

One of the main purposes of this meetings is to present and show new or existing Open Source GIS software (and its capabilities or improvements). We

[7] FOSS4G in this article refers to the concepts of open source software for geoinformatics, not specifically the annual FOSS4G conference

[8] I Jornadas SIG Libre: http://www.sigte.udg.es/jornadassiglibre2007

[9] gvSIG Project: http://www.gvsig.gva.es

[10] Ominiverdi group: http://www.ominiverdi.org

[11] PSC: http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Libro_SIG_PSC_candidaturas

[12] Book contents: http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Contenido

[13] Book authors: http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/AsignaciŬn_de_capŠtulos

[14] SEXTANTE GIS project: http://sextantegis.com/

[15] Libro SIG list: http://lists.osgeo.org/mailman/listinfo/libro_sig

[16] Web site translation status: http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Portal_Translation_Status

[17] GIS & Remote Sensing Service: http://www.sigte.udg.es

[18] I Jornadas SIG Libre: http://www.sigte.udg.es/jornadassiglibre2007

are also really interested in showing real applications and experiences using any Open Source GIS & Remote Sensing software, 3D visualizations tools, etc. and their degree of presence in the professional world, pointing out advantages and disadvantages.

Moreover, during this II Spanish FOSS4G Meeting[19], we are trying to emphasize the discussion about free geodata, open standards for open source software, the role that Public Administration could (or should) play in the adoption of GIS Open Source Software solutions.

Taking advantage of Tyler Mitchell's attendance during the meeting, an official presentation of the OSGeo will be done. In addition, some discussion group sessions regarding to the Spanish Local Chapter are also planned.

We are exploring some ideas and the active participation of the community is the key to keep the wheel moving on.

Ottawa Local Chapter

Jeff McKenna, Dave Sampson

Background

The Ottawa Local Chapter of OSGeo was formed in July 2006 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The group is a union of two previously existing groups: the Ottawa GRASS Users Group (OGUG) formed in June 2005, and the Ottawa MapServer Users Group (OMSUG) formed in winter 2003. Both groups were already very active in the FOSS4G community, with OGUG continuing development and use of the Public Geodata License in English[20], and OMSUG hosting the 2004 Open Source GIS Conference in Ottawa[21]. The Ottawa OSGEO Chapter was formed by the combination of those original two groups, but also includes active local users and developers of at least the following OSGeo projects: GDAL/OGR, GRASS, Mapbuilder, MapGuide, and MapServer.

Mission

The OSGeo Ottawa Chapter exists to provide support for local users of Open Source Geospatial software, and to promote the goals and projects of the Open Source Geospatial Foundation. The Chapter is focused on the National Capital Region around Ottawa with face to face meetings providing networking, support and educational opportunities to the local members.

Chapter Co-Chairs

- Dave Sampson, Natural Resources Canada
- Jeff McKenna, DM Solutions Group

Current Activities

Meeting approximately once a month, the Chapter regularly enjoys presentations and discussions on various FOSS4G subjects, as well as refreshments. Recent presentation topics include the Nunaliit Atlas Framework[22], as well as GeoServer's functionality[23].

Important Links

- Mailing list - http://lists.osgeo.org/mailman/listinfo/Ottawa_users
- Chapter home page - http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Ottawa_Chapter

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[19]II Jornadas SIG Libre:http://www.sigte.udg.es/jornadassiglibre/

[20]Public Geodata License: http://cemml.carleton.ca:8080/OGUG/pgl

[21]OMSUG: http://www.omsug.ca/osgis2004/

[22]Nunalit Atlas: http://nunaliit.org/

[23]GeoServer: http://www.geoserver.org/

Journal online: `http://www.osgeo.org/journal`

OSGeo Homepage: `http://www.osgeo.org`

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