

# **GIRAF 2009**

**Geoscience InfoRmation in  
Africa**

## **GIRAF Strategy and Agreement**

Proposed and Agreed in Windhoek, Namibia, 20 March 2009

### **PREAMBLE**

**94 participants from 30 nations met in Windhoek, Namibia, between 16 and 20 March 2009 to hold a workshop on geoscience information in Africa with the purpose of:**

- *bringing together relevant African authorities, national experts and stakeholders in geoscience information;*
- *initiating the building of a pan-African geoscience information knowledge network to exchange and share geoscience information knowledge and best practice*
- *integrating the authorities, national experts and experts across Africa into global geoinformation initiatives;*
- *developing a strategic plan for Africa's future in geoscience information*
- *making Africa a more active part of the international geoscience information community*

#### **Participants agreed that:**

- *Africa's geology is less well explored in comparison with the rest of the world*
- *effective management and dissemination of geoscience information is crucial*
- *we need geoscience information to successfully deliver and implement applied geoscience so that we can address the challenges in education, mitigate hazards, locate and sustainably manage resources, and address the impacts of climate change in order to meet society's needs.*

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Participants agreed the following 15 recommendations:

1. A small GIRAF management group is set up to coordinate the work and ensure that GIRAF is sustained. This small group will comprise a core executive and regional representatives.
2. GIRAF, through BGR, will set up a permanent but dynamic web which will include national contact details, news of progress and upcoming meetings and links to useful documentation, an informal message board. GIRAF will also aspire to produce a Newsletter quarterly.
3. Participants will communicate the outcomes of this meeting to the African geoscience organisations not present at GIRAF 2009 and encourage them to take part and embrace these recommendations and become a part of the GIRAF community
4. GIRAF will establish a network (and focal point) within Africa to connect geological survey institutions, support North-South partnerships in research and develop linkages to other related bodies, projects and initiatives.

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5. GIRAF will nominate African delegates to international bodies as to IUGS-CGI Council and the OneGeology Operational Management Group. These delegates will represent Africa at these two committees and communicate developments in IUGS-CGI and OneGeology back to African geoscience organisations.
6. The GIRAF community will seek support especially for those nations who have demonstrated a severe lack of capacity and capability and requested aid.
7. The GIRAF community will seek funding and sponsorship to support its work and goals and develop an initial case and proposal in order to bid for funds.
8. A second GIRAF Workshop should be organised in two years time and continue biannually. Tanzania/SEAMIC have agreed to host this.
9. GIRAF will encourage all African geoscience organisations (e.g. OAGS, Geological Society of Africa and other participating organisations) to communicate their collaboration through reports to their organisations, presentations at conferences, web pages, press releases and other means.
10. The GIRAF community will use all opportunities to lobby politicians, (including where possible ministerial briefings), using for example the occasions of INDABA, UNECA, NEPAD).
11. Training and scholarships will be pursued and regional offices for geoscience informatics proposed at existing university campuses.
12. GIRAF will approach the organisers of the next Colloquium on African Geology (CAG)/ Capetown to propose a session on geoscience information and volunteer to organise that session.
13. GIRAF will approach the organisers of the 34th IGC in Australia to propose the concept of a Special Symposium on African geoscience information and volunteer to organise that Symposium and to seek Geohost funding in particular for African participants.
14. The progress of GIRAF and its recommendations will be presented at the IGC in Australia in 2012.
15. We, the GIRAF community, will develop strategies to provide mutual assistance to implement GIRAF aims and build participant capacity to ensure the success of our endeavour.

***This agreement was produced and unanimously endorsed by participants at the GIRAF 2009 Workshop in Windhoek, Namibia, 20 March 2009.***