Learn more about our new game, the Geo-Wiki refactoring, FotoQuest, and LACO-Wiki.

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Welcome to our Autumn Edition of Geo-Wiki News!

In our fourth edition of 2015, we report on the launch of our new game Picture Pile, the refactoring of Geo-Wiki, a new FotoQuest Austria campaign, and the upcoming LACO-Wiki validation platform. Finally, we keep you informed about our team's participation in past and upcoming events.

Help Science: Picture Pile is now available

Picture Pile, the successor of Cropland Capture, was released three weeks ago and players have already sorted over 100.000 images, which is a 10 meters high picture pile!

In Picture Pile, players sort through a series of side-by-side images of the same location several years apart. The game asks, "Do you see tree loss over time?" After examining the image, player swipes the image to the right indicating "yes," or to the left for "no,"—much like the popular dating app, Tinder, with an additional swipe down option to indicate "maybe" when players can't tell from the photo pair whether forest has been lost.

Play Picture Pile and help us track deforestation. You can also win great prizes when the pile is sorted!

Picture Pile is available for free for browsers and for the Apple iOS and Android operating systems via the Apple Store (coming soon) and Google Play Store, respectively.

Geo-Wiki is refactored: Get to Geo-Wiki without admin permissions

At the end of last year, Google announced the deprecation of the Google Earth API. As a result, the Google Earth plug-in would no longer be supported in common browsers, such as Chrome and Firefox. To address this issue, we have refactored Geo-Wiki so it is no longer based on the Google Earth plug-in, but on the open source mapping framework OpenLayers.

For users, this means that you no longer need administrative permissions to install this plug-in, which was an issue for some who may not have had such permissions on their computers. By switching to OpenLayers 3, we have also increased performance and the application runs much faster now, especially noticeable on slower internet connections. Finally, in the previous version we could only provide Google Earth imagery, whereas users can now switch between different base maps - currently, we provide Google and Bing maps.

We hope this change will provided a better functionality and user experience for all.

More info

FotoQuest Austria Autumn Campaign - Join us!

The FotoQuest Austria Autumn Campaign was launched on 16 October and will continue through 16 December 2015. As with the FotoQuest Summer campaign (which ended on 30 September),

we are running a friendly competition whereby the top 3 weekly players who complete the most quality Quests will be entered into a raffle for an opportunity to win prizes at the end of the campaign.

This time, we are appealing to the outdoor adventurer in you, as prizes will be vouchers to an outdoor-gear store in the amount of €200 for first place, €150 for second place, €100 for third place, and €50 for fourth place! All other names entered into the raffle will win a FotoQuest T-shirt.
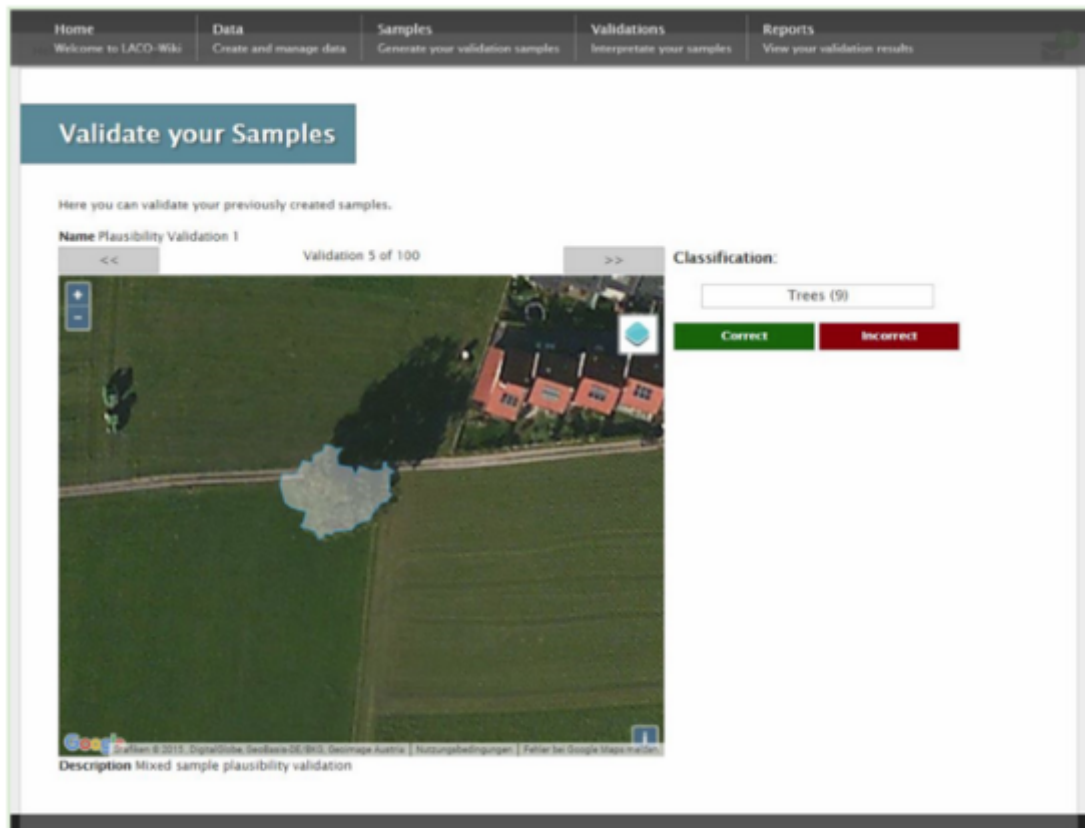
LACO-Wiki: Our new validation platform

We are very excited about our new land cover validation tool, called LACO-Wiki. Although many of you have helped us to collect validation data in the past (through campaigns and games like Cropland Capture), this new tool will allow you to upload your own land cover maps, create a validation sample, share out the validation session with your friends, and generate an accuracy report including the confusion matrix.

We hope that this tool will be used by researchers, students and map producers for land cover validation in the future. We also hope that everyone will share their validation data with the rest of the community through the LACO-Wiki database, thereby creating a valuable, open resource that can be used by many people for land cover calibration and validation.

We will be releasing a beta version for testing in the very near future but in the meantime you can subscribe to our mailing list.

More info

Past events

- Ian McCallum attended the ECSA conference on Citizen Science in Barcelona, Spain October 28-29. He presented the use of gaming to incentivise inputs from citizens.
- Dmitry Schepaschenko attended XIV World Forestry Congress in Durban, South Africa September 7-11 with a keynote presentation "A citizen science application for improving knowledge of the spatial distribution of global forests"
- Dmitry Schepaschenko was invited to give a lecture "Biomass Geo-Wiki – an online platform to visualize, analyse and improve biomass datasets" at 4th Regional Workshop on Forest Monitoring: Methods for forest biomass mapping and estimation in the Tropics. October 05-09, 2015 Bogor, Indonesia.
- Linda See attended the International Symposium on Spatial Data Quality in La Grande Motte, France, where she presented the latest developments in LACO-Wiki.
- Inian Moorthy attended JRC's workshop on "Information needs in crop monitoring" in Kiev, Ukraine on October 22-23, 2015. He presented the use of Geo-Wiki and gaming apps, such as Cropland Capture and FotoQuest Austria for land use and land cover monitoring

Upcoming Events

- Linda See will be attending an EU COST workshop at the National Mapping Agency of France (IGN) in Paris, which examines the use of VGI for land cover and data quality issues
- Steffen Fritz will be attending the GEO-XII Plenary & Mexico City Ministerial Summit in Mexico City hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores). He will be representing IIASA at the GEO summit and participating in side events on land cover, GEOGLAM, ConnectinGEO and citizen observatories.
- Myroslava Lesiv and Christoph Perger will be training SIGMA consortium members in the use of Geo-Wiki for validating a new 300m hybrid cropland layer produced by the University of Louvain.
- Linda See will be attending the upcoming Systems Analysis, 2015 conference held at IIASA on November 11-13. She will be speaking with Paul Chatterton of the WWF on "Mobilizing Mass Action through Mobile Devices: Challenges and Opportunities for Science, Policy and Governance."

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