

MARS fact sheet #02

Freshwater Information Platform – www.freshwaterplatform.eu

Over recent years, many European Union funded research projects have investigated freshwaters – ranging from biodiversity related projects to others focusing on pressures and their effects on European inland waters, including appropriate rehabilitation strategies. However, the data generated by these projects is often difficult for water managers, policy makers, scientific communities and the general public to access and use. In order to make this detailed and wide-ranging knowledge of freshwater ecosystems accessible to all, the Freshwater Information Platform was launched: an interactive website integrating results and original data stemming from finished, on-going, and future freshwater research projects.

The platform contains several complementary sections, either providing access to original data or summarising research results in an easily digestible way. All sections are composed as ‘living documents’ that will be continuously improved and updated. Pressures such as water pollution, intense land use and climate change are increasingly threatening the health and diversity of European freshwater ecosystems. The Freshwater Information Platform also provides a collection of research tools, information about freshwater-related policies and relevant European and global networks relating to freshwater science and policy.

Platform sections

The “*Freshwater Biodiversity Data Portal*” provides access to data on the distribution of freshwater organisms (such as fishes, insects and algae), both in Europe and worldwide. The portal helps scientists to advertise and publish their data(base) and to provide tools for the discovery, integration and analysis of open and freely accessible freshwater biodiversity data.

Freshwater Biodiversity Data Portal facts

Number of species:	> 900.000
Total occurrences:	>16millions
Georeferenced occurrences:	>13millions
Visitors per month (first half 2015):	950-1400

Scientists are invited to add their data to the platform, publish their research results and share it with other users inside and outside the scientific community. We also invite other research projects to be part of the platform. As a connecting element we have developed a corporate design and a “member sticker”, which forms a linking element across different websites.

Member of the



The “*Global Freshwater Biodiversity Atlas*” provides a series of interactive maps with different data-layers on freshwater biodiversity richness, threats to freshwaters and the effects of global change on freshwater ecosystems.

Global Freshwater Biodiversity Atlas facts

Maps online:	35
Maps currently under development	24
Maps data requested/agreed on:	40
Map data-layers:	92
Visitors per month (first half 2015):	2300-3100

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The “*Freshwater Species Traits Database*” integrates the knowledge on the ecology of about 20,000 species inhabiting European freshwater ecosystems, including information on their ecological preferences (e.g. species’ habitats, nutrition, pollution tolerance).

Freshwater Species Traits Database facts

	Taxa	Ecological pref.
Fish:	654	21
Macroinvertebrates:	8586	40
Macrophytes:	1083	5
Diatoms:	8868	36
Phytoplankton:	1976	4
Registered users > 800		

The “*Freshwater Metadata*” section provides an overview of hundreds of major data sources related to freshwater research and management and offers the option to publish such data in the Freshwater Metadata Journal.

Further reading

Schmidt-Kloiber A., & Hering D. (2015) www.freshwaterecology.info – An online tool that unifies, standardises and codifies more than 20,000 European freshwater organisms and their ecological preferences. *Ecological Indicators*, 53, 271–282.

Schmidt-Kloiber A., Vogl R., De Wever A., & Martens K. (2014) Editorial - Launch of the Freshwater Metadata Journal (FMJ). *Freshwater Metadata Journal*, 1, 1–4.

St. John, R. “[The Freshwater Information Platform is launched.](#)” *The Freshwater Blog*, May 6, 2015.

St. John, R. “[Freshwaterecology.info: an online database for European freshwater species.](#)” *The Freshwater Blog*, July 6, 2015.

St. John, R. “[A new way of publishing information on freshwater datasets.](#)” *The Freshwater Blog*, October 22, 2014.

This easy way of publishing freshwater (biodiversity) related metadata is aiming to change the perception about data publishing in the freshwater scientific community.

Freshwater Metadatabase facts

Publications (2015):	8 (incl. 4 MARS publications)
Metadata:	314 databases
Publicly available:	212 databases (incl. 19 MARS databases)

The vibrant and widely-read “*Freshwater Blog*” publishes features, research highlights, interviews and podcasts on freshwater science, policy and conservation.

Freshwater Blog facts

Blog posts:	> 310
Overall readers:	> 200.000 (90.000 within MARS)
Readers per month: (Jan-Jun 2015)	5000 - 12.000

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Corporate design

Logo



Button for websites



Simple icon for websites or other uses



Colors



Iconset for website

