

Story telling : Story Map



TYPE OF TOOL: **WEB APPLICATION**



Goals

- ▶ To graphically tell stories through maps.
- ▶ Inform, share, sensitize, and mobilize using narrative text and images.
- ▶ To provide a visual tool that is accessible and integrates various formats and multimedia content (maps, text, photos, video, etc.)
- ▶ Experience capitalization expressed in a simple, dynamic, visual and interactive manner.



Targets

- ▶ Partners
- ▶ Funders, institutions
- ▶ Media
- ▶ General public



Production Steps

DESIGN

A "Story Map" is a Web tool that makes it possible to tell a story, present results or monitoring of a project based on maps and by bringing together images, text, and multimedia content. This tool can be used to create annual reports, for trainings, team presentations, promoting events, etc.

First select the information that is to be shared, identifying "why" this particular information is chosen and for which targets. There are different applications available doing story mapping, for example, map viewing, collecting key points of interest, detailing narratives, presenting several maps, etc. Each application offers a single user experience. Take time to get familiar with the different applications and their components and how they are integrated within the overall story map. Once selected, upload the GIS (Geographic Information System) data and then create the maps using one of the available mapping software programs, i.e., Esri (in the case of ArcGIS Online). After integrating the maps in the Story Map, complete the information by writing simple, nar-

rative texts and then cutting them into short sequences and matching them to the images and/or videos, a little like doing a story board.

PRODUCTION

A web design person can be hired to do this (mapmaker, designer, information graphics specialist, web designer, etc.) but by gaining some basic skills in mapping and web design, it's quite easy to do your own story map but only on the condition that the GIS information and the maps have been uploaded prior. Story maps are part of ArcGIS Online¹ which offers a fee-based solution, however there are also free open source software tools (for non-commercial use, in general) available, for example, Story Map JS². All these software programs are quite simple to use and it is quite easy to learn to master them especially for those already familiar with software such as ArcGIS, MAP Info, Photoshop, InDesign, etc. If using ArcGIS Online, each sample application has a tutorial page which guides you through the creation process.



Content

Story Maps are good way to capture experience and knowledge that has been acquired over a certain time and space. They are good for presenting an update about certain period, highlighting the evolution or changes using maps as a visual support. The maps can also be interactive.

MESSAGES

Changes, comparisons, demonstrations, proofs, statistics, prospects. Advocacy, Call for Mobilization.

IMAGES

- High quality Images and videos – but not so heavy in order to ensure optimal download
- Be aware of copyrights and to give author credit for any images used.

Key Points: Prepare in advance the text, images, and maps (make sure to have good quality images). Do not use too much text nor have too many links. Adapt the text to the target audience. Developers also have the option of downloading the source code and configuring the application on their own Web servers which allows for more personalization of the application.



Distribution

Story Maps are only available online. The URL address can be shared via email, website, social networks, etc.

Example



- **The Story Map: "Follow the evolution of vegetation cover in the Tristao Managed Natural Reserve" (Guinea).** See Example Worksheet below and the site as well.

EXAMPLE Story map

STORY MAPPING: THE EVOLUTION OF VEGETATION COVER IN THE TRISTAO MPA

Context:

The Story Map: "Follow the evolution of vegetation cover in the Tristao Managed Natural Reserve in Guinea" was developed under the project "Management of West African Marine and Coastal Biodiversity through the reinforcement of Conservation and Monitoring Initiatives in MPAs (Bicos)" (2009-2015)

Partners: FFEM, AFD, OGUIPAR, RAMPAO, MAVA. Production: Terra Maris.

Type of Tool

Web Application

Language

French

Technical Characteristics

Composed of 14 slides made up of maps, satellite imagery, aerial/field photographs, graphics, links to documents (PDF), videos.

Targets

- Tristao MPA managers
- MPA network members, partners
- NGOs, associations
- Institutions, funders, media
- Scientists
- General public

Geographical scope

International

Key Messages

Presentation of the results and knowledge acquired, the methodologies used, an overall summary of the project with all the products (maps) develop, future prospects.

Usability



Requires an Internet connection; also requires basic GIS skills and someone who knows how to develop maps.

Use over time



Replicability*



Each project is a "prototype": The information has to first be collected then selected, upload the specific GIS data, create the maps, etc.



Goals

- Tell story of how the vegetation cover of the natural reserve has evolved between 1990 and 2014 and the working methods employed through the use of a visual tool, that is accessible and incorporates several formats and media.
- Inform, share, sensitization.
- Experience capitalization in a simple, dynamic, visual and interactive manner.

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- Good design and lay-out.
- Texts not too long and accessible; high quality images.
- The maps are not fixed: possible to zoom in/out.
- Diversified content (satellite imagery, aerial and field photographs, graphics, video, etc.).
- Some interactive parts.
- Good brief presentation of the key information with links to get more details by downloading complete documents.

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- Develop more the interactive parts, this would be a plus
- Some of the document files are too heavy for downloading.
- Think about creating a smaller visual format to make this content available for smaller screens, e.g., smart phones.

* Capacity to be reproduced as is or with few modifications for another organization and/or to be replicated (reprint, copy, etc.).