



Africamuseum:

- Heterogenous multidisciplinary collections
- Digitization using wide range of tools, techniques and methods

Two kinds of projects involving volunteers:

- Citizen Science
- Crowdsourcing

COLLECTION FIGURES

Cultural Anthropology & History

122 000
ethnographic artefacts

75 000
archaeological artefacts

9000
musical instruments

4000
ancient maps

500 000
historical photographs

20 000
historical objects
and Western artworks

3 km
historical
archives

70
historical films on the
Belgian Congo, Rwanda
Burundi (1940-1960)

Biology

10 000 000
specimens among which:

6 000 000
insects

1 200 000
fishes

500 000
butterflies

300 000
spiders

195 000
amphibians

150 000
birds

135 000
mammals

80 000
wood samples

62 000
reptiles

17 000
snakes

Earth Sciences

264 000
aerial photographs

160 000
rock samples

25 000
maps

22 000
palaeontological
specimens

19 000
mineral specimens

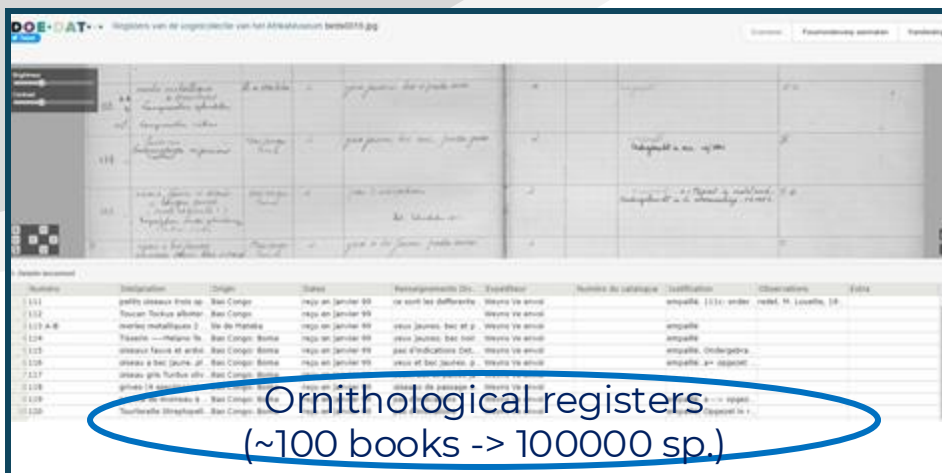
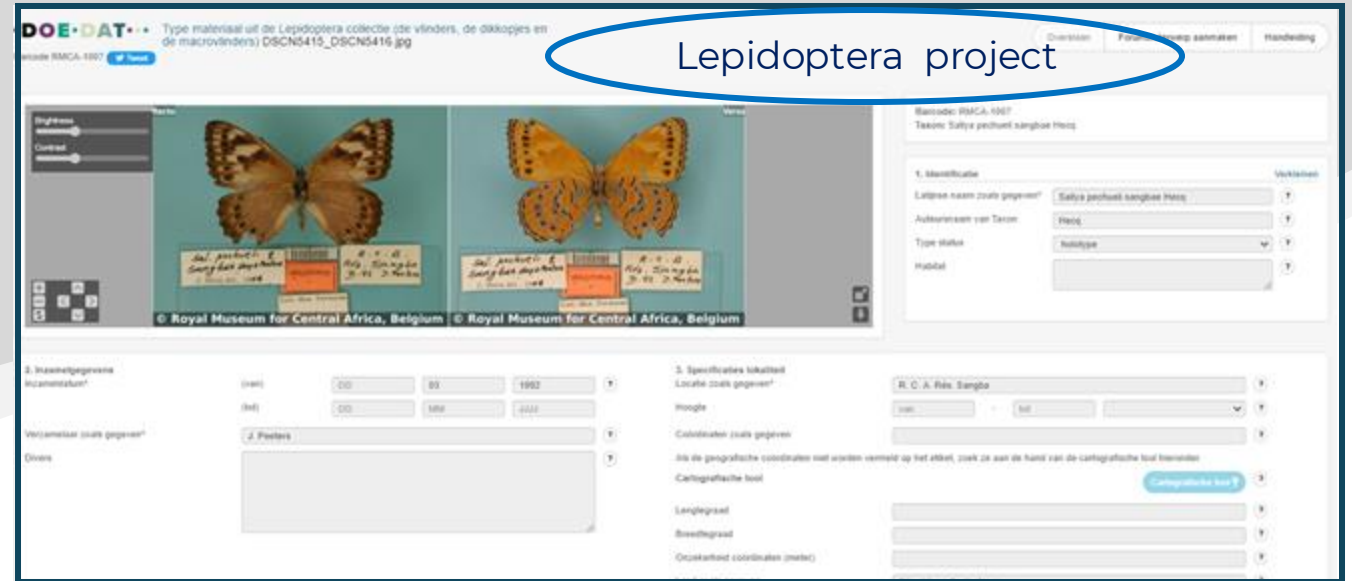
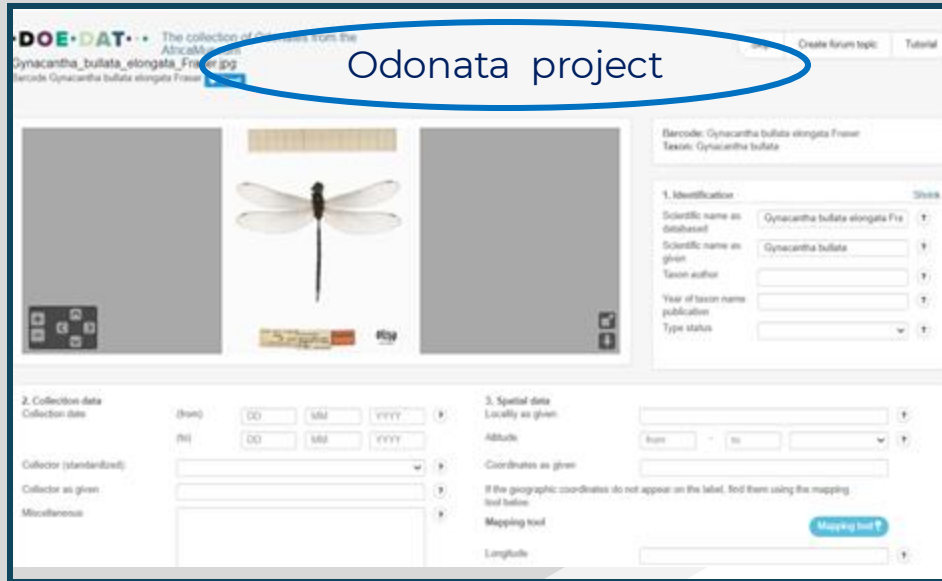
1 km
geological
archives

Crowdsourcing projects:

- Data collection
- Online
- Require no specific skills
- No training
- Anonymous

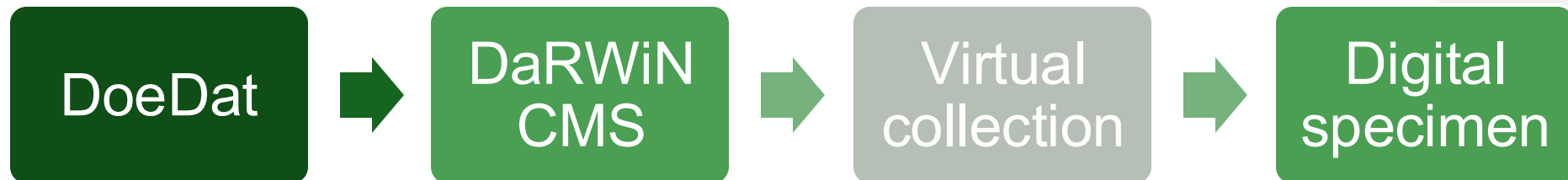
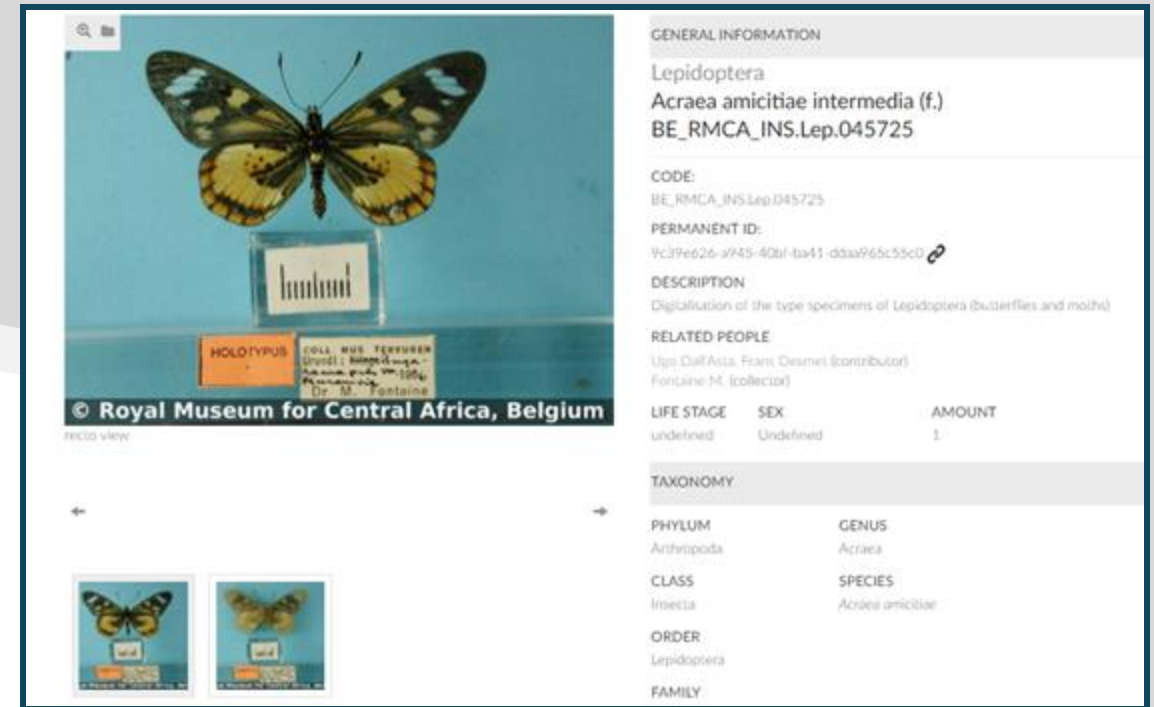
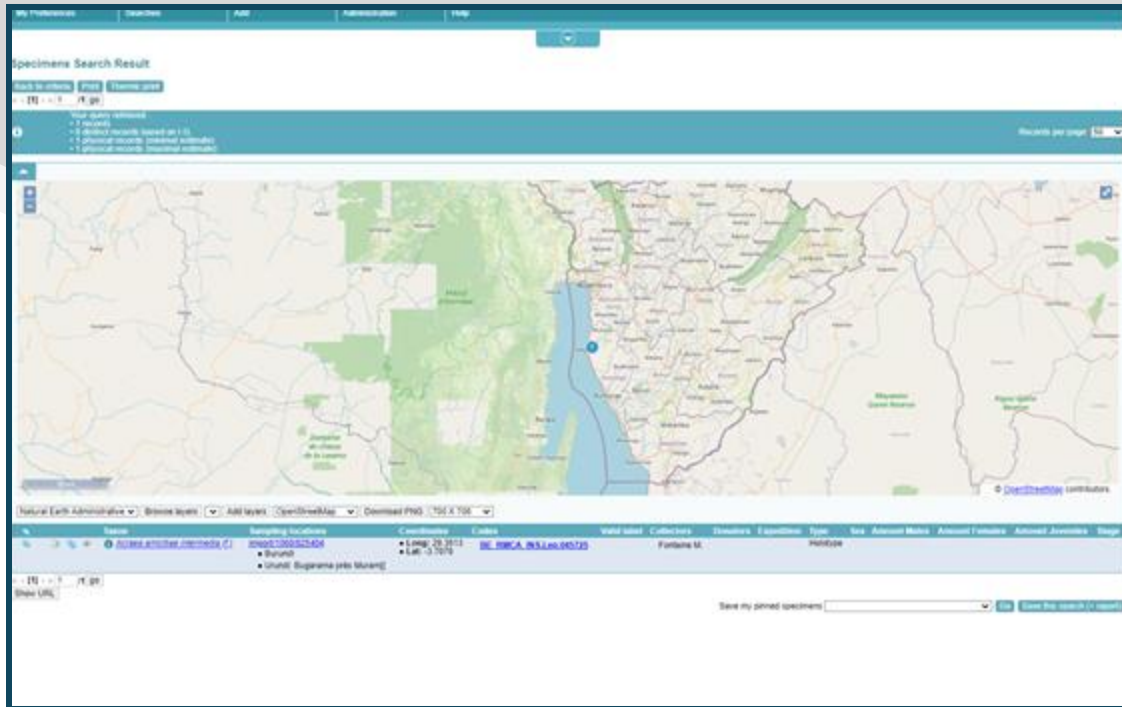


- On DoeDat crowdsourcing platform run by Meise Botanic garden (www.doedat.be)
- Transcription of handwritten text (labels, records in registers, repertories)



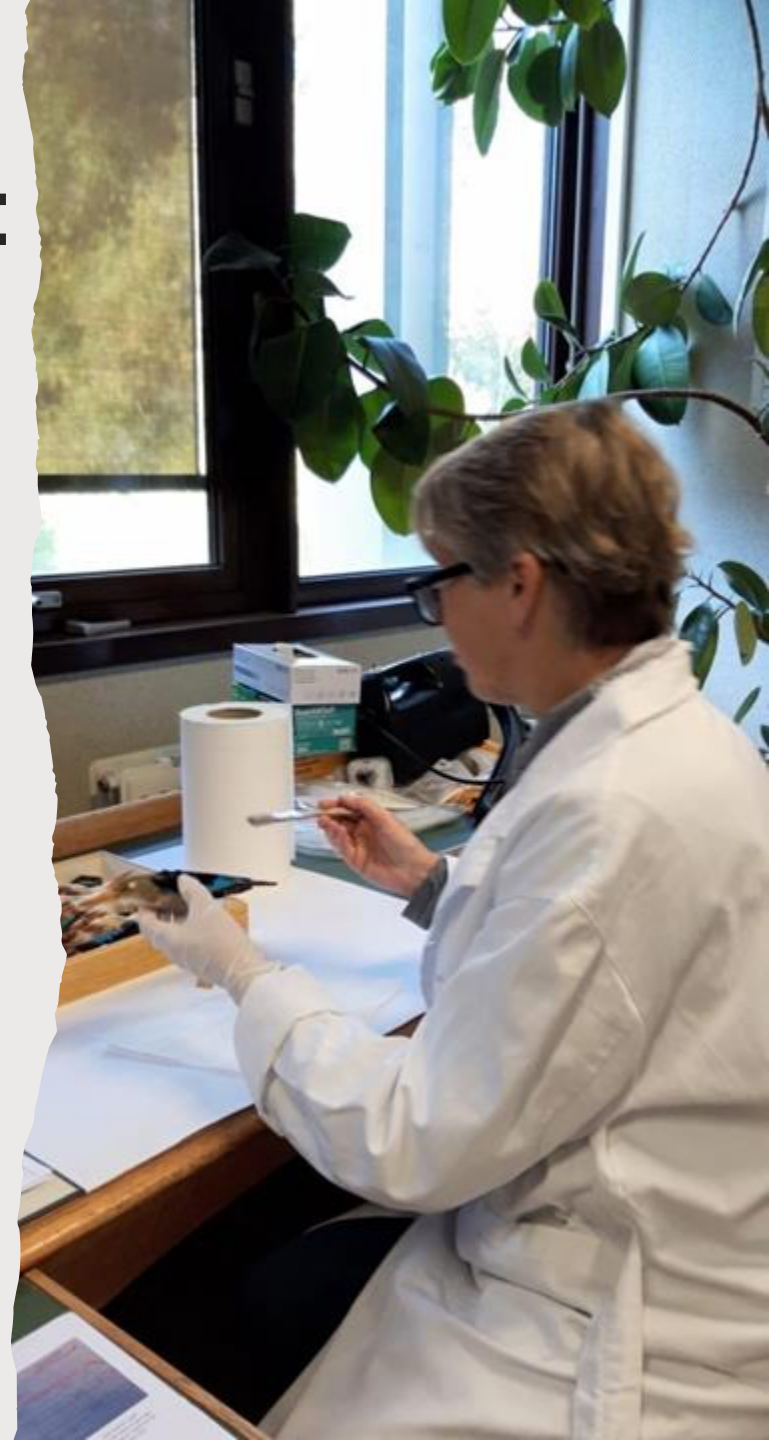
Outputs:

The transcribed data are downloaded as csv. After cleaning, the data is uploaded to our collection management system **DaRWiN** and the images to the **Virtual collection**.



Citizen Science projects:

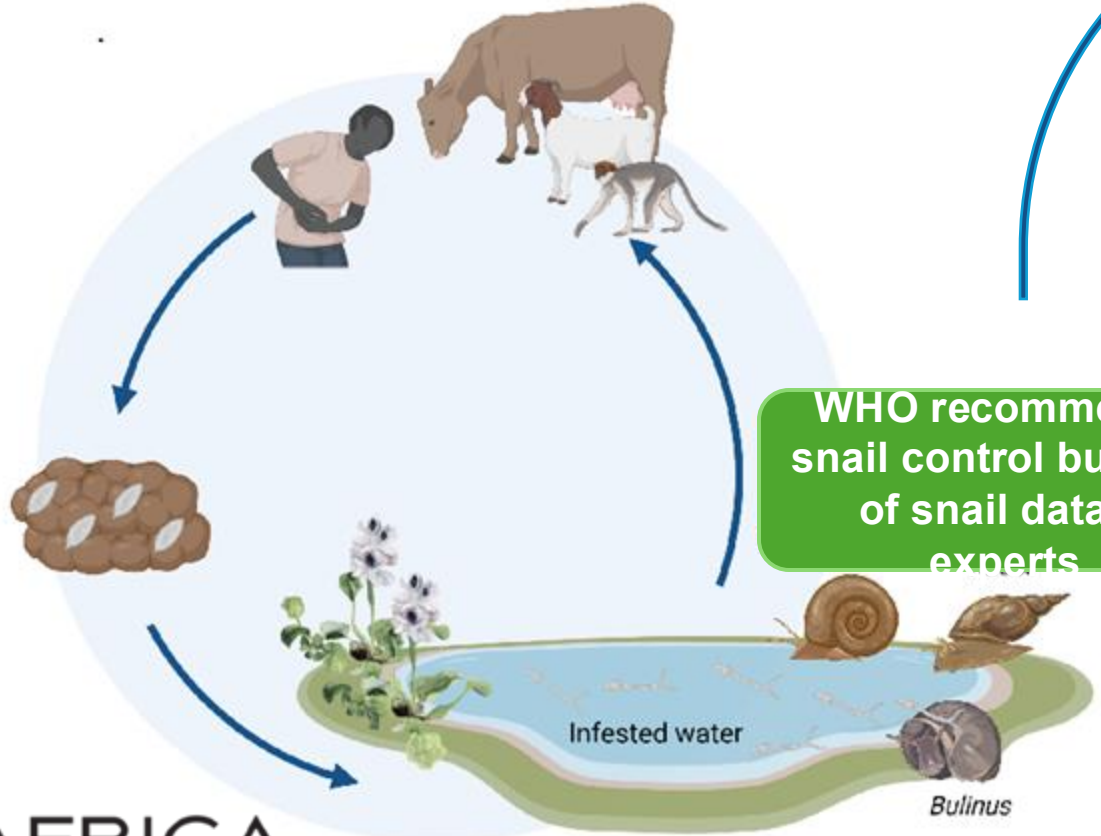
- Participative
- Answering specific scientific question, monitoring
- On site
- Require training or specific scientific protocols



ATRAP project | Prevention of snail-borne diseases



Bilharzia: a tropical disease transmitted by freshwater **snails**



WHO recommends snail control but lack of snail data & experts



Citizens help in snail monitoring



Protective gear + snail scoop



Smartphone



Snail ID key

Citizen scientists + expert



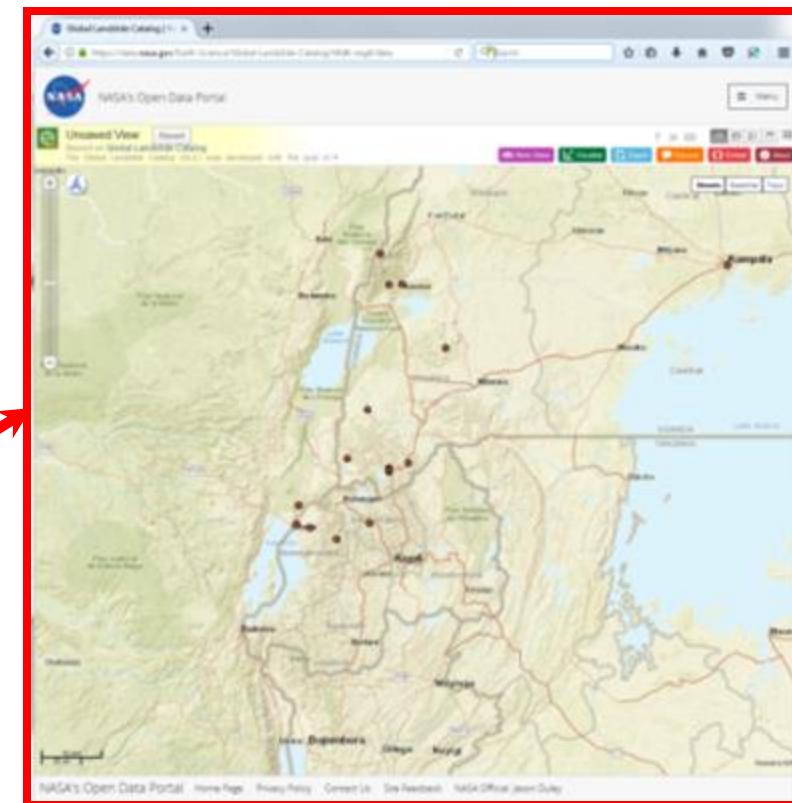
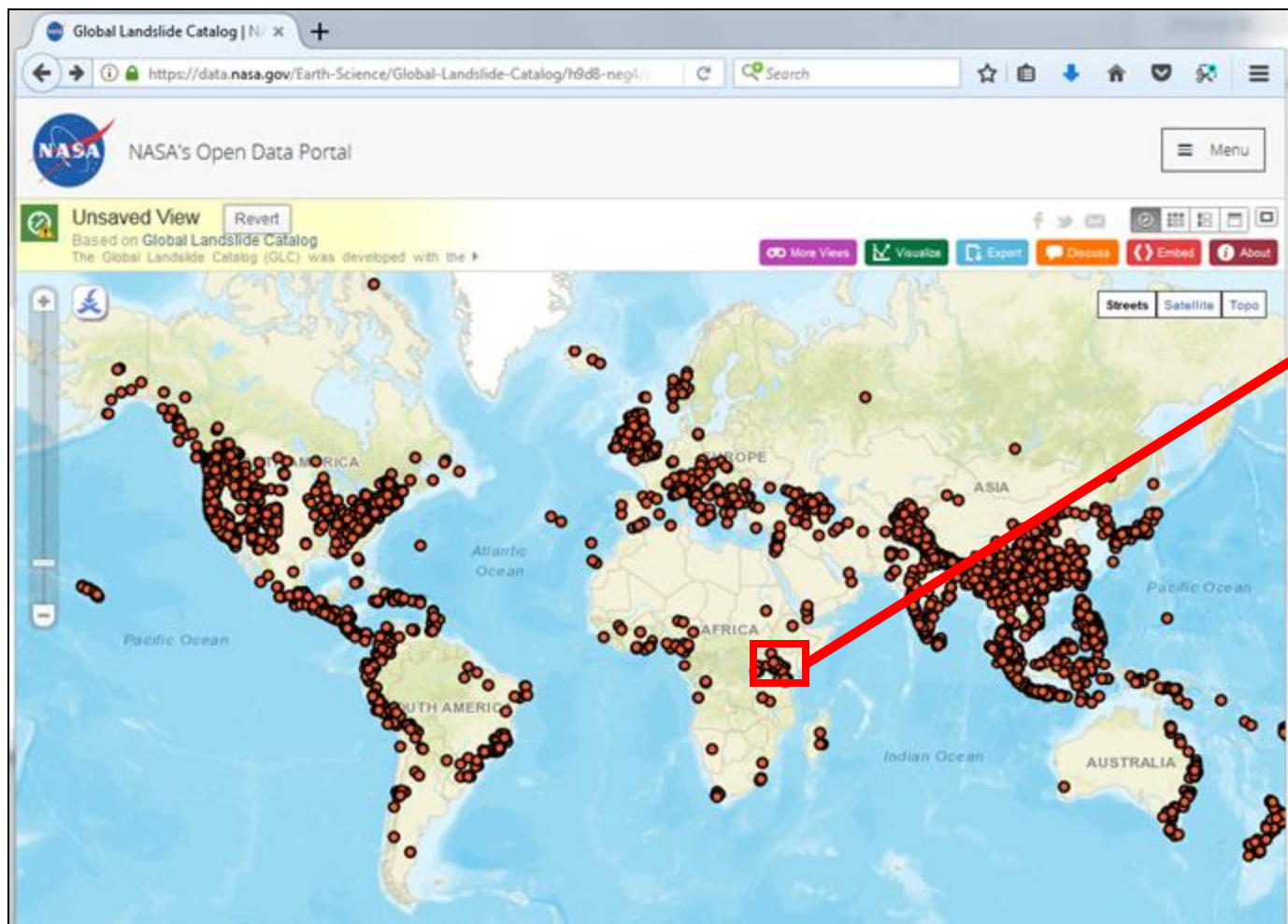
KoBoToolbox to send snail data to the cloud

78 locations in a weekly basis

Predictive modelling of disease transmission sites

HARISSA -> GeoObservers (2019-now)

OBJECTIVE: Localize and quantify “natural” disaster occurrence and impacts



CRESCO 2023: Citizen REScuers for Collections

- Citizens and researchers join forces to study collections and make them accessible worldwide.
- CRESCO has received funding from the IMPETUS consortium and is part of the IMPETUS Accelerator for Citizen Science program.



Join the tree squad in the AfricaMuseum

Do you prefer using machines and technology? Researcher Ruben De Blaere needs your help to digitize the Tervuren wood collection and develop state-of-the-art wood identification



Join the bird squad in the AfricaMuseum

Would you rather be more hands-on? You can join Annelore Nackaerts, collection manager, and Larissa Smirnova, research assistant, inside the AfricaMuseum. They are currently cleaning and



Join the bug squad from home

Volunteer online on the platform DoeDat, from the comfort of your own home! Wouter Dekoninck, Entomology collection curator at the Institute of Natural Sciences, needs your help to

Vyakulani Africa 2024 | Record the food traditions of the African diasporas in

- Qualitative data: interviews with the African Diaspora community members and photos of dishes cooked in Belgium
- The project helped formulate new research questions and was reconducted for a second edition in 2025-2026
- Bottom-up methodology: The Food Bridge vzw facilitates and maintains the connection between researchers, diaspora community members and citizen scientists

-> **Vyakulani Diaspora Women**



BE-MUSIC project | Create a multi-lingual information platform for musical heritage



Volunteers helping to identify the rightful owners of the various sound recordings. Manon takes particular charge of unpublished collections, while Franck and Julien work together on published collections.

Plan your visit ▾

See & Do ▾

Discover ▾

Get involved ▾

Learn ▾

Research ▾

About us ▾



Project title

Pestfly Patrol

Monitoring action of the Oriental fruit fly (*Bactrocera dorsalis*) by citizens in Belgium

Location

Belgium

Duration

July 2026 – August 2026





Empowering Diversity in Museum Volunteering

Menu

About MARVI

RESOURCES

PARTNERS

ACTIVITIES

CONTACT

✓ **Volunteers collection management**

Are you motivated to contribute to the Collections Management Team at the AfricaMuseum in Tervuren?

The Africa Museum is currently seeking 10 volunteers across two profiles:

Profile 1: Volunteer Collections Management — **Art Handler / Registrar**

Profile 2: Volunteer Conservator-Restorer — **Ethnographic Collections**

If you come from a migrant, bicultural, or diaspora background and have a working knowledge of French, Dutch, or English, register now!

Social impact (from Cresco)

- 26 citizen scientists (14 on site)
- 50% women
- 43% had a migrant background
- 171 event participants
- 56,000 on social media

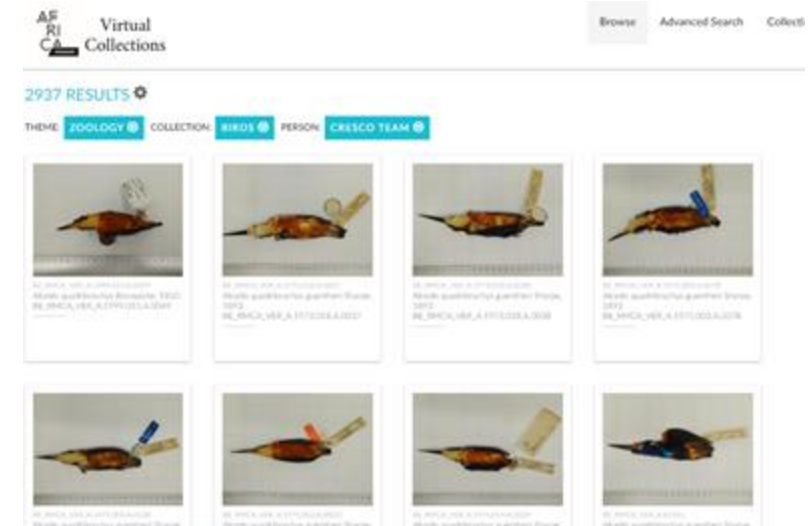
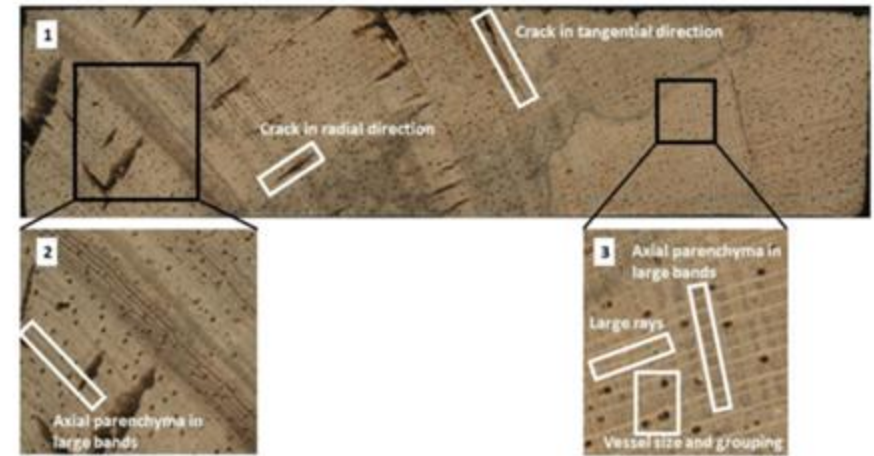
On site:

- 90% more confidence in the Africamuseum
- 64% would register for nature conservation training
- 73% more skills in scientific research



Scientific and economic impact:

- 3 published datasets
- Contribution to SmartWoodID, the first reference database of wood samples for AI training
- New methods for wood samples and for the digitization of glass slides
- Minimum cost savings: €26,800



Conclusions | Added value

For collection and research:

- ✓ Accelerates data collection
- ✓ Expanding data collection at a scale impossible for professionals alone
- ✓ Enriching metadata for global discovery
- ✓ Scales up data analysis
- ✓ Physical preservation support

For monitoring and field research:

- ✓ CS can help answer many of society's questions
- ✓ CS tackles data gap in (Central) Africa
- ✓ CS contributes to raising awareness in the studied fields
- ✓ CS engage the community but...
- ✓ Co-creation is a key!

For society:

- ✓ Reconnect science with society -> Open Science
- ✓ Community engagement
- ✓ Fostering education

Challenges

- CS in Africa is not volunteering; it has a cost!
- CS network development requires human & financial resources
- Collection-oriented institution can only benefit from CS and/or crowdsourcing if there is enough support for collection management and digitization.

