

Located in Belgium, the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) hosts some of the World's largest collections on Central Africa. The Museum is active in developing Web-based applications to enable both the public and the Scientific Community to access these collections.

Since 2002, the Museum has been involved in several projects based on the Zope and Plone open source frameworks. Each of these projects is testimony to the versatility and user friendliness of these systems. This document describes the main current projects.

-Metafro – Infosys standing for **Metadata African Organization - Information System**.

Metafro Infosys is a catalogue of data sets and data sources related to Central Africa. These data sets include documents, metadata information on institutions and research projects, library catalogues and collections. On completion, users will have access to more than 2.000.000 records including 8 library catalogues, 65 collections and several thousand documents (in PDF and word formats). Powered by Plone, Metafro includes a membership access allowing users to upload their information directly into the system. It is linked to proprietary database software. www.metafro.be

-The MARS project standing for **Multimedia Archaeological Research System**.

Mars is a research action funded by the Belgian Science Policy (www.belspo.be). Three Belgian federal institutions are involved: the RMCA, the Royal Belgium Institute of Natural Sciences, the Royal Museum of Arts and History (RMAH), and Aragne a consulting company. The project goal is to give access through a single portal to archaeological collections physically divided in the 3 institutions. This portal uses a multiple host search engine based on Zope and Plone. It will be hosted at the RMAH and queries will be sent to the other institutions using a wireless connection over long distance (20 km). This wireless system is being tested as part of the project. www.naturalsciences.be/MARS

-The Geological Archive project aspires to establish in Belgium and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) an information system based on a network of geological databases disseminated across both countries. The Belgian Directorate General for Development Cooperation funds the project. Several institutions are involved including the University of Lubumbashi, the CRGM (Centre de Recherches Géologiques et Minières), the MINIMINES (Ministère de l'Énergie et des Mines), MIBA (Société Minière de Bakwanga) and GECAMINES (Société Générale des Carrières et des Mines). Starting in 2005, this project will be based on Plone.

-The RMCA's website

It includes a customized Content Management System (CMS). This site makes use of many Zope and Plone features as multilingual content, customized skins, WYSIWYG editor. www.africamuseum.be

-The management system of the RMCA publication service

It is an internal web application based on Zope. It is accessible to visitors at the Museum Shop to purchase books. It allows the publication service to manage its stock, purchase order and invoices.

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