

QGIS Plugins Dokumentation

Documentation of all QGIS plugins developed and maintained in-house.

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Vowa Baselayers – Purpose, Installation, Usage

Purpose of the QGIS Plugin

There are a number of commonly used geodata available locally at the servers of Vogelwarte as well as online at swisstopo. Users of QGIS who want to use these data in their visualisations require specific knowledge of the data and database structure in order to find the appropriate layers.

It is the goal of this plugin to make overview, access, and use of the commonly used geodata as easy as possible. The plugin presents the data so that the users recognise what data are available. It allows selecting the data and adding the selected data to the user's QGIS project. Furthermore, it gives descriptions about the layer and links to metadata.

Installation

In QGIS, go to "Plugins" and "Manage and Install Plugins...". Click on "All" and type "VoWa". You will see all available QGIS plugins created and maintained in-house. Make sure the required plugin has a checkmark next to it.

If the requested plugin does not show in "All" go to "Settings" and make sure that Plugin Repository "VoWa-Plugins 3" is listed. If it is not, contact the Scientific IT (see Contact below).

Usage

Prerequisite: You need to have read access to the Spatial DB.

You open the plugin by either selecting "Plugins" > "Vowa Baselayers" > "Vowa Baselayers" from the menu, or by clicking on the plugin's icon in the toolbar. The plugin may ask for a master authentication password once. It then presents a dialog with a number of tabs. Each tab corresponds to a category of base layer maps and contains a list of various such map layers. You find descriptions and links to metadata for most layers.

Select the requested map layers by clicking on them. By holding Shift or Ctrl/Cmd while clicking you add more layers to or remove them from the selection. If you change to another tab the layers you already selected remain selected. Please, find an indication of the total number of layers you

have selected in all tabs above the tabs.

By double-clicking on a layer you add this individual layer directly to the QGIS project without having to click on the "Add" button.

The language of the plugin corresponds to the language of your QGIS. However, if you prefer to have the map layers displayed in a differing language click on the language buttons at the top right of the dialog. The same layers will appear with translated title and description. (If the description and metadata fields are presented as links, the link label will not be translated.)

If you have selected the required map layers click "Add" to add these layers to the current QGIS project. The layer name will correspond to the title field as shown in the map layer list. You may rename or otherwise manipulate the layers in QGIS. The dialog will remain open so that you can add more layers if required, even the same layers multiple times. You close the dialog with the according button at the bottom right.

Implementation and Maintenance

The QGIS plugin uses tables in the schema qgis_tools in our DPSpatial database for storing the information on the layers to be loaded into QGIS. The documentation is [on this page](#).

You find further information on the development and maintenance of the plugin and the layers it provides [on this page](#).

Contact

GIS, maintenance data layers: [Jérôme Guélat](#)

Scientific IT, implementation: [Bernhard Schneider](#)

VoWa Conservation

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The plugin is configured so that all text is always displayed in German, independent of the language setting of QGIS. This is implemented by setting all translations – EN, FR, IT – to the German text. The non-German text can be found in the comment lines of the translations (see .ts files). (This implementation follows the requirement expressed by Gaby on Feb 16th, 2026.)

Contact

VoWa MAA

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VoWa Synthese

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Vowa Baselayers – Implementation and Maintenance

Implementation

The QGIS plugin is implemented as standard QGIS plugin with Python. It uses tables in the schema `qgis_tools` in the DPSpatial database for storing the information on the layers to be loaded into QGIS. The documentation on the tables of this schema is [on this page](#). The QGIS plugin repository can be found [on the Vogelwarte GitLab](#).

Purpose, installation, and usage of the plugin are documented [on this page](#).

Layer Types

The following layer types can be provided through the QGIS plugin:

- WMS
- WMTS
- QGIS Layer File
- Shapefile
- GeoPackage
- GeoTIFF
- PostGIS Vector Layer

Each layer type requires a set of parameters so that it is loaded properly in QGIS. You find the specification [on this page](#).

Test Layers

In order to add layers in the table `vowabaselayers` that are only visible for development and test users you have to do the following:

1. Create the environment variable "VOWA_BASELAYERS_DEV=true" on your computer.
2. Add the layers and give them IDs greater than 1000.

&-Character in Tab Titles

The QGIS plugin replaces '&' characters in tab titles by default with '_'. If you want to use the '&' character in tab titles type it twice. For instance, the tab title "Lakes && Rivers" will be shown as "Lakes & Rivers" in the QGIS plugin.