

A new study revitalizes EU investments in geoscientific information

Brussels, 20 May – Today, at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, EuroGeoSurveys presented the final results of EGDI-Scope, a 2 year feasibility study on the creation of a European Geological Data Infrastructure (EGDI). The study sets the basis for a **Geological Service for Europe that will facilitate easy open access to digital geological data at the European scale**. EGDI-Scope estimated the investments made in current and past EU-funded geoscientific research projects – for which results are no longer easily accessible – to be in the order of 400-700 million €, and proposes an e-infrastructure which gathers data from these projects, thereby contributing to European policies development in relevant domains such as mineral resources, soils, groundwater, energy and natural hazards.

At the EGDI-Scope final event, EuroGeoSurveys and representatives of the European Institutions discussed the results of the study with key stakeholders. The creation of a sustainable, long term European platform on geoscience disciplines (the EGDI), that will collect and provide high quality harmonized geological data for many cross-boundary applications, is seen as a necessity for the EU.

Most importantly, EGDI-Scope has identified a methodology to sustain results from past, on-going and future EU projects having a direct impact on EU policies, such as the Raw Materials Initiative, the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan), the Soil Thematic Strategy, the Water Framework Directive and the INSPIRE Directive. In fact, **despite the large investments made by the European Commission, the majority of the EU-funded projects and their resulting data have disappeared after only three years from completion, resulting in a huge loss of taxpayers' money**. The EGDI will therefore facilitate continuity and sustainability of these EU projects by coordinating, collecting and archiving high quality data from geoscience disciplines making them available in the long term.

Robert Tomas, EU & EEA INSPIRE Coordination Team at the DG Joint Research Centre, declared: "*The realization of the EGDI, that builds upon INSPIRE, from an ICT point of view poses a technological challenge that goes beyond the current scope of the INSPIRE Directive. The EGDI will open up the wealth of geoscience information held by the National Geological Surveys to other scientific communities for addressing complex environmental or natural resource related phenomena*".

The system will support strategic decision processes related to Europe's societal and growth challenges and international initiatives such as GEOSS, the Global Earth Observation System of Systems. EGDI-Scope sets the basis for a common European Geological Service to support national and EU institutions in effective decision-making and strategic planning related to the subsurface.

Background - EGDI-Scope was co-financed by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, and was administered by the European Commission's DG Connect and executed by a project consortium of four National Geological Surveys (NL, UK, FR, DK), the Catholic University of Leuven (BE) and EuroGeoSurveys with the direct contribution of the 32 member European Geological Surveys.

EuroGeoSurveys (EGS), The Geological Surveys of Europe, is a not-for-profit organisation representing 32 National Geological Surveys in Europe, with an overall workforce of several thousand scientists.

Links <http://www.eurogeosurveys.org>

<http://www.egdi-scope.eu/>

Contacts For information please contact the EuroGeoSurveys Secretariat

36-38, Rue Joseph II- 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel +32 2 888 75 53

Communications Manager | Ms Claudia Delfini

claudia.delfini@eurogeosurveys.org