

Interview with Johnny Fredericia

Managing Director, Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland

Introduction

European Geological Data Infrastructure scope study (EGDI-Scope) has prepared the way towards easier access to digital geological data at European scale. It has proposed the creation of an e-infrastructure, a single sustainable, permanent and repository of shared knowledge (in the form of primary and derived data) of the Geological Surveys of Europe. This will be called EGDI. The aim is to obtain an efficient and comprehensive multidisciplinary research platform in Europe.

EGDI will coordinate, collect and archive high-quality data from geo-science disciplines across Europe. EGDI will integrate this data and information and make it available in a variety of formats, including multidisciplinary products, resources and services. It will make data available for free and as accessible as possible for everyone. All data and services will be available through a portal where the different data types can be overlaid and interrogated.

Why is EGDI-Scope so important?

It is important because it is a backbone of our strategy and if we succeed we will meet the expectations that EU has for us. One point is delivering useful information in a harmonized way and another point in the future is to make the investments in EU projects alive and useful after the finalization of the projects through EGDI.

There has been a quite large investment in a number of EU-projects, but unfortunately many projects are often «stuck» when they are finished. Keeping the results alive is a task that we can take on better than anybody else.

Which are the main benefits for your Geological Survey?

The primary benefits are not for my Survey, but for the society. The benefits for the Surveys in Europe as a whole will be that the surveys – including my own - is chosen to perform EU Project in our working field as a first choice, because we are not only making the actual projects, we are also building stone by stone an infrastructure the Commission and other stakeholders, like our national governments, need for cross-boundary applications and assessments.

EGDI-Scope is coming to the end.

Do you think it is meeting the European Commission main expectations?

Yes in this sense it is a Scoping study, and not the implementation of a system. That is why we need to make an effort to convince the EU that now we are ready to build the system. We do have to demonstrate it now, until we can apply and hopefully get the funding to help us to do it, but we need also to put our own efforts in this process to get in going.

So we are moving in the right direction?

I think we are moving in the right direction. I think it is the backbone of our strategy and our mission as National Geological Surveys joining together to make our European Geological Service.

If the results reached by EGDI-Scope will satisfy the expectations, what might the next step be?

I think the next step is to apply for getting the funding but until we succeed we have to begin on our own resources. We need to prepare a truly targeted proposal in our application and I think we still probably need to tailor it a bit at the end of the Scoping study.

Do you have any suggestions to be successful in the final part of the project?

I think we are in front of the challenges to reach our main stakeholders and this is a building process: funding the infrastructure that is useful for politicians, for the Commission and for other stakeholders. What is a bit different compared to traditional research projects is that the result is also an infrastructure. I think we need to stay in contact with the stakeholders which include the Commission but also our national governments, so that we can have support from our Ministers.



Johnny Fredericia, Managing Director, Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland