

Statement of the Geological Surveys of Europe (EuroGeoSurveys)
at the Tenth Plenary Meeting and Ministerial Summit of the Group on
Earth Observations - **GEO-X**
Geneva, Switzerland, 17th January 2014

Mister Chair,
Honourable Ministers,
Members of the GEO Executive Committee,
Madam Director of the GEO Secretariat,
Distinguished delegates,

EuroGeoSurveys, on behalf of 31 national Geological Surveys in Europe, would like to thank the Government of Switzerland for hosting us.

We have been involved into GEOSS since the very beginning, and we are pleased to see GEOSS progressing every year, making all of us more and more conscious of its potential.

Under this perspective we fully endorse the Geneva Declaration. We especially note that, even if major steps still need to be made, in-situ data provision is now almost unanimously acknowledged by the GEO community as essential to the progress of GEOSS. This, at the same time, makes us, at EuroGeoSurveys, more and more aware of the contribution we bring to GEOSS.

The geosciences community is one of the world's largest in-situ data providers. The huge data sets held by the geological surveys include several hundred thousands of records in areas like geohazards mapping, groundwater, soil geochemistry or mineral resources. Moreover the Geological Surveys of Europe operate in various fields relevant to the development of GEOSS, directly addressing issues of concern for society, such as natural disasters, agriculture, health, energy, mineral resources, water and climate.

In order to help GEOSS to advance further it is necessary that the global geological map data, which the geological community serves to GEOSS through the OneGeology portal, is complemented by as many as possible of the previously mentioned geological data sets.

For this reason we have almost completed a detailed 24-months scoping study, co-financed by the European Commission, which is assessing the functional, legal and technical requirements needed to develop a European Geological Data Infrastructure - EGDI, where geological data sets and derived information services developed under the EGS umbrella will be integrated.

Commissioner Potočník,

The European Geological Data Infrastructure, building on OneGeology-Europe, will bring together a huge amount of federated European geological data on marine geology, geohazards, geochemistry, mineral resources, geo-energy and groundwater, which will be served under one single portal.

Examples of such data sets include the PanGeo project deliverables - a free geohazards information service for Europe, which has just completed, for 52 of the largest urban areas of the European Union, a comprehensive ground stability layer and a geohazards summary on natural hazards of geological origin, such as earthquakes, landslides, volcanism or floods; the European Geochemical Atlas of Agricultural and Grazing Land Soils (GEMAS) - a project unique in the world concluded and presented last month jointly with FAO; the ProMine database that contains almost 13,000 records on mineral deposits in Europe; a complete coverage of the geological mapping of the European seas (EMODnet-Geology), which will be ready in 2016; or the data catalogue of the forthcoming European Minerals Yearbook, which is currently being developed by the Minerals4EU project.

Minister Gallagher,

We expect that, once operational, the European Geological Data Infrastructure will tremendously boost the GEOSS capacity to deliver, and will serve as an instrument of further cooperation with other continents. We strongly believe on our potential role from this point

of view and, under this perspective, we need to emphasise the excellent cooperation with the United States Geological Survey - USGS.

Moreover, Minister Hanekom,

A major capacity building effort is already being carried out jointly with the Organisation of African Geological Surveys, aiming to cover the whole of Africa. The results of this feasibility study, in which the South Africa's Council for Geoscience plays a key role, and that will support the AfriGEOSS initiative, will be presented at the European Union - African Union Ministerial Summit next March in Brussels. The previous week the Directors General of the Geological Surveys of Europe will meet to discuss with their colleagues Directors from United States, Canada, Russia, South-East Asia, Latin America and Africa - therefore covering the whole globe, except Oceania - on the open exchange and on the joint provision of geoscientific data.

Through these actions we also confirm our commitment to contribute to the implementation of the GEO Work Plan and express our full endorsement to the Geneva Declaration.

Thank you for your attention.