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1. Study for the European Parliament about the Governance and Financing of GMES

At the request of the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, in December 2009 the European Techno-Economic Policy Support Network (ETEPS AISBL) issued a study entitled 'The EU programme for Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES): governance and financing'. This study introduces the GMES programme and its components, draws lessons learned from a comparison with the Galileo programme and critically analyses the governance and financing of GMES. Furthermore, the study develops policy recommendations based on the main findings.

Starting by the GMES applications and strategic importance, the study states that GMES can be the appropriate strategic tool to support Europe on geopolitical issues through unified Earth Observation. GMES will provide the EU with a tool for participating in the international efforts relating to the July 2005 G8 recommendation to strengthen the global climate system. Moreover, the study underlines that GMES makes an important contribution to serving the EU's civil security needs.

While describing the distinction between the Core Services and Downstream Services of GMES, the study points out that the most significant difference is that Downstream Services are processed for and financed by the private sector. Due to the complexity of GMES, related to the integration of space-based and in-situ data, the study is of the view that the GMES capacity can only be built up progressively, based on identified priorities and using existing elements whenever possible.

When making comparison between Galileo and GMES, the study stresses very slow development to date for both space programs, leading to delays and cost overruns. The reasons for these problems are similar:

- Unclear programme tasks from the outset;
- Insufficient political support;
- Inadequately defined roles for the decision makers;
- Unclear plans for revenue generation.

Regarding the governance of GMES, the study concludes that it has a very complex structure which can lead to a number of shortcomings. Therefore there is a potential for improvement in this regard, including the necessity to integrate a Security Board into the inner structure of GMES as well as to strengthen the interlinkages between the different institutions and to assess the potential market for the Downstream Services.

As regards the financing of GMES, the study recalls that until 2008 the main contributions came from EC Research Framework Programmes and ESA, and were mostly dedicated to research activities. It was only after 2008 that funding was dedicated to pre-operational and operational activities. At the current stage questions concerning the financial relationship between the EU and ESA still remain open which explains the need for a longer-term financing agreement to contribute to stable working conditions. The contribution of Member States to GMES depends mostly on political priorities and the expectations of the outcomes for their space industries. Finally, the commercial space industry could also be considered as a source of financial contributions to GMES, but only as a limited one.

Among policy recommendations expressed by the study remain the following:

- Ensure that it is possible to exchange information between GMES and Galileo;
- Improve the GMES structure thanks to clear governance and decision-making structures;
- Establish a balance between restructuring processes and stable working conditions;
- Realise the fast track services as soon as possible in order to improve the visibility of GMES;
- Ensure a structured dialogue among all stakeholders due to the user-driven approach of GMES;
- Secure new and sustainable sources of finance for GMES in the long run;
- Create a market for private end users;
- Create a single budget line for GMES, with clearly defined coordination activities between ESA, EC and Member States as well as the involvement of the private sector.

The study can be found at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/studies/download.do?language=en&file=28551#search=%20PE%20429.985%20-%20>

2. Proposal for a Regulation on GMES and its Initial Operations (2011-2013) - under Scrutiny in the European Parliament

The European Commission's proposal of 20 May 2009 for Regulation on a Community programme for Earth observation (GMES) and the rules for the implementation of GMES initial operations (2011-2013) is currently under scrutiny in the European Parliament, as part of the co-decision procedure. The Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy is responsible for the proposal with MEP Mr Glante Norbert (S&D) who is in charge of drafting the report, while the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs have to give their opinions on the proposal.

On 11 November 2009 Mr Vittorio Prodi (S&D) presented the draft opinion of the Environment Committee. The latter considers the Commission's proposal for Regulation as an important tool to respond to the increased research and civil protection needs, given the seriousness of global warming effects on the environment. Mr Prodi expressed, however, concerns about the funding structure of the space component, notably the fact that the proposed regulation only covers financial needs for the period 2011-2013, while for the period 2014-2017 decisions have not been taken yet. The amendments proposed by Mr Prodi include the following:

- Climate change and its impacts need to be stressed as first focus of GMES activities;
- GEOSS should be clearly mentioned given Europe's contribution to it through GMES;
- The European Environment Agency (EEA) role should be highlighted in the implementation of GMES;
- The funding of some GMES activities could be covered with some of the revenues provided by the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).

On 12 November 2009 Mr Glante Norbert presented a draft report on the proposed regulation. In this document the rapporteur expresses his awareness about the heavy costs needed for the short and long-term development of GMES, but considers that these are justified by the project's massive benefits for society. Therefore the draft report underlines the importance to ensure sufficient funding at the right time and proposes, among others, the following amendments:

- To further increase the funding, so that commitment appropriations can be allocated to the space component during the current financial perspective;
- To avoid a break in data continuity, so that users can use the services on a reliable basis;
- To make the GMES services free of charge to natural and legal persons residing in the EU and to promote stronger Earth observation markets in Europe;
- Technical implementation of the space component by ESA should be governed by a delegation agreement;
- Public contracts should be the normal funding procedure for the GMES programme.

More recently, on 7 January 2010, Mr Damien Abad (PPE) presented the draft opinion of the Budgets Committee. The rapporteur states that the GMES programme is an opportunity for the EU from a political perspective, but underlines, as Mr Prodi, that the issue of financing is essential for the stability and continuity of the programme. Mr Abad stresses that the short- and long-term aspects of the plan are interlinked, meaning that the financing strategy for the period 2014-2020 will depend to a large extent on the decisions taken for the period 2011-2013. Among the proposed amendments remain:

- To indicate the entire financial envelope earmarked for GMES under FP7 and to ensure coordinated management of the two different envelopes;
- To assess all available means of financing GMES and to draw up a long-term strategy;
- To ascertain which needs have not been met so far, particularly as regards the space component of the programme;
- To define clear governance arrangements, a well-defined medium- and long-term strategy and effective cooperation between all the stakeholders.

The draft report on the Regulation was discussed in Parliament's Industry Committee on 27 January 2010. At that time, Mr Glante Norbert emphasized the three main points that should be further clarified:

- The budget - given that the price rose over 70%, new funding is needed to launch the satellites;
- The data - whether it will be free of charge or paid by the users;
- The coexistence with private companies providing similar services and data.

The MEPs of the Industry Committee will vote on the final report in March this year, followed by the vote in Plenary expected in June.

More information at:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/064-67878-025-01-05-91120100121STO67828-2010-25-01-2010/default_en.htm

Draft opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-430.605+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>

Draft report of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/draftReportsCom.do?language=EN&body=ITRE>

Draft opinion of the Committee of the Budget:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-431.174+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>

European Parliament Legislative Observatoire:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oel/file.jsp?id=5776632>

3. Next Steps for a New Global Climate Deal

At the approaching of the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen, which took place on 7-18 December 2009, the European Commission expressed clearly its wish to reach a new global, ambitious, comprehensive and legally binding climate agreement for the period after 2012. The conference was expected to settle the key political elements of the treaty and set up a process with mid-2010 as deadline for completing the full text. In this context, the Environment Commissioner at that time, Stavros Dimas, underlined among others that 'Ensuring the environmental integrity of the future treaty is of paramount importance to the EU'.

However, due to the slow progress made in the negotiations and a lack of consensus about the shape of the eventual treaty, it was already unlikely prior to the world summit that such a treaty could have been finalised in Copenhagen as originally planned. The EU's goal at the conference was therefore to make as much progress as possible towards a full treaty and to reach an ambitious and comprehensive political accord covering all the key elements necessary for the new treaty. In the view of the Commission, this accord should include the following four elements:

1. Pledges on emissions and finance;
2. Key architectural components of the future treaty;
3. A 'fast start' deal;
4. The follow-up process.

The outcome and follow-up to the Copenhagen conference was discussed at the occasion of the Environment Council meeting of 22 December 2009. The Council affirmed that the Copenhagen Accord contains many of the elements for which the EU had fought (including the provision of a mechanism to accelerate technology cooperation) and that it is a first step towards a legally binding and sufficiently ambitious global climate deal. In order to reach this deal, Ministers agreed that further

work should follow a tight time schedule with clear deadlines and the EU should continue to offer leadership.

According to the United Nations, up to date, fifty-five countries, accounting for almost 80% of world greenhouse gas emissions, committed to fight climate change in the framework of the Copenhagen Accord.

Henceforth the EU follow-up to the Copenhagen Accord will be ensured by the new Commissioner-designate for climate change, Mrs Connie Hedegaard. During her hearing at the European Parliament on January this year she stressed that the EU should continue to push other countries to set more ambitious targets for the post-Kyoto climate deal.

More information at:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1867&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/09/534&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/climate-environment/fifty-five-countries-join-climate-copenhagen-accord-cut-emissions-3>

Environment Council meeting of 22 December 2009:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/envir/112072.pdf

Summary of the hearing of Connie Hedegaard - climate change

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/008-67223-013-01-03-901-20100113IPR67222-13-01-2010-2010-false/default_en.htm

4. The Global Climate Monitoring Emphasized by ESA at Copenhagen

During the event entitled 'Global Monitoring of our Climate: the Essential Climate Variables', which was hosted by ESA on 10 December 2009 in the framework of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, speakers from various agencies highlighted the role of Earth Observation satellites for the provision of systematic global climate observations. The latter are of paramount importance for climate change research and for managing mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has long recognised the need for global observations of climate variables for the assessment of the state of the climate. Using space technology, the new ESA's Climate Change Initiative will provide free of charge a set of long-term global records of essential climate variables to climate research and modelling communities worldwide. These records are required by the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) – an

organisation in the framework of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) – to support the UNFCCC and the International Panel on Climate Change.

The ESA's initiative will build on the availability of Europe's global data sets (obtained through its fleet of Earth-observing satellites, including the Earth Explorers and Sentinels) as well as on data delivered by a network of other space agencies. The ESA's contribution will encompass data archived during the last three decades, combined with data from new missions. These data will be used to produce information on a wide range of climate variables such as greenhouse-gas concentrations, sea-ice extent and thickness, and sea-surface temperature and height. The activities necessary to generate essential climate variables will be implemented by ESA, in partnership with key users such as GCOS and UNFCCC, space agencies, relevant players in the field of climate change research and monitoring such as the European Commission, WMO, NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), EUMETSAT and national programmes.

At the event in Copenhagen, it was recognised that there is a need for space agencies to coordinate and work together in order to strengthen the operational monitoring of climate through Earth Observation. In addition, the need for getting data to developing countries and for achieving free exchange of data was underlined.

Finally, the ESA's activities on monitoring forests, which were developed as part of the GMES services, were also presented at Copenhagen. In this context, the Forest Monitoring project funded by ESA was initiated to help establish a mechanism for measuring deforestation. The space monitoring of forests will underpin political agreement on schemes such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) under the UNFCCC.

More information at:

www.esa.int/esaEO/SEMCGJ7JT2G_index_0.html

www.gmes-forest.info

5. Access to GMES Earth Observation Data

On 17 December 2009 the European Commission and ESA organised in Brussels an User Hearing day on access to GMES Earth Observation (EO) data. The aim of the event was to inform about the principles governing the access to GMES EO data under the EC/ESA delegation agreement. The event also provided a list of foreseen data sets that will be made available during the 2011-2013 period.

The main objectives of GMES as a whole are to provide value-added services to the GMES user community, including pre-processed EO data and to share them amongst a large community of users. However, to date the use of EO data and derived products is very often limited which explains why it is crucial for GMES to have appropriate data access conditions and data policies in line with its main objectives.

The data access conditions should not only ensure access to the GMES services, but also foster the user uptake of EO data acquired through GMES and of products supplied by the Core Services as well as

strengthening EO markets in Europe in order to bring growth and job creation. The conditions should also secure the continuous provision of EO data to operational services at the lowest possible cost, contributing to the sustainability of the provision of GMES data and information.

The approach to EO data procurement would then be built on the following basis:

- A move from the existing Data Access Grant to the concept of a “Data Warehouse” which will hold standardised data sets for a very high number of beneficiaries;
- In line with the above, the new scheme will be open to a large user community, by defining a simple licensing scheme open to public stakeholders; there will be a limited number of user categories;
- The limited funding should also favour a scheme where the use of public assets in GMES is maximised.

The specifications of the data to be provided through the Data Warehouse will aim at widening user access along three major principles:

1. Extension of licences to meet the needs of a wider range of user activities for the datasets covered by the current GSC DAP (GMES Space Component Data Access Portfolio);
2. Depending on the type of service, predefinition of CORE datasets with fixed specifications that represent the common needs of a broad user community;
3. Bulk agreement for ADDITIONAL datasets with flexible specifications.

The approach for the procurement of the two types of datasets will be different: CORE datasets can be procured on the basis of pre-defined specifications, while ADDITIONAL datasets through a quota mechanism and bulk agreements with data providers for the provision of data within a financial envelope.

More information at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3842&tpa_id=1007&lang=fr

6. Towards an Effective Access to Environmental Information for Africa

Launched in 2007, the African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) project, funded by the European Union under the European Development Fund programme, is the precursor of the extension of GMES to Africa. Scheduled to run to 2012, AMESD is managed by the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The first AMESD Forum took place in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, on 1-4 December 2009, on the theme “Towards a Pan African Partnership and Networking for the monitoring of the Environment by Satellite in Africa”.

Later, at the beginning of January 2010, an activity to secure access to key Earth Observation information was launched at the African Union Commission premises. Thanks to this activity, which is part of the AMESD project, the National Meteorological Services in sub-Saharan Africa and regional institutions will benefit from the replacement of the 52 EUMETCast stations already deployed (called

PUMA stations, the installation of which began in 2002). The AMESD programme will replace all their PCs and upgrade the software packages for the visualisation and interpretation of the data. This activity will ensure the sustainable and long-term access to EUMETSAT data by the African meteorological community, allowing it to fully benefit from the extensive coverage of Africa by EUMETSAT satellites.

Additionally, the activity includes the installation of 47 new EUMETCast stations (one per sub-Saharan African country) which will provide African countries with effective access to various environmental data and products, including from AMESD. These new stations, called AMESD stations, will be installed at the environment, agriculture or water management ministries. The five AMESD Regional Implementation Centres are operationally producing various environmental products based on Earth Observation data.

Thanks to this operation, all sub-Saharan African countries will have two operational stations to access environmental data in real time from various data providers all over the world. The key information on the state of the environment in the African continent will contribute to its sustainable development.

More information at:

<http://forum.amesd.org/index.php?lang=en>

<http://www.eumetsat.int/Home/Main/News/CorporateNews/716302?l=en>

7. GMES Services Helped Rescue Operations in Haiti

Following the devastating 7.0-magnitude earthquake that hit Haiti on 12 January this year, the international community has joined its efforts for the rescue of the local population. In the case of such a powerful earthquake, Earth Observation (EO) satellite images can help the work of the rescue teams on the ground by providing updated views of how the landscape and the infrastructure have been affected. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, satellite data of the area were requested from the International Charter on 'Space and Major Disasters', which aims at providing satellite data free of charge to those affected by disasters anywhere in the world.

Thus, very high resolution imagery was needed as quickly as possible, from various satellites with both optical and radar sensors, in order to meet the requirements of the rescue teams on the ground. Imagery acquired immediately after the event was used to generate emergency maps for an overview of the current state of the area, while the situation maps generated from archived satellite data could identify major changes on the ground caused by the disaster.

GMES was collaborating with the Charter to produce damage maps, generated from optical satellite images, for the use of international actors such as UNUOOSA, WFP, and the German and French Civil Protection authorities which were engaged on the ground. GMES produced maps of the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince as well as of surrounding urban areas through the SAFER emergency response and G-MOSAIC security projects. The maps showed heavy damage in south and central parts of the capital and gave at the same time an overview of the spontaneous gathering areas. Moreover, GMES maps identified damaged schools, medical centres and administrative buildings, and provided an overview

and assessment of the state of larger infrastructure such as roads, bridges, ports and airports. Furthermore, GMES maps showed the epicentre of the earthquake and estimates of ground movements.

In the framework of the SAFER project, the first space-maps derived from crisis data acquired on 13 January were produced by SERTIT (a remote sensing and image processing service in Strasbourg, France) within 24 hours, using CNES's SPOT 5 satellite. These were rapid situation maps used to help locate damaged areas with up-to-date cartographic material. The German Aerospace Centre's (DLR) centre for satellite-based crisis information (ZKI) was also working on the provision of such maps using particularly data acquired by the TerraSAR-X satellite.

In the framework of the G-MOSAIC project, e-GEOS (Telespazio/Italian Space Agency company) was providing maps of road conditions in the Haitian areas of Jacmel and Léogâne, the earthquake's epicentre.

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) was supporting the European Commission's services in coordinating a response from the EU, by issuing early warning alerts and delivering updated situation maps. The Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS), providing near real-time alerts about natural disasters and tools to facilitate response coordination, detected the first shock after 18 minutes and issued a red alert to 8500 users, mainly aid and first response organisations.

More information at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3994&tpa_id=141&lang=en
http://www.dlr.de/en/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1/86_read-22076/

<http://www.gmes.info/pages-principales/projects/emergency-projects/gmes-services-for-haiti/>

http://www.esa.int/esaLP/SEM5G7MJ74G_LPgmes_0.html

8. Observation from Space of Volcano Eruptions

On 2 January 2010 Mount Nyamulagira in Congo erupted, threatening the population living in the town of Sake. After this event, there were fears that the Nyiragongo volcano, which devastated the city of Goma in 2002, would also erupt. Moreover, lava from the Nyamulagira eruption was flowing in a direction south and southwest of the volcano, raising thus concerns that lava could cover the Goma and Sake roads within weeks, causing problems to the local economy.

Following these events, scientists and local authorities used a long series of space images from ESA's Envisat, together with seismic and helicopter data, to monitor the situation and calm fears of the local population. In the case of volcano eruption, optical and radar instruments can image the various associated phenomena such as lava flows, mud slides, ground fissures and earthquakes, while atmospheric sensors can identify the gases and aerosols released by the eruption, and quantify their wider environmental impact.

As regards lava flows, it can be mapped by comparing satellite radar images acquired before and after the eruption by the Advanced Synthetic Aperture Radar (ASAR) on Envisat. The information about the size, direction and speed of the flow of the lava from the Nyamulagira volcano was crucial for enabling the authorities to make timely decisions.

Regarding the ground deformation caused by the volcanic eruption, the scientists used a technique called 'SAR interferometry', or InSAR, to construct an 'interferogram' image by analysing the differences between two radar signals taken over the same area on Earth at different times. The InSAR technique was also applied to data over Mount Nyiragongo to determine whether there were any signs of abnormal activity at the volcano.

In order to evaluate the level of risk and increase their knowledge of volcanoes, volcanologists need continuous data over long periods and, in some cases, only a satellite is capable of providing this because of the inaccessibility of the areas.

More information at:

http://www.esa.int/esaEO/SEM3UUKOP4G_index_0.html

9. Importance of Satellites for Glaciers Monitoring

In its article of 1 February 2010 ESA highlights the valuable role of satellites for constant monitoring of Earth's glaciers. Given that the latter are among the most reliable indicators of climate change and that they have a considerable impact on the water cycle, knowledge of the recent changes and future behaviour of the glaciers is of great interest for climate scientists and decision-makers.

Data from satellites allow scientists to measure glaciers extent in detail and to expand the local measurements to a regional scale. Considering this possibility, the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) has called for the systematic monitoring of glaciers by satellites in support of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Additionally, a detailed glaciers inventory was needed in order to assess the changes occurring in the glaciers or to model their future evolution.

In 2007 ESA started the GlobGlacier project with the principal aim to establish a service for glaciers monitoring from space, based on user requirements, and to complete the world glaciers inventory (WGI) from 1970 by producing glaciers outlines in regions where no inventory has been done and by complementing the information already existing in order to allow change assessment.

Concretely, the inventory combines information on glaciers outlines based on archived satellite data from the Landsat Thematic Mapper (TM) and the Enhanced Thematic Mapper Plus (ETM+) instruments with topographic information from the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission and the Global Digital Elevation Model (GDEM) from ASTER (Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer). ESA's ERS-1, ERS-2 and Envisat Advanced Synthetic Aperture Radar (ASAR) data are providing velocity measurements of selected glaciers.

ESA's new Climate Change Initiative, that will produce robust long-term records of essential climate variables, will build on the results of the GlobGlacier project by further improving the algorithms for glaciers monitoring and continually updating the glaciers inventory information.

More information at:

http://www.esa.int/esaEO/SEMY4HUJ15G_index_0.html

The GlobGlacier project :

<http://www.globglacier.ch/>

10. Paving the Way for a European Strategy for Danube Region

In line with the conclusions of the European Council of 18 and 19 June 2009, and building on the positive experience of the first 'macro-regional' strategy of the EU in the Baltic Sea Region, the Commission plans for an European Strategy for the Danube Region. This strategy will aim to develop the huge economic potential of the river, improve environmental conditions and reinforce integration in the region, which encompasses 14 countries. As regards time planning, it is foreseen that during the first half of 2010 the Commission will consult the relevant stakeholders and propose afterwards an Action Plan and a governance system for the EU Strategy for the Danube Region to be formally adopted in December 2010.

On 21 January 2010 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on a European Strategy for the Danube Region. Among others, the resolution contains the following requirements:

- The Commission should carry out a broad consultation with all countries along the Danube and present the strategy no later than end of 2010;
- To incorporate any macro-regional strategy in the EU's regional policy, as a coordinated policy for the whole territory of the EU;
- To improve the ecological status of Danube, which is currently a polluted river, and accordingly to reduce pollution and prevent further releases of oil and other toxic and harmful substances;
- To protect the environment in the Danube basin which will have a bearing on the agricultural and rural development of the region; the riparian states should give top priority to the establishment of shared hydrological and water quality testing facilities;
- To pay special attention to local ecosystems; the Commission should support research and development, focusing on new technologies capable to enhance forecasting and response activities in connection with flooding, extreme drought and accidental pollution.

On 2 February 2010 Paweł Samecki, the European Commissioner for Regional Policy, officially launched a series of consultations events aimed at shaping the Commission's plans for a European Strategy for the Danube Region.

EU Strategy for the Danube Region:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/danube/index_en.htm

European Parliament resolution of 21 January 2010:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0008+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

Launch of public consultation:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/110&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

GMES Projects Corner

11. First MACC Assembly and Launch of Operational Aerosol Verification

The First General Assembly of the MACC project, which is currently providing the pre-operational version of the GMES Atmosphere Service, was held on 11-15 January 2010 at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) in Reading, United Kingdom. More than 120 visitors attended the event.

Through a set of parallel meetings on individual themes, followed by plenary presentations and discussions, the Assembly aimed to review and present the project's progress and plans for the coming year. Moreover, the Assembly included a plenary session devoted to user requirements, plans and initial feedback. Training lectures were provided as well as meetings of the Advisory and Management Boards for the project.

Prior to its First Assembly, on 9 January 2010, MACC made available on its website the operational verification of the aerosol analysis/forecasting system. Within this system, Aerosol Optical Depth (AOD) values from the short-term forecast are compared to the observed values from the AERONET (**A**erosol **R**obotic **N**etwork program) on a daily basis. Both the MACC team and the users have now the option to monitor the quality of the aerosol monitoring system.

More information at:

http://www.gmes-atmosphere.eu/news/first_macc_assembly/

<http://www.gmes-atmosphere.eu/news/new/>

12. First Annual Progress Meeting of SAFER

The first annual progress meeting of the SAFER project took place in Brussels on 20-21 January 2010. Beyond the presentations of the project's achievements and the feedback on the first 25 activations in emergency situations, the meeting was a great occasion of exchange and fruitful debates between all the SAFER stakeholders. Those open discussions pave the way for the next 12 months period of the project, towards the consolidation of the GMES Emergency Response Service.

More information at:

http://www.emergencyresponse.eu/site/FO/scripts/myFO_contenu.php?noeu_id=30&article_id=40&lang=EN&popup=1

13. Two Workshops will be Organised for the LIMES Dissemination Activities

Launched in December 2006 under the 6th Framework Programme, the LIMES project has developed for the first time applications and services relating to security, applying innovative solutions based on Earth Observation systems and satellite communication and positioning technologies.

Two workshops will be organised in the first half of this year, as part of the LIMES dissemination activities. The first one entitled '**LIMES Final End User Workshop. The pre-operational R&D services applied to the Maritime Surveillance**' will take place on 15 April. This workshop will present the Maritime Surveillance elements of the GMES Programme. Presentations will demonstrate pre-operational services that exploit the use of new space information sources in the maritime picture compilation for marine security authorities as well as the provision of enhanced information to commercial shipping industry in non-EU high threat waters. These services will be demonstrated in the context of a Common Information Infrastructure that would enable controlled information sharing across the EU.

The objective is to present LIMES Maritime Surveillance Services to a wide audience of established and potential new users and collect their assessment of and feedback on presented services. The LIMES experience will be linked to the next initiatives in FP7 Space and Security calls as well as proposed operational implementations.

This workshop will be hosted by the LIMES maritime surveillance leading partner Qinetiq, located in Farnborough, UK, with the participation of the UK Royal Navy authorities.

The second workshop entitled '**Space Monitoring for Complex Crisis Management. The European R&D Projects for citizen protection**' will take place on 6-7 May in L'Aquila, Italy, with the aim to present the "S" of the GMES Programme. In particular the pre operational R&D services applied to the monitoring of critical assets, the prevention and management of crises and to the support of EU intervention for the management of Humanitarian relief in regions outside the EU.

The final results and recommendation of the LIMES project (FP6) will be presented and the FP7 ongoing Security and Emergency initiatives - i.e. SAFER and G-MOSAIC - will be invited to join the workshop to present their current findings as a contribution to the development and implementation of the future GMES services.

For more information:

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