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EuroGeoSurveys Strategy and need for European geoscientific data and knowledge in EU policy developments

EuroGeoSurveys President, Dr. Zdenek Venera, opened the EGS Directors Workshop on the need for European geoscientific data and knowledge in EU policy developments and the [EGS strategy](#) explaining how the National Geological Surveys, members of [EuroGeoSurveys](#) (EGS), are public sector institutions carrying out operations and research in the field of geosciences, with a long tradition in collecting data, preparing information and conducting research focused on their national subsurface. Besides their national mandates, EGS members play an important role in EU policy developments by providing the European institutions with geoscientific data and knowledge for the benefit of society.

Haitze Siemers, Head of Unit at the European Commission's DG Energy, emphasised the important role EGS members can play in the European energy transition strategy and in the development and implementation of EU energy policy, pointing out the increasing need for energy storage solutions and better knowledge regarding underground storage potential (i.e. natural geological reservoirs).

On [Horizon Europe](#), **Wolfgang Schneider**, Policy Officer at the European Commission's DG Research & Innovation, mentioned that the new research programme will strengthen the scientific and technological basis and boost the capacity of the EU and its innovation, stressing the relevance of new approaches to partnerships such as strengthening international cooperation, reinforcing openness and rationalising the funding landscape.

Gilles Ollier, Head of Sector at the European Commission's DG Research & Innovation, highlighted the role for Geological Surveys in the continuing development of GEOSS, by providing in-situ earth observations and making them available for the broader community. Strengthening GEOSS in this way will help with regards to data processing at a global level.

The first day of the workshop finished with the presentation of **Nelles Scholiers**, a GIS Expert at the Emergency Response Coordination Centre of the European Commission's DG for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), who pointed out the role of geoscience in improving disaster resilience across Europe.

The Directors' Workshop continued the following day with internal discussion about the implementation of the EGS Strategy. **Slobodan Miko**, Director of Croatian Geological Survey, presented an informal report on results of a short questionnaire on Geological Surveys' national mandates. In the following presentation, **Slavko Solar**, EGS Secretary General, reviewed the implementation of the three pillars that are that backbone of the EGS Strategy and developed ideas on how it might evolve in future. **Maurice Hanegraaf**, Business Director of Geo Energy at TNO, emphasised the importance of the [GeoERA programme](#) as a service to the European Commission and highlighted the fact that lessons learnt from GeoERA should be incorporated into discussions on the next phase of GeoERA in Horizon Europe. **Jørgen Tulstrup**, Chief Consultant at GEUS, addressed the

open issues related to the financial sustainability of the European Geological Data Infrastructure, [EGDI](#), which is the active component of Pillar II in the EGS Strategy.

The final session of the workshop entitled ‘EGS strategic projects towards a Geological Service for Europe’ started with the opening words of **Peter Handley**, Head of Unit at the European Commission’s DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW). Mr Handley, in discussing security of supply for raw materials in Europe and improving exploration and investment opportunities, highlighted that the knowledge gaps on exploration of raw materials in the EU can be filled by the continued cooperation and data available within the Geological Surveys of Europe. **Constantin Ciupagea**, Head of Unit at the European Commission’s DG Joint Research Centre, reviewed the Collaboration Agreement between DG JRC and EGS, noting that regarding raw materials, the whole supply chain needs to be considered. There should be special interest in the upper part of the raw materials supply chain in order to address the issues around social acceptance. **Iain Shepherd**, Policy Officer at the European Commission’s DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries presented [EMODnet Geology](#) and pointed out its position in strengthening blue growth in Europe. **Tom Leemans**, International Aid/Cooperation Officer at the European Commission’s DG International Cooperation and Development, concluded the session with the mid-term evaluation of the [PanAfGeo](#) project on Pan-African Support to the EuroGeoSurveys-Organisation of African Geological Surveys (EGS-OAGS) Partnership. PanAfGeo is part of the larger Pan-African programme that the EU is financing and has thus far been a very successful joint EGS-OAGS undertaking, with trainings for OAGS geologists being held across Africa.

For more information visit: <http://www.eurogeosurveys.org/>

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