

Honorable Members, Guests, President of NEREUS,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honour for me to present to this joint
publication by NEREUS and ESA on The Growing Use of
GMES Across Europe's Regions.

NEREUS is very focussed on helping to raise awareness
how space technologies can support the interests and
responsibilities of the Regions.

By working with ESA on this publication we set out to
consult with the Regions on the role of GMES and Earth
Observation in the management of the Regional
territories-both now and in the future.

The results are very positive.

67 case studies of regional uses of GMES

47 different regions represented

17 Member States

A high degree of cooperation between different
regions and countries in over 1/3 of the contributions.

For convenience, the papers are grouped into the
generally recognised themes of GMES; LAND,

MARITIME; ATMOSPHERE; EMERGENCY RESPONSE;
CIVIL PROTECTION: CLIMATE CHANGE.

But the papers themselves show rich diversity of how Earth Observation and GMES is already being employed in many areas of great interest and benefit to the regions. Let me pick on just a few examples.

Earth Observation data is being used to predict and monitor water conservation and water reserves in the lakes and mountain snow across Europe- supporting the EU water directive;

Air pollution from traffic and industry and their effects on citizens' health is being monitored using GMES resources.

Agriculture and forestry are important economic industries in many regions. Numerous papers show how GMES is helping to protect the forests and to improve crop yields and farming efficiency.

Earth Observation data is being used to estimate insurance liabilities associated with crop damage arising from extreme weather events.

Managing coastline erosion and water quality in estuaries and coastal waters is another important area.

The energy sector is turning to space for to assist with managing wind farms and solar energy conversion.

Crisis management using space covers many risks; supporting the rescue service responding to earthquakes and volcanos ; identifying risks to buildings and bridges from subsidence, oil spills, rapid response to forest fires.

There are many other examples in this collection.

We are mindful too of the need for regions to be convinced of the economic benefits of embracing Earth Observation and GMES in their forward planning.

Involvement of industry and SMEs in some of these projects is a good indicator of the potential for innovation and economic growth from employing GMES services in regional applications. This shows a growth industry, building on a strong high technology research base.

Uptake of GMES services in regional authorities and cities offer potential to reduce costs of traffic management, land planning, air quality improvement and energy management, all high priority, non-space sectors that are beginning to use space as a CROSS CUTTING, VALUE ADDING technology.

This publication is not a collection of rigorous scientific papers aimed at the experts and specialists. These are short case studies of applications of space in many areas of the daily life of citizens in the towns, cities and regions of Europe and further afield.

I invite you to use this publication as a reference book of the potential of GMES to make huge changes to the life and prosperity of Europe's regions in the coming decade and to convince the European Commission that we should ensure that the investments are made to realise these potential benefits in the next Financial Framework. This is your reference book to help you to understand what these benefits are.

Thank you for listening.