



## **CONFERENCE**

Integration of the New EU Member Countries into the GMES Programme  
12-14 December 2005 – Warsaw, Poland

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Warsaw Conference on “Integration of the new EU Member Countries into the GMES Programme” was attended by around 160 experts from space and user institutions, infrastructure and service industry, research centers and academia. More than 40% of the audience was from outside the space sector, and about half of the participants came from new Member Countries.

The Conference focused on active participation of the New EU Members States (NMS) in the future development and application of GMES. It is the second in a series of GMES-related conferences following the Berlin event and preceding the Toulouse and Budapest ones, concluding with the Graz Conference to be held in April 2006.

The participants acknowledged with satisfaction the outcome of the European Union Space Council (Nov 28 2005) and the ESA Council meeting at ministerial level (Dec 5/6 2005) at which a GMES programme was presented to Member States. In particular, the decision of the ESA Council to launch the first phase of the optional GMES programme with an over subscribed budget was welcomed by the participants who saw it as a strong encouragement of their effort toward building and integrating operational services. The formal invitation by the ESA Council meeting at ministerial level to countries from new EU member states to join the programme as fully participating states was received with great enthusiasm and underlined the relevance of the Conference. However, the participants expressed their wish to see a greater commitment of the EU Member States, supporting the swift implementation of GMES through the European Commission.

During the discussion, the participants agreed that the involvement of user organisations, research institutions and industry from the New EU Member States in GMES is essential for ensuring the success of this programme in the enlarged Europe. A number of stake holders from the NMS, most notably user organizations and service industries, already participate in both the ESA and EC GMES projects. Their involvement is presently limited to land and ocean GMES projects, but must be extended to the GMES security projects such as RISK-EOS, LIMES and PREVIEW. Participants were convinced that industries in the New Member States have all the required skills to participate as active players within GMES. In particular, Industrial leaders already active in GMES welcomed the participation of NMS industry in all roles within GMES, including space and ground hardware, distribution/ processing /

calibration, validation and service provision. However, the potential of New Member States in GMES is still not fully exploited, and there is a pressing need to increase the involvement of New Member States actors in GMES.

For this purpose, a resources and dedicated framework need to be made available and accessed within the institutional set-up. The key GMES European-level stakeholders including EC and the JRC, ESA, EUMETSAT, EUSC and EEA are all developing new links and enlarging their respective membership and cooperation with NMS national organizations. This clearly sets the long-term institutional and programmatic framework for GMES.

Priority should be given to making full use of existing programmatic and funding mechanisms to achieve this, including national funding from the New Member States, activation of the ESA PECS (Plan for European Cooperating States) mechanism, access to funds available through EC Programmes, and involvement of NMS organizations in GMES.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following specific recommendations emerged from the discussions that took place during the meeting:

- 1) The formal integration of the New EU Member States to the GMES programme needs to be accelerated in order to set-up the mechanisms facilitating collaboration at all levels. In particular, ESA and officials from the New EU Member States are invited to accelerate their efforts toward reaching agreements, either via the PECS mechanism or the “Programme participation” mechanism of ESA.
- 2) The legal framework related to Earth Observation applications, either at National or EU level, does not support the development of services. The European Commission and National Legislators are invited to undertake a careful screening of existing legislation and required adaptations, following for example the case of the water framework regulations.
- 3) In particular, the timely availability, the pricing and licensing of data, services and products are critical for the deployment of GMES, and need to be foreseen in the respective legal instruments.
- 4) Partnerships are seen as a key factor for the development of the GMES Programme in general and the integration of the new EU Member States in particular. It was recognised that in addition to national and EU levels, the regional (sub-national) level and cross borders (adjacent) coordination and applications are essential and need to be supported. The GMES institutional actors, in particular the EC and ESA, are invited to foster the development of specific downstream services through bilateral partnerships of new Member States’ and old Member States’ institutions.