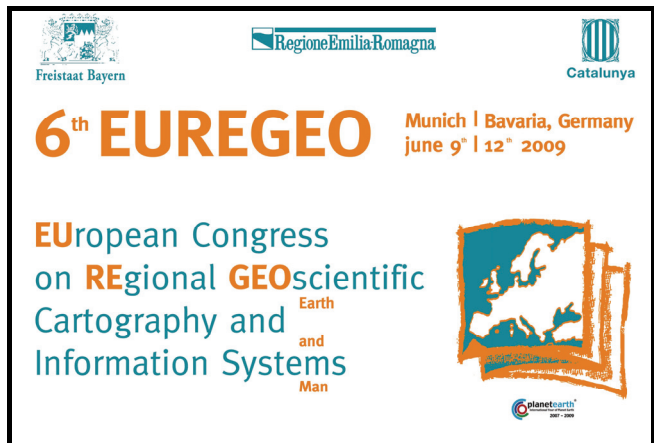


## Final conclusions and recommendations



The “6<sup>th</sup> European Congress on Regional Geoscientific Cartography and Information Systems EUREGEO 2009” with the subheading “Earth and Man” was held in Munich (Germany) from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2009. It was organized by the Bavarian Environment Agency together with the Bavarian Agency for Surveying and Geographic Information. The meeting was the sixth event of a series of conferences initiated in the year 1994 by the three European regions Bayern, Emilia-Romagna and Catalunya.

Spontaneous cooperation between European regions has demonstrated to be a very effective way to exchange successfully new methods and tools. This results in a very effective instrument to share territorial and geo-environmental information and “best practices” at the European level. In order to support this target, the European Commission and EuroGeoSurveys are represented in the Scientific Committee since the year 2000.

The 6<sup>th</sup> congress brought together about 400 participants from more than 40 countries. They came not only from Europe, but also from Africa, Asia, North and South America. Under the subtitle “Earth and Man” 130 oral presentations and 110 posters were presented in the conference, which also included a meeting of the ViaGeoAlpina operational management committee and was completed by two pre-congress and one post-congress excursion.

The opening session attended by top ranking politicians and superior officials from the three regions and from European Organizations was followed by four keynote lectures focussing on the actual role of Geological Surveys in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the generation and handling of geo-information for sustainable development, spatial planning based on geoscientific knowledge of the region and the different information requirements at the regional and European level.

Over the years the initiative of Bayern, Emilia-Romagna and Catalunya has developed into a firm institutional co-operation. It was formalized with a joint agreement by the responsible regional Ministers in 2004. After 17 years of fruitful collaboration the three regions maintain their offer to enlarge and consolidate their initiative. They invite other regions of Europe, which face comparable specifications, to join the group as new partners.

This Congress proved again that the most effective way to deal with geosciences and information systems is a bottom up approach by local and regional authorities in charge of the management of land and soils of their respective territory. Geoscientific maps, models and information systems should be established on the basis of interoperable systems. They are developed at local and regional levels and should be closely linked to the needs of the local population. Since in Europe the awareness grows that citizens in all parts are confronted with geohazards, the demand for reliable information about the areas exposed to such risks increases.

The delineation of these areas, which is a key element of any proactive risk mitigation policy, requires involvement of local experts in order to ensure that the information has the necessary acceptance and recognition by the local population.

Involvement of the society, including politicians, requires a network of multidisciplinary regional geological survey organizations, closely related to the peculiarities and special features of their respective territories. This network is being requested to produce and deliver the data, information and knowledge required as a base of decisions in challenges such as sustainable regional and local development, planning for urbanization and infrastructure, management of the natural resources and mitigation of geological hazards. A vital and functional co-operation and exchange is a precondition for the successful implementation of the European protection strategies of land and natural resources. Experience and data resulting from the cooperation of this network of regions can then be aggregated at the national and European levels.

As a major result of the 6<sup>th</sup> EUREGEO, the scientific committee is convinced that the future work shall concentrate on a few increasing important issues. The regions decided to co-operate closely on geothermal energy, geohazards and soil conservation during the next three years. These topics were selected due to the necessity to find solutions for the supply of energy and the replacement of the present use of fossil energy, but also as a contribution of geoscience to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub>-content of the atmosphere by storing it underground. Furthermore, it is urgent to offer solutions for handling the threats of landslides and flooding increased by human pressure and climate change. And finally there have to be found adequate measures to handle the increasing consumption, contamination and erosion of soils in a sustainable way.

The geological surveys of the regions will serve as a platform to share and spread information. They are committed to continue implementing close and successful collaboration on the regional, but also at the national and even European level. It is planned to present the results of this commitment at the next congress in Bologna in the year 2012.

Munich, 12th June 2009

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