

## African and European Geological Surveys committed together for Africa's wealth

Brussels, 2 April

Africa and Europe have strengthened their cooperation in the field of Geology at the 5<sup>th</sup> EU-Africa Business Forum on "*Engaging the private sector in sustainable and inclusive growth*". The event has been a great success for the Geological Surveys of Africa and Europe engaged at the roundtable on *Raw Materials and governance*, thanks also to a previous debate with Geological Surveys worldwide at the EuroGeoSurveys General Meeting last week.

The **Organization of African Geological Surveys (OAGS)**, **EuroGeoSurveys (EGS)**, Euromines, Business Europe and other industrial players and institutions discussed how to enhance a sustainable exploitation of the minerals wealth of the continent leading to a sustainable economic growth, along four axes: governance, infrastructure, knowledge base and waste management. It has emerged that geological knowledge and information should be increased by strengthening Geological Surveys capacity and geological cooperation. The roundtable stressed the importance of developing a good policy framework to attract investments, promote skills development and business education in the sector. This process should ensure environmental protection and the participation of local population in all part of the processes, also in the form of consultation.

**Mrs Fatima Haram Acyl, African Commissioner for Trade and Industry**, and **Mr Karel De Gucht, European Commissioner for Trade** were present at the debate. Mrs Acyl expressed full support to the geological cooperation, considered one of the most important and urgent needs to understand minerals resources potential in Africa and its sustainable development. Geological Surveys data production and access has a remarkable impact, especially for business and development opportunities and to enable African countries to take informed decisions.

In line with EU Raw Material Diplomacy, at the Business Forum opening ceremony the European Commission Vice President, Antonio Tajani, expressed his commitment to foster geological collaboration. This should benefit local populations and European companies that adopt a business model ethic compatible with the EU legislation. The President of European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and the chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, reaffirmed the strategy to strengthen African sustainable development (infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, raw materials, young education) while enhancing EU business and trade with Africa.

The Forum followed the broad debate held at the **EuroGeoSurveys General Meeting** on the 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of March, in which for the first time the Geological Surveys of North America, South America, Asia, Europe and Africa plus international organizations representatives from World Bank, UNESCO, UNECA discussed cooperatively about **sharing geoscientific information for a sustainable world economy**. In particular, Paulo de Sa, World Bank Manager (Sustainable Oil, Gas and Mining) presented the African Mineral Geoscience Initiative (AMGI) Project, that intends to develop a complete Geological Data Catalogue for Africa in relation to mineral resources.

Mr de Sa declared "*The World Bank strongly supports the AMGI project as an initiative that can lift the lid on growth of Africa's mineral resource wealth, while widening access to geological information to promote more equitable sharing of benefits*".

The debate brought to light two main business models of data access: Anglo-Saxon and Mediterranean, the former emphasizing that data production cost needs to be underpinned by pay-for-data to fund cutting-edge research, and the latter fostering more free open data and counting on economic benefits through business opportunities generated from it.

**EuroGeoSurveys (EGS), The Geological Surveys of Europe**, is a not-for-profit organisation representing 32 National Geological Surveys in Europe, with an overall workforce of several thousand scientists.

<b>Links</b>	<a href="http://www.eurogeosurveys.org">http://www.eurogeosurveys.org</a>	<a href="http://euafrica-businessforum.eu">http://euafrica-businessforum.eu</a>
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