

Bucharest Conclusions

The European Earth Monitoring Programme COPERNICUS:

Its benefits for the citizens of Eastern Europe

Conference in Bucharest, Romania, 21 – 22 May 2013

The conference on “The European Earth Monitoring Programme COPERNICUS: Its benefits for the citizens of Eastern Europe”,

Welcomes the organisation of the follow-up to the 2012 Bucharest conference on “GMES: New opportunities for Eastern Europe”.

Recognises the central role of COPERNICUS in further fostering the European integration by providing services for a wide range of applications and users, making the European citizens’ life better and safer, thereby helping to protect the environment, to address challenges like climate change and to stimulate economic growth in Europe as well as cross-border and regional cooperation.

Underlines the potential return- on- investment ratio for Copernicus of 4 to 10 Euro for 1 Euro invested.

Acknowledges the excellent progress made by COPERNICUS and its components over the last twelve months, as well as the important decisions made at ESA’s Council meeting on ministerial level in November 2012 regarding Segment 3 of the GMES Space Component and the negotiations at EU level for an operational Copernicus programme funded within the Multi Annual Framework Programme 2014-2020, necessary to ensure long-term availability and continuity of services.

Underlines the increasing demand for high quality earth observation data for public decision makers and private industry in Eastern Europe, benefitting amongst other fields environmental protection, emergency relief measures, agriculture, forestry and land use policy, and **encourages** the business sector to exploit the free and open use of the upcoming Sentinel data.

Recognizes the need to prepare for the handling of major data volumes once the Sentinel satellites are launched as from 2013/2014 onwards, by taking the necessary technological measures and maximising cooperation between states.

Welcomes the increasing interaction and involvement of the user communities as reported by various user driven projects and initiatives using Copernicus data and demonstrating the benefits for society of the related services.

Acknowledges the willingness of Eastern European countries to further intensify their involvement in Copernicus activities, also through ESA or EU funded procurement actions and **calls upon** ESA and the EU to provide assistance to ensure that local industry is well prepared to reply on Invitations to Tender through, for example, information workshops or similar events, which could also involve a cooperation with the joint initiative for the regional centres network under the Danube Strategy.

Calls upon the organizers of this conference to establish it as a regular annual event, thus providing a valuable source of information and exchange of views on Copernicus for the Eastern European states and Europe as a whole.