

Copernicus KEN Workshop Notes

Title: Fostering Complementarity between Copernicus and NMCAs

Date: Tuesday 5th December 2017

Location: EuroGeographics Head office, Rue du Nord, 76 Brussels 1000, Belgium

Aim of workshop:

- To have a shared understanding of Copernicus requirements and intentions, and what is needed to support them achieve their activities.
- To have a shared understanding of what NMCA's can provide understanding the position of the NMCA's, including intentions and constraints.
- To consider issues AND solutions of how EuroGeographics and it's members can support Copernicus activities and develop some next steps with the support of the EEA.

All presentations are available to view on the EuroGeographics website in the Members section [here](#).

Welcome

Mick Cory welcomed the attendees to EuroGeographics. This meeting is a direct output of the EEA / EuroGeographics partnership agreement. Mick hoped that the group would have a positive meeting that would deliver solutions.

Anders Sandin also welcomed the attendees and explained the aims and objectives of the meeting. He also thanks Henrik Steen Anderson from Copernicus for his help and support in the last year. A tour de table was completed.

Copernicus and it's links to NMCA's, Henrik Steen Anderson, Project Manager – Copernicus in situ coordination, European Environment Agency

Questions

Q: As INSPIRE services become more available, how will CORDA move to INSPIRE?

A: Eventually it should not be necessary to have CORDA as all data will be available through INSPIRE catalogues. Until that point, it is not possible to continually add in new datasets all the time. Following the deadlines for Annex I, they will go back and look for more data checking with member states, and then make it available.

Q: We should acknowledge that even if it is not possible for NMCA's to produce required data today, most NMCA's will be able to make it available in the near future;

- NMCA's need to know clear requirements for what is required
- The transformation to continental production is not straightforward for NMCA's and would need investment

NMCA's need to understand the needs at a national and continental level and they need to be complementary.

A: What is important to understand is, will INSPIRE take us all the way or is more required? Would Copernicus be able to use a set of INSPIRE compliant databases straight away? Could Copernicus have taken the Transport theme (Annex 1) and included in CORDA now as the deadline was two weeks ago? Probably not. OSM is a competing product, can NMCA's deliver something better or equivalent to this? Requirements will be presented in some of the following presentations.

Q: Where do you see that NMCA info is less quality than OSM?

Q: How do you define quality, it is completeness?

A: NMCA is authoritative data which is preferred but Copernicus requires Pan European coverage. OSM is currently there and available. Could ELS be an alternative? Copernicus is already in discussions with EuroGeographics about testing ELS.

Statement: NMCA's don't work in a harmonised data model, in Earth Observation there is a standard data model and licensing model. ELS provides that harmonised model to work with. INSPIRE can only direct member states, we need to look at what else can be done.

Statement: From the mapping side we need to accept that others are providing in our market place, it may not be as good quality. It is useful to have this discussion, and we need to listen to the Copernicus requirements, and try to understand what is needed, and then move forward.

Four presentations were given by the services:

Robert Lowson, Evenflow Consultants

Francesca Lorenzon, e-GEOS

Fabio Giulio Tonolo, ITHACA (two case studies presented)

Questions

Q: Having been working internally reviewing options for download services, what would be the best way for NMCA's to make their INSPIRE services available as a download?

A: The first Decision is to provide the INSPIRE services.

Q: But what do you prefer for Copernicus, and what is a usable download service?

A: It is about performance and standardisation. Most important is to have Pan European, and understand the data model in advance. Even if it is known, once testing starts there can be technical issues, this happened in the ELF testing.

Q: For all different services we understand you will need data but you need the data for EMS now. Should this high-quality information be produced together in a pan European way or not? Does the EEA plan to invest in supporting NMCA's to do this? This is a political decision not a technical one.

A: This is an important question and the EEA cannot speak on behalf of the European Commission. There is clearly a very important role for NMCA's. The question is will the Commission invest on top of INSPIRE? This is what is required but they probably need an offer from NMCA's to explain why this is required. It is important for this group, you could create a relevant proposal and EEA is confident the Commission would consider it.



Statement: It is important to have a plan for NMCA harmonised data and we need EEA to support this.

Q: Is this not what is coming from ELS? It is a clear proposed solution.

A: There are issues with EuroGeographics members contributing to ELS.

Q: We need to also remember that non-EU data is required, how do we deal with this unharmonized situation?

A: Copernicus understand this is an important issue and is trying to overcome this by working with lots of groups including EuroGeographics, and the Copernicus User Groups. It must be noted that Copernicus does not have a huge amount of funding, and the funding that is provided is for coordination, they are not in a position to buy data or pay for services.

Statement: We also need to recognise that some countries contribute to the EMS but are not allowed to use it due to their national policies and links to Copernicus use.

Statement: It is very important to talk to users to understand what is required.

ELS Update, Abigail Page, EuroGeographics

Questions

Q: Can you further clarify on the point about no further harmonisation required.

A: When a customer is using ELS, there should be no pain points for them, it should be easy to use.

Q: Will ELS investigate providing more than INSPIRE services?

A: The starting point is INSPIRE but user requirements will define what is needed. It may be a situation of INSPIRE+

Q: ELS is an excellent INSPIRE use case and hopefully will end up offering Pan European coverage. Is the plan to then ingest data from Annex 1, thus adding value to INSPIRE?

A: Yes that is correct, ELS needs to add value to the customer and we will be looking at Pan European coverage. In Open ELS we will make available what we can. One of the remits of EuroGeographics is to promote our member's data outside of national boundaries and this is what is being done through ELS.

Round Table - Issues

Political

- Licensing Policy; Copernicus is a Free and Open policy. This is a clear political issue / business model decision and it is not in the hand of the NMCAs, it is in the hand of the countries. Copernicus is free at point of use, but the countries have paid to generate the service and have to follow national requirements.
- Protection of data; if they use a dataset they have to provide it to the user so if they use a national data set, then it has to be delivered to the world. This is different to the EMS and use of NMCA data. This has to be discussed at a political level. There may be technical solutions to that.

- Definition of OPEN; The compromise is coming in when the data is being shared. This includes issues of accessibility and constraints on accessibility, NMCA's have concerns about downstream re-use and this is a requirement of Copernicus.
- INSPIRE does create 28 SDI's rather than 1 European one (but there are now two good use cases now; UN data requirements and Copernicus which should help).

Economic

- We need to clarify from the beginning that geospatial data is reliable and authoritative from the Member states.
- Who will cover the costs of this continental transformation? This is not free to undertake this.
- How long will it take, what is the timeline? It is one thing to say what you want and how quickly you need it (if so it will be expensive). Could take one theme as an example and do it thoroughly, e-GEOS work provide some good cross cutting themes.
- We need to understand who benefits (EC / EEA, not citizen?) and who should pay (those who will benefit?). Evidence that data is being used is a real incentive for those creating it, so if we can get something working well that will be encouraging – but this wouldn't solve the question of payment / resources.
- Risk /reward, European Commission vs EuroGeographics. It is difficult for EuroGeographics to take on these levels of risk and so issues need to be elevated to higher level.

Technical

- Things need to be standardised.
- We need to understand the technical requirements at continental level.
- What is the transformation needed at continental level?
- How do we fill in the gaps? Getting coverage right makes a big difference for people using this, would like a pan European example which would help.
- Not sure ELS will perform properly, doubt that the resources available for EGHO will be enough to find proper technical solution to realise an operational service.
- Version control can be an issue.

Administrative

- Who leads? Are we really converging, Copernicus said EuroGeographics should suggest solution, and EuroGeographics said they need detailed requirements? Who moves first?
- Who is benefitting from this? It would be a wonderful example to have open ELS as an example of INSPIRE, this is great for the Commission but no good for an NMCA who had implemented INSPIRE.
- Understanding customer requirements; Is there an issue around the imperfect dialogue between the services who require data and the institutions who are creating that data? In the past the services were asked to produce a shopping list of what they needed rather than a dialogue so really understand what was required? Is there room for a better dialogue?

Also need to understand the end user requirements, there is also an imperfect dialogue between those designing the service (technical) and those using the service, it is not user driven. The solution could be outside the Earth Observation community. If you really focus on the user it has to be beyond Copernicus.

Round Table - Solutions

Political

- The licensing policy needs to be raised to a higher political level and should be done through three channels; led by EuroGeographics to Commission, from Agency to Ministry to Commission (could possibly become counterproductive), and from Copernicus / Commission direct to the government;
 - Note that EuroGeographics has no power to tell members to do anything and we have no power within the Commission, we may be able to influence things. We need to represent our member's interests.
- The Commission should look at the next INSPIRE steps, currently it is solved nationally. We should have agreement between at least EU member states.
- Demonstrating real world benefits through case studies, this is what politicians need, e.g. saving lives etc, or at least highlighting risks of being not prepared.
- Communicating better with policy makers (links to use cases). How much can we work together now we are collaborating well at an operational level? Not just at EG level but national. Worth looking at national cases, not just cross border ones, and apply pressure on data availability.
- Strengthen the self-confidence of the NMCAs and re-emphasise the provider – customer relationship
- Learning from experience, build up experience of what works (use EMS as example) e.g. EMS where they have happened and what was covered.

Economic

- The taxpayers, the national governments and relevant ministries need to see the outcome of the work that is being done so they can see value.
- Funding includes a wide ranging and subtle set of issues. Identify technical solutions and identify the non-technical instruments for these to be solved. There will be a lot of detail in the State of Play reports, which will be published in Jan / Feb 2018.
 - If the mapping community in Europe was fully financed to provide the services could we agree to provide a pan European service? No because it is not just financial issues.

Technical

- We need to understand the technical requirements at continental level and this is what e-GEOS have done and are currently doing, they are defining in a very precise way for all six Copernicus services, it will be available early 2018. Then they will issue the database and it

will be distributed and will detail all services components, all datasets and relevant information. Prioritisation has also been included in the state of play report.

- Protection of data; there will be a technical solution here.
- Haven't solved issues of features across the borders even, and these cross-national features are not included in anyone's tasks. This is a consequence of the INSPIRE directive.
- Need to understand how a harmonised approach would work with the higher technical levels.
- There is a lot of pressure on e-reporting, bring that together with demands of Copernicus may bring some more synergy and pressure.

Administrative

- Understanding customer requirements; Copernicus have spent a lot of time listening to users, they have a user forum, and give regular Copernicus updates.
- Strengthen cooperation between INSPIRE and Copernicus; this could be encouraged by getting the commission to communicate with the member states; too much of the communication is bottom up to national governments, they need pressure from Commission to solve these issues.
- Increase communication between NMCA and the Copernicus User Forum. This is essential. Some of the NMCA's would not know who their rep is on the Copernicus User Forum.
- Focus on one Annex 1 theme and do it properly getting the coverage right, it would be a good selling point also for INSPIRE, set priorities and stick to them.

Conclusions

The chair of the Copernicus KEN noted that the workshop has met his expectations and offered thanks to Henrik Steen Andersen and the three service providers. Thanks also to everyone, you have contributed a lot to the discussions today, and we have a good view about future requirements.

Once we have digested the meeting we will do a very good next step. Straight away we will do a summary of this meeting, publish the powerpoints on the website, communicate to members within EuroGeographics about this meeting through the newsletter.

We will arrange a Committee meeting to discuss next steps.

Henrik Steen Andersen thanked EuroGeographics for allowing them to explain what is going on within Copernicus and thanks to the attendees for discussions. He noted that Copernicus will meet with Abigail Page in February to kick off the testing phase for the ELS. Also EuroGeographics will share an insight into our recent survey on data availability of INSPIRE services from our members.

If anyone would like to subscribe to Copernicus updates you can do so here <https://insitu.copernicus.eu/news/newsletter>.

HSA will also notify us when the State of play report is issued.