

FOREGS GEOCHEMICAL BASELINE MAPPING PROGRAMME

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FOREGS (Forum of European Geological Surveys) Geochemical Baseline Mapping Programme was initiated to provide high quality environmental geochemical baseline data for Europe. The data will be based on samples of stream water, stream sediment, flood plain sediment, soil, and humus collected all over Europe. High quality and consistency of the obtained data are ensured by using standardised sampling methods and treating and analysing all samples in the same laboratories. This programme represents the European contribution to the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS)/International Association of Geochemistry and Cosmochemistry (IAGC) Working Group on Global Geochemical Baselines. The Sampling instructions are based on the recommendations of the IGCP 259 and IGCP 360 programmes. The FOREGS Geochemistry Task Force, which was established in 1994, in order to make an inventory of geochemical databases in European countries identified 120 separate geochemical databases, but found that the material collected, the sampling methods and analytical techniques used varied widely and an intercalibration of data sets is needed. Currently 27 European countries have participated in the work of the FOREGS Geochemistry Working group. At common meetings the main sampling and analytical strategies were discussed and accepted. The sampling will be completed by the end of 1999 in 23 countries consisting of 900 sampling sites altogether. The samples will be analysed for XX elements in selected laboratories using standardized methods. All data will be stored in a common database and it will be available to every participating country. First results will be presented in the 31st IGC. The collaboration of professional geochemists has been widespread both in terms of geographical location and experience. This process has been extremely successful and an active network of European geochemists has developed as a direct result.