

MORE THAN JUST A MAP:THE MULTINATIONAL GIS PROJECT OF THE 1:5 MILLION GEOLOGICAL MAP OF EUROPE

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A major European GIS project: the 1:5 Million International Geological Map of Europe and Adjacent Areas (IGME 5000) is being managed and implemented by the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR). The project involves over 40 European and adjacent countries. The aims of the project are to develop a GIS underpinned by a geological database and a printed map providing up-to-date and consistent geological information. A CD-ROM will be produced with a subset of the GIS and the related data-base. While the main theme of the GIS is the pre-Quaternary geology of both the land and offshore areas of Europe, it is planned to include additional themes, such as Quaternary geology – a key factor influencing the natural landscape. The project is dependent on the numerous contributions of the many countries. An extensive multinational project like the IGME 5000 requires meticulous preparation and establishment of standards and protocols in order to provide the essential structure and guidelines for the data compilation e.g. common term dictionaries for the database. In addition a standard topographic base map was an essential prerequisite. In many areas the IGME is establishing basic standards where none exist. The resulting GIS will hold significantly more information than the previous printed maps could ever provide. It will also offer versatility, e.g. to retrieve and present for the whole of Europe, information on age, petrography and structural and metamorphic features. Finally the IGME 5000 will provide the essential foundation for pan-European applied geo-environmental thematic mapping.