

## **PANGIS : EARTH SCIENCES INFORMATION SYSTEM, ABOUT AFRICA, FOR AFRICA AND BY AFRICA**

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In order to enhance the availability of information on the geology of Africa, CIFEG (International Centre for Training and Exchanges in Geosciences) and MRAC (Royal Museum of Central Africa) set up PANGIS (Pan-African Network for a Geological Information System) in 1987 with the support of UNESCO. PANGIS has been designed to benefit those African Geological Surveys that wish to a) restructure their geoscientific information and b) supplement their library resources with documents held or produced by Northern institutions so as to be in a position to provide both their decision-makers and potential investors with the facilities of a Geological Information System (GIS). In its initial phase, the aim of the PANGIS project was to disseminate a standardized bibliographic data management system and to provide normative tools (manuals, thesauruses, etc.) compatible with international bibliographical standards in order to facilitate exchanges of information. A second phase of the PANGIS project, entitled PANFACT, was initiated in 1995. A methodology and tools for the management of factual and digital geological data were made available to the African Geological Surveys. This application makes it possible to develop geoscientific databases covering field and borehole data, mineral resources, geochemistry and hydrogeology. By means of these two complementary phases, PANGIS gives a new dimension to the work of African governmental agencies. Through the knowledge and the effective management of available geological information, the network provides decision-makers with decision-aid tools and thus participates in national development. It also provides African geoscientists with a modern information search and analysis tool. Finally, PANGIS promotes smooth and efficient exchanges of information within a framework determined and managed by the participating member countries. The PANGIS experience, thanks to its 30 country members in Africa and because it is more than 10 years old, is at present adapted to the needs and realities of South East Asian Countries and a «SANGIS» project is being examined.