

EARSC Internationalisation Strategy

EARSC has as one of its objectives to support the European EO Services industry by opening up new market opportunities. In other words, to help develop the market for the commercial products and services. This includes new commercial market sectors and new export possibilities linked to national needs in countries outside Europe.

However, the sector is dominated by SME's with over 65% of the companies comprising less than 10 employees and over 95% qualifying as SME's according to international definitions; <250 employees, <€50m annual revenues and not belonging to a larger industrial group. For small companies developing links into export markets is challenging. It requires significant effort with a high risk not to provide a good return on investment. Hence a business network such as EARSC is an ideal vehicle to help them overcome these barriers.

The EARSC strategy to improve export prospects for companies hinges around partnerships. The EO services sector is one which has business applications in many domains and we seek partners which can help expand our reach. One key partnership is with the Oil and Gas sector through the International Oil and Gas Producers Association.

Internationally, EARSC has agreements with key organisations in Japan, in Africa and in Latin America. The wide spread of applications for the sector means that there is no specific geographical focus or targets for EARSC which have yet been established. EO services may be used anywhere in the world and whilst some applications will be more relevant for some countries or regions. Every country or region offers the possibility to bring services to users. Individual companies have certain links and certain export targets and overall this means that there is interest in almost any country in the world. We are currently working with the members to establish some priority countries which would provide the focus for our strategy within a clusters network.

Through partnerships, we have organised B2B meetings between European industries and companies in both Africa and in Japan (on separate occasions) and this will continue to provide one focus for our strategy. Increasing the number of partnerships between umbrella organisations or associations with a regional focus will provide the fundamental approach.

The market for EO services today is mainly for public sector (governmental customers) or for industrial users (business customers) ie B2G and B2B markets. The consumer market is expected to develop in the future but is small today. Hence, the second focus is to organise presence for the European EO services companies at international trade events. Such events will expose the capabilities of the sector to those working in other user sectors. Developing business to business links is key to this.

We envisage two separate approaches to the selection and organised presence at such international events. The first is to organise a stand which showcases the capabilities of the European EO services industry which EARSC represents. Events selected will be internationally known and respected conferences and trade shows. EO services will be highlighted which are of particular relevance for the

sector which is targeted by the trade-show/conference and the region in which it is being held – since a significant number of those attending will be from the host country or region.

The second strand to the strategy is to present at a show with a partner from the sector. This is particularly relevant for the cluster approach. So a partner focused on say wind turbines could present a package of engineering consultancy for the installation of wind-turbines together with EO services packages which provide wind and wave data necessary to design and operate a turbine. Similarly, for solar arrays where a provider of – probably large scale arrays – can promote solar radiation data and to support the design and operation of such an array. Either of these could be promoted at alternative or renewable energy trade shows.

Other examples which are considered could relate to shipping (wind and wave data), infrastructure engineering (complemented by environmental assessment packages or services linked to ground movement which is capable of being measured from satellites to within mm accuracies.

This combination of approaches we consider will offer our companies good possibilities to develop export business. We shall also provide services for individual companies to be present and promote themselves directly.

The European flagship programme Copernicus also offers a strong framework around which to organise industry representation at international events. Copernicus data and information is available on a free and open basis. The competences and skills of the European service companies can hence be offered using these data. The recent activity to establish a new Copernicus Services enabling access to the Data and Information which it provides, is a great platform around which to showcase European products and services. EARSC works very closely with the European Commission and ESA to enhance the exploitation potential for Copernicus. We envisage taking a group of companies to organised events in order to promote this European capability. Service companies will be offering new products and services based on this new platform which will become operational around the end of 2017.

EARSC represents European companies and seeks to develop links with international partners. A key tool to leverage our activities is the GEO – The Group on Earth Observation. GEO was set up in 2003 as an informal international organisation to co-ordinate international efforts in Earth Observation. Today, GEO has over 100 countries from every around the world as members and over 100 Participating Organisations (PO's). The European effort in GEO is co-ordinated by DG RTD. The focus for GEO is to establish a GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System of Systems) linking both satellites and analytical capabilities at a global level. Recently, the focus of GEO has been to promote the use of EO derived information in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

Since March 2016, EARSC has become a Participating Organisation to GEO. We consider that this can benefit the industry network in 3 ways:

1. Access to global data. GEO promotes open data policies and enables access to both satellite and in-situ data which can support companies to develop their business.
2. Links to countries. The large number of countries which are members of GEO provides a strong network towards which to promote the use of EO services.
3. Awareness. EARSC is active towards the GEO secretariat and the GEO members. It provides an excellent resource to raise awareness of the Association and thereby to promote the capabilities of the industry.



GEO has recently been pursuing a policy to develop engagement with the private sector. It is at an early stage but awareness is now growing amongst the GEO members that the private sector can offer many products and services which can support GEO goals.