



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2009/0070(COD)

24.2.2010

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
on the European Earth observation programme (GMES) and its initial
operations (2011–2013)
(COM(2009)0223 – C7-0037/2009– 2009/0070(COD))

Rapporteur: Vittorio Prodi

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SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The regulation on the global monitoring for environment and security (GMES) and its initial operations is the latest element of a multi annual strategy aimed at providing Europe with its own capacity for Earth's observation in environment and security domains. Given the recent findings that called for increased monitoring of climate change impacts, the importance of this proposal is further stressed. The data that has been produced by previous monitoring has in fact, either been not complete enough (with regard to parameters), or it has not been available in a continuous manner.

In order to do so, GMES is comprised of three key components.

1. Space

This consists of space observation infrastructure which addresses service data needs, specifically through land, atmospheric and oceanographic parameters. This component aims at developing and implementing a number of satellite missions known as the Sentinels. It will rely on coordination by the ESA.

2. In Situ (including ground-based remote sensing observations).

This relies on a number of facilities, instruments and tools which are owned and operated at national, regional and intergovernmental levels.

3. Services.

This will ensure access to information covering various thematic areas, from climate change adaptation and mitigation, to security, and land, marine and atmospheric monitoring.

The Rapporteur welcomes the Commission's proposal as an important tool to respond to the increased research and civil protection needs, given the seriousness of global warming effects on the environment. This regulation represents the initial segment of the operative phase of GMES programme, and will provide us with the means to gather precise data on land, sea and atmosphere changes. Some examples of measurable indicators include elements such as ocean salinity or biomass moisture, and sea levels. Furthermore, there are beneficial effects with regards to our capacity to prevent and manage major disasters, i.e. oil spills, forest fires, floods and landslides. GMES is also a crucial element for ETS management and emissions control. It has been necessary to prioritise the financial strategy between the three components of the programme bearing in mind that the funding architecture foresees the intervention of national governments and other public and private bodies mainly for the in-situ and services component.

Another element of appreciation comes from the potential spinoffs of the programme for SME growth, especially in the research sector, in a moment of economic crisis. Moreover, the European industries are the ones setting the standards for GMES, with evident beneficial effects on their competitiveness in the global market.

On the international cooperation side, clear mention of GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System of Systems) should be given in the regulation text, considering that part of the funding

requested for the implementation of GMES goes as contribution to this world monitoring system to which EU has officially subscribed.

Furthermore, the rapporteur suggests the Commission to highlight in its proposal some information technology aspects, given the particular relevance for satellite technology and the role of the European Environment Agency, with regards, in particular, to its role of coordinating user needs (public authorities).

Finally, a serious concern is raised by the funding structure of the space component: this regulation only covers financial needs for the period 2011-2013. However, the ESA commitments for the launch of the "Sentinel" satellites require precise and timely preparation and imply huge expenses for the actual launch, planned for the 2014-2017 period. For this period, decisions as regards the financial perspectives have not been taken yet. Consequently the project will be faced with uncertainties in a transitional phase (January -December 2014) during which no funds will be allocated, while the space purveying industries involved will nevertheless have to be paid for the services delivered. The rapporteur invites the Commission and the Council to face this problem and find an adequate solution.

AMENDMENTS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Amendment 1

Proposal for a regulation

Article 2 - paragraph 2 - point a

Text proposed by the Commission

(a) a service component ensuring access to information covering the following thematic areas:

- land monitoring;
- emergency management;
- security;
- monitoring of the marine environment;**
- atmosphere monitoring;**
- climate change adaptation and mitigation;**

Amendment

(a) a service component ensuring access to information covering the following thematic areas:

- climate change adaptation and mitigation;**
- land, **marine environment and atmosphere** monitoring;
- emergency management;
- security;

Justification

Climate change and its impacts need to be stressed as first focus of GMES activities, hence a different wording and position in the list.

Amendment 2

Proposal for a regulation Article 4 – paragraph 1

Text proposed by the Commission

1. The Commission shall ensure coordination of the GMES programme with activities at national, Community and international level.

Amendment

1. The Commission shall ensure coordination of the GMES programme with activities at national, Community and international level ***such as, for example, with the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS).***

Justification

GEOSS should be clearly mentioned given Europe's contribution to it through GMES.

Amendment 3

Proposal for a regulation Article 4 - paragraph 3 - subparagraph 2

Text proposed by the Commission

The European Space Agency shall be entrusted with implementation of the GMES space component, relying on the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT) where necessary.

Amendment

The European Space Agency shall be entrusted with implementation of the GMES space component relying on the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT) where necessary, ***while the European Environment Agency (EEA) shall have the role of coordinating the in situ component, bringing together user needs and contributing to service management.***

Justification

EEA role should be highlighted in the implementation of GMES.

PROCEDURE

Title	European Earth observation programme (GMES) (2011–2013)						
References	COM(2009)0223 – C7-0037/2009 – 2009/0070(COD)						
Committee responsible	ITRE						
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	ENVI 14.7.2009						
Rapporteur Date appointed	Vittorio Prodi 9.9.2009						
Discussed in committee	2.12.2009						
Date adopted	23.2.2010						
Result of final vote	<table> <tr> <td>+: </td><td>42</td></tr> <tr> <td>–: </td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>0: </td><td>0</td></tr> </table>	+:	42	–:	0	0:	0
+:	42						
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Members present for the final vote	János Áder, Elena Oana Antonescu, Paolo Bartolozzi, Sandrine Béliet, Sergio Berlato, Milan Cabrnoch, Nessa Childers, Bas Eickhout, Edite Estrela, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Satu Hassi, Jolanta Emilia Hibner, Dan Jørgensen, Karin Kadenbach, Christa Klaß, Jo Leinen, Peter Liese, Kartika Tamara Liotard, Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė, Gilles Pargneaux, Antonyia Parvanova, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Mario Pirillo, Vittorio Prodi, Frédérique Ries, Oreste Rossi, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Carl Schlyter, Horst Schnellhardt, Richard Seeber, Theodoros Skylakakis, Bogusław Sonik, Catherine Soullie, Salvatore Tatarella, Anja Weisgerber, Sabine Wils, Marina Yannakoudakis						
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Jutta Haug, Veronica Lope Fontagné, Anna Záborská, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska						