

“Natural resource deposit locations, licence areas & groundwater information now available online”

Dublin, 17 October 2007

Minister Eamon Ryan today announced that he would be making the bulk of the digital data held in the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources available to people freely and easily online.

More than 5Tb of spatial data will now be made available for free download. These services will be made available via the Department's website and the University sector's internet backbone, the HEAnet.

Commenting on the announcement Minister Ryan said, "The free dissemination of this data is intended to stimulate the environmental, exploration, construction, and geoscience sectors. Some of the data could prove very useful for companies exploring for oil and gas resources for example. It will also provide important data for planners in achieving sustainable and responsible development and assist in the planning of major infrastructure projects."

The bulk of the Department's spatial data is within the Natural Resources sector, and initial datasets available will include licence boundaries and drill hole locations from the Petroleum Affairs Division, significant deposit locations and prospecting licence areas from Exploration and Mining Division and a wide range of marine, bedrock geology, soil, groundwater, mineral and geotechnical data from the Geological Survey of Ireland as well as the Marine Institute.

Additional spatial datasets will come from the Department's Engineering Division, whose coastal photos are collected for coastal protections work. The offshore datasets collected by the Department's and Marine Institute's joint sea bed mapping projects, the Irish National Seabed Survey, and its successor INFOMAR will also be made available.

"This project is an important component of an overall plan to make Ireland an internationally renowned destination for geoscience research. The Government has committed to investing a total of €43 million over the next seven years in the geoscience sector and I hope to soon see many more exciting new geoscience projects that could potentially transform our lives," concluded Minister Ryan.

www.dcmnr.gov.ie

E-Governance

<http://www.egovernance.ie/>

DCENR Spatial Data

<http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Spatial+Data/DCENR+Spatial+Data.htm>

<http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Natural/>

HEAnet Information Resources Zone

<http://www.heanet.ie/resources/index.php>

Exploration and Mining

The Exploration and Mining Division of the Department is charged with applying the Minerals Development Act to minerals exploration and development, encouraging the early identification and responsible development by private investors of the Nation's minerals deposits in accordance with best international practice and enhancing the attractiveness of Ireland for international and national minerals investment by active promotional measures.

<http://www.minex.ie/>

<http://www.minex.ie/Interactive+Maps/>

Petroleum Affairs Division

The Petroleum Affairs Division aims to maximise the benefits to the State from exploration for and production of indigenous oil and gas resources and ensure that activities are conducted safely and with due regard to their impact on the environment and other land/sea users.

<http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Natural/Petroleum+Affairs+Division/Petroleum+Affairs+Division.htm>

Geological Survey of Ireland

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) is responsible for providing geological advice and information, and for the acquisition of data for this purpose. GSI produces a range of products including maps, reports and databases and acts as a knowledge centre and project partner in all aspects of Irish geology.

<http://www.gsi.ie/>

Environmental Assessment

<http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Marine/Environmental+Assessment/Environmental+Assessment.htm>

Strategic Environmental Assessment

<http://www.epa.ie/whatwedo/advice/sea/>

Dunsink Observatory

<http://www.dias.ie/lang/en/cosmic/astro/dunsink.html>

Earthquake Update

<http://www.dias.ie/lang/en/cosmic/geo/earthquake/earthquake.html>

Landslides

<http://www.gsi.ie/Forms/Landslides.htm>

Natural Resources Publications

<http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Corporate+Units/Virtual+Press+Room/Publications/Natural+Resources+Publications.htm>