

Review Panel Consensus Report

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Even considering the fact that some programs have started only at the end of 2006, and hence are far from being completed, it already appears that significant results have been achieved. In particular the integration of numerical modeling and experimental verifications stipulated in the call have been successfully carried out in the majority of the projects. Several projects have resulted in paradigm shifts in several fields of the geosciences.

New unique in-situ analytical tools have been developed and deployed for European use. In parallel, new software and computational approaches have been proposed and applied for mineral sciences.

Several articles have already been published in high profile journals and the program will clearly produce more publications in the near future.

The synergistic use of theoretical calculations and experimental verifications has been demonstrated from nanometer to Earth scale. For instance, this has proven instrumental in securing an extreme conditions beam line at Petra III.

Taking into account the progress made so far, one should expect that most of the projects shall meet their initial goals.

NETWORKING, TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION

Sharing ideas, experimental equipments, computation facilities, works fine within the CRPs. Cooperation and communication between CRPs exists only in areas where specific expertise resides. Most inter-CRP collaboration has been initiated during the annual EuroMinSci conferences that clearly represent a fruitful networking tool.

More effort could have been dedicated to the program-wide training of young scientists in the form of summer schools or similar training classes.

Most CRPs have organized specialized workshops, training courses or special sessions within international meetings, which have increased the visibility of the research groups.

EVALUATION OF THE REALIZATION OF THE EUROMINSCI PROGRAMME

Much if not most of the excellent research performed within the CRPs could not have been done without the supporting structure of the EuroMinSci Programme.

Indeed, the Programme appears to have drawn together most effectively individual expertise residing in different European countries and different organizations therein.

However, due to financial constraints, several prominent researchers and research groups could not participate in the Programme.

SUGGESTIONS

In the following, some suggestions to enhance the EUROCORES programme's use (not in any particular order):

- Enhance networking, training and dissemination activities
- Participation of younger scientist should be encouraged
- Intra- or interdisciplinary inter-EUROCORES meetings should be organized
- Diminish red tape
- Funded project times should be prolonged to (at least) four years.
- Slow start-up of the projects should be removed
- Co-operation between ESF and different national funding agencies should be enhanced
- Commitment of national agencies to fund the projects recommended by ESF should be firmly secured before the start of the programme
- Final funding decisions based on scientific merits should be left to the Review Panel in concert with the ESF
- Future development of experimental/theoretical approach to mineral science should be assured by new programme(s)