

EARSC going International

We recently attended the kick-off of our new project IDEEO along with all the other projects under the Clusters Go International programme of EASME. It was quite enlightening and very gratifying to see how advanced we are in EARSC compared to other project teams!!

We are in the first stage of a two-stage process. In the first stage, we are funded to develop a joint strategy along with our cluster partners; Pol Mer Bretagne (PMB) and Cluster Lucano di Bioeconomia (CLB). This gives us 3 business focuses; Earth observation, off-shore and agriculture but we shall seek to broaden this as we go along with links to other clusters. The first phase is to develop a joint strategy and the 2nd phase – which we shall bid for this time next year – implements that strategy.

At the kick-off meeting the broad modalities of the EASME programme were explained and each project gave a short overview of its activities. When we talked about the trade missions and international links which we have made already, the reaction was strongly positive and we found ourselves being held up as an example of best practice even as we start the project!!

It showed how difficult it is for national clusters to develop the international links which are at the heart of each strategy. However, for EARSC, as we are already a European-wide organisation (we have become identified as a business network rather than a cluster), we have international links which we have turned into MoU's with Japan, India, Africa and Australia as well as close working with Chile.

The latter link has been greatly helped by the EC intention to sign a data agreement linked to Copernicus. Indeed, we find it useful to elaborate our strategy in close alignment with the EC actions. If a data sharing agreement is signed, this can open the door for industry to meet local partners and establish business links. This has happened most recently in India when we were able to have EARSC companies present during the exchanges.

Further missions are planned for later this year and we shall keep all our members informed of the opportunities and with the support of the EC, open up business to business meetings and links in each case. Last year we were in Chile and Bolivia as well as in Japan and the US.

In addition to the Australian mission (see previous blogpost [EU-Australia Partnerships](#)) and those identified above, this year we shall be in Egypt for the bi-annual AARSE conference and in Kyoto for the GEO plenary. Other missions may be identified on an ad-hoc basis.

For next year and beyond, we have an EARSC Internationalisation working group which serves to set the priorities for IDEEO and other mission priorities. Keep an eye on our web-site for news and if you wish to benefit and/influence our programme; you can always become a member of EARSC!!