

Interview with Jorge Civis Llovera

New Director of the Geological Survey of Spain - IGME

You have been recently appointed director of the Geological Survey of Spain (IGME). Could you briefly explain the main aims and tasks of IGME?

The IGME is a Public Research Institution attached to the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and National Geological Survey. Since 1849 the Survey produces basic infrastructural knowledge of the territory including its resources, and provides web access to the databases and geo-scientific information systems that it develops. The Institute is also the national reference centre for natural hazards.

Its main mission is to provide the public administrations, the economic agents and the society at large, with information, technical-scientific assistance and advice, concerning the Earth sciences and technologies to be used in land-use planning.

What will be the main strategies and approaches of IGME during your mandate?

IGME has two main roles, one is basically scientific and another is as a public service, both are relevant but up to now they were sometimes working in different directions, it is my intention to collate both activities in a single path. Another of my strategies will be to strengthen the international activities of the Survey involving personnel and resources in projects abroad.

Could you describe some of the more recent activities being conducted by IGME that have been relevant to the Spanish or Global Earth Sciences?

We have in the last few years, developed a very modern and interactive data system, to provide all our users with updated and realizable data sets through our web site.

IGME has also drastically increased its scientific research presence in the international arena through many high level papers in top level scientific magazines.

Our international presence has also been another key action in recent times, with activities in South America and Africa.

Water and minerals are major issues now at European level (European Water Directive & Raw Materials Initiative), will IGME be very active in these subjects at national and EU level, and how?

IGME will continue to develop activities in those fields as has been in the past. IGME has an wide expertise on groundwater. We can't forget that Spain is a semi-arid country. Regarding mineral resources we plan to increase our activity due to the fact that Spain has a role to play in the European scene as a main raw materials producer.

Could you highlight a subject or theme where you think IGME is the main or leading research institution in Spain?

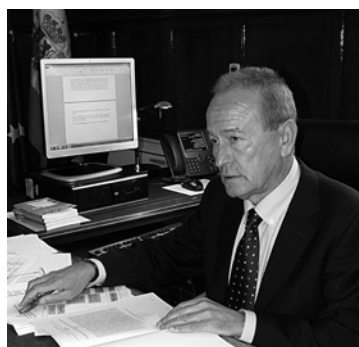
I believe that IGME is the leading research center in Spain in subjects such as geological hazards, geological heritage, mineral exploration, groundwater management, CO₂ sequestration, earth sciences outreach and many other issues.

What is the situation of mining in Spain today, and what will be the role of IGME in this subject?

IGME should be the main data supplier, as we have in our databases most of the information about mineral resources in Spain, and such information is crucial in mineral exploration. But we also have a role in exploration itself.

What geological singularities does Spain have with respect to the rest of Europe?

Geologically speaking, the Iberian Peninsula is like a microcontinent with a Variscan basement surrounded by three alpine ranges with an hazardous geological history behind. The volcanic Canary Islands adds value to that singularity. All these materials are well known thanks to 1:50.000 scale geological map covering the whole national territory. Since 1849 IGME has provided geological and mining knowledge making available an impressive amount of data of subsoil which, for instance, has helped in the interpretation of the deep crust of the Alpine and Variscan orogens.



IGME has in the last few years increased its international activities, do you have a plan to promote the international presence of IGME, and if so, in which regions?

Yes as I said before, one of my lines of action will be to promote the international activity of IGME. As with respect to new regions for instance we have been appointed, among other geological surveys, to participate in the National Geologic Map of Angola (PLANAGEO).

IGME is one of the main national geological surveys of EuroGeosurveys, how do you see the future role of IGME in the organization?

IGME is one of the largest surveys in Europe, and thus our commitment with EGS will continue and probably increase in the future.

IGME has a well-defined communication strategy and has participated actively in EGS communication efforts. How do you see the development of this activity within IGME and EGS in the coming future?

I believe outreach is crucial for surveys, so both in Spain and in Europe, IGME will maintain its efforts as has been doing in the last few years.

It is well-known that Spain is facing economic difficulties, how are this difficulties affecting IGME and how will you plan to overcome such problems and maintain the research quality level of the Survey?

The lack of national funding for IGME is a reality, but at the same time is an excellent incentive to promote our international activities in order to obtain external funds.