

General Assembly 2017
19 May 2017 09.00 – 13.30h
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Member Name	Representative
Full Members:	
Apulia	Ms Loredana Capone
Apulia	Mr Paolo Casalino
Apulia	Ms Luciana Milella
Apulia	Mr Giorgio Ampolo
Azores	Mr Francisco Wallenstein Macedo
Baden Württemberg	Mr Thomas Häringer
Basilicata	Mr Valerio Tramutoli
Bavaria	Ms Baerbel Deisting
Brandenburg	Mr. Andreas Kueppers
Brandenburg	Ms Birgit Urban
Bremen	Mr Christian Bruns (Vice-President)
Bremen	Ms Ulrike Krumsee-Budde
Bremen	Ms Barbara Cembella
Brittany	Ms Marion Boulard
East Midlands	Mr Mark Lester
Hesse	Ms Perdita De Buhr
Lombardy	Mr Folco Ciulli
Lombardy	Ms Valentina Colombo
Mazovia	Mr Krzysztof Maczewski
Mazovia	Ms Nina Malachowska
Occitanie	Mr Bernard Plano
Occitanie	Mr Stéphane Beyrand
Occitanie	Mr. Yannick Proto
Podkarpackie	Mr Edgar Szewczyk
Piedmont	Mr Vincenzo Zezza
Piedmont	Mr Massimo Lapolla
Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur	Ms Emmeline Allieux
Veneto	Mr Silvano De Zorzi
Associate Members:	
ALTEC	Mr Ernesto Vittone
AvioSpace	Mr Luca Angelantoni
AvioSpace	Mr Alessandro Chiesa
Consorzio TeRN	Mr Lucio Bernardini
CNR-IREA	Mr Massimo Antoninetti
Pole Mer Bretagne Atlantique	Mr René Garelo
Politecnico di Milano	Ms Branka Cuca

Secretariat:

Ms Roya Ayazi, Secretary General
Ms Ilaria d'Auria, Communication / Project Officer
Ms Elena Bratikova, Secretary

09.30 – 10.00 h

INSPIRATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEECH by Amanda Regan

(See Annex I)

Ms. Amanda Regan, seconded expert from ESA at the European Commission, brought her fifteen year experience as an engineer and TEDx speaker to the audience, via an inspirational opening speech. She shared a reflection on **how the uses of space data can lead to wisdom**. Using the DIKW pyramid, she brought her insight to illustrate how satellites data that can lead people to knowledge and wisdom, when transformed into useful information. She backed her purposes with illustrative examples of derived satellite uses from the real world, such as M-PESA in Kenya. Reflecting on the meaningfulness of data production, she mentioned the risk of data overload which could outcast the most important aim of using information: reaching wisdom. She concluded her speech with a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt: “Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living, the other one helps you make a life”.

Ms Roya Ayazi, Secretary General of NEREUS, thanked Ms. Regan for her insight and opened the floor for discussion. The participants further discussed issues related to the use of space data in our daily lives.

WELCOME by NEREUS-Vice-President Christian Bruns

(See Annex II)

NEREUS’ Vice-President Christian Bruns welcomed the participants and introduced his report on **NEREUS’ political dialogue since 2015** by informing the audience that in 2017 the network will celebrate its 10 year anniversary since the signature of the Political Charter. He gave an overview of the main results of the past two years’ activities of political exchanges. He introduced the main highlights of the network’s political dialogue with its strategic partners, namely: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Space Agency. NEREUS, he said, became a recognized interlocutor at both EU- and national level in matters of regional space uses. The regional dimension is increasingly taken into consideration when shaping and discussing space policies, he added. The launch of two new networks by the European Commission, such as the Copernicus Relays and the Copernicus Academies, are a clear recognition of the value of the local and regional level for the uptake of Copernicus data and information amongst new public users and communities. In addition to that, he explained that NEREUS is being increasingly valued as a cooperation partner as the high number of collaboration requests for different projects demonstrates. Last but not least, Mr. Bruns highlighted how NEREUS is regularly being invited to represent the regional perspective to relevant EU/ESA expert groups and events.

Mr. Bruns then gave an **overview of NEREUS' specific dialogues with its strategic partners**. He mentioned the high-level political event held at the **European Parliament** in June 2016 in the frame of the project with the European Space Agency, recalling the importance of the involvement of NEREUS member Regions in bringing to the debate MEPs who have their constituency in their regions. Each member's commitment is crucial to the overall impact of the network, he concluded. He reported on the advocacy work he led in order to discuss regional views and concerns with MEP Constanze Krehl, responsible for the report of the European Parliament on the European Space Strategy. This led Mr. Bruns to the presentation of the ongoing exchanges with the **Committee of the Regions**, ranging from the continuous discussions with the ENVE-Commission, to the interlocution with CoR's Secretary General Juri Burianek, to the CoR's request through its President to be represented on behalf of regions at the Copernicus User Forum (key governance body for the Copernicus program). Mr. Bruns then reported on the dialogue held with the **European Commission** prior to the publication of their **European Space Strategy**, recalling the broad dissemination of NEREUS' Position Paper towards relevant institutional partners. Alongside with the European institutions, the dialogue with its agencies such as the European Space Agency, is central to the network's advocacy: the exchange with ESA-Director General Prof. Jan Woerner in January 2016, and the joint initiative by NEREUS and ESA on Improving Copernicus User Uptake among Local and Regional Authorities via thematic regional workshops across Europe. Mr. Bruns then looked into the National level, sharing the highlights of the exchanges held with the **National Space Agencies**, an important pillar of the NEREUS work program. He then announced that the Italian Space Agency is becoming an Associate Member to the network. NEREUS, he said, strives to maintain close relations to Space Agencies of Member States whose regions are present on the NEREUS-platform. Again, this is a field in which each region can play a crucial role in improving and maintaining relations with the National level. As an example, he recalled the high-level NEREUS Delegation made of NEREUS German Regions who met with the DLR-Chairwoman Prof. Pascale Ehrenfreund to explore topics of common interest. The two organizations agreed to meet on a regular basis.

After the overview of the advocacy activities with the main NEREUS interlocutors, Mr. Bruns welcomed the proposal of organizing **interactive brainstorming sessions** prior to the General Assembly. He expressed his satisfaction for the format, as well as for the quality of the content provided by the participants, and thanked the NEREUS Secretariat for the organization. The three thematic discussions held during the brainstorming sessions, he said, feed greatly into the one this General Assembly should have with view to the 10 years anniversary of the network. The position paper published by NEREUS prior to the publication of the Commission's Space Strategy for Europe has been a useful tool to position the network and provided some items for discussions on its future activities.

Mr Bruns thanked the participants for their presence, and gave the floor to Ms Roya Ayazi, Secretary General of NEREUS, to move forward with the Outlook on 2017/2018 and with the statutory affairs.

ACTIVITY REPORT 2016/2017 AND OUTLOOK ACTION PLAN 2017/2018 by Roya Ayazi, NEREUS Secretary General

(Annex III)

Ms Roya Ayazi took the floor and started the presentation by indicating the 2016 Activity Report in the handout. She then focused on the main milestone of 2017: the high-level political ceremony to celebrate the 10 years anniversary of the signature of NEREUS' Political Charter. She invited the participants to save the date in their agendas for the **29th of November 2017** and make all the necessary arrangements to be in Brussels together with their political representatives.

She then highlighted the **series of regional workshops** that have been organized in order to better link the European space policy to regional and/or sectorial requirements. Ms Ayazi presented the initiatives in the field of space technologies and agriculture, introducing the work of the EO/Copernicus Working Group on "How can space make a difference for the agriculture sector?" that led to the workshop in Basilicata on the same theme and finally to the relation with Copa Cogeca in view to explore the possibility of drafting a joint position paper on the subject. She then related on the fourth edition of the Space Policy / Industry Dialogue co-organized with bavAIRia e.V. She reported on the progressive shift within NEREUS, from a more technology-oriented vision to a more thematic approach to the organization of events. As an example, she showed how Bremen Region had steadily developed area of cooperation on space and development cooperation, opening a whole new potential for cooperation beyond Europe, together with GiZ.

The **importance of regional workshops to strengthen the regional anchorage** of the network has also been witnessed in the frame of the joint NEREUS/ESA initiative on Improving Copernicus Uptake amongst Local and Regional Authorities. She mentioned the numerous benefits for the NEREUS community, namely the fact that they were an opportunity for community-building, they lead to tangible outcomes and increased the overall visibility and networking opportunities in each region that hosted the workshops. Last but not least, she said, the initiative brought additional resources to the network.

For this reason, she continued, NEREUS and ESA are in the process of negotiating a **new NEREUS/ESA/EC initiative for 2017-2019**: the compilation of a collection of Copernicus use cases from local and regional authorities across Europe. However, she stated, there are differences with the 2012 publication: first of all, the call will not be limited to NEREUS Member Regions but has to be extended to all Copernicus participating countries, and a minimum of 100 articles has to be collected, at least one from each Copernicus participating country. The publication should not be seen as the ending point of the joint initiative, but as the start of a communication plan that includes, a high level launch event at the European Parliament and a series of rewards to outstanding participating local and regional authorities (videos, interregional working sessions, ecc.).

She then introduced the fact that this joint NEREUS/ESA/EC initiative will take place in a changed panorama, in which the European Commission itself has set forth a **Copernicus User Uptake Framework Contract** of which NEREUS is part. She described the different contracts in this frame, which are producing concrete outcomes such as video tutorials, information and training sessions, researches and user workshops.

She concluded by reminding the participants that NEREUS has acquired the copyrights of the **Space Girls Space Women exhibition**, which has been touring NEREUS Member Regions and is available for all members at advantageous conditions until 2019.

STATUTORY AFFAIRS by Roya Ayazi, NEREUS Secretary General

➤ **Apologies and proxies received**

Ms Ayazi then moved to the statutory affairs.

She stated that the Secretariat received 7 apologies, namely from:

- Andalusia
- Madrid
- Basilicata
- Lombardy
- Lazio
- Nouvelle Aquitaine
- South Holland

She confirmed that 3 proxies was received:

- Madrid (to Basilicata)
- Lombardy (to Bremen)
- Wallonia (to Occitanie)

➤ **Approval of the agenda**

Decision: The agenda was approved as tabled.

➤ **Approval of the minutes of the GA 2016**

Decision: The minutes were approved unanimously without amendments.

➤ **Approval accounts 2016** (Report by the Treasurer, Ms. Baerbel Deisting)

(Annex IV)

Ms Ayazi gave the floor to **Ms. Baerbel Deisting**, the Treasurer of the network. Ms Deisting took the floor and reported on the current financial state of the association: while presenting the accounts for 2016, she underlined the difference between what the association was supposed to receive, in terms of membership fees and projects, and what the association actually received. She drew the attention of the GA to the difference between the two amounts, and recalled that while NEREUS' costs are constant, its income varies depending on the regular payment of the membership fees. She said that she couldn't stress more the importance of paying the membership fees on time. Ms. Deisting showed a graphic which illustrates a comparison between the income in terms of membership fees in 2015 and in 2016. In comparison to the previous year, she stated, there have been improvements, however – when looking at the graphic representing the development of the cash and savings, the situation remains critical as shown by the fact that after their refurbishing at the beginning of 2017 they start to decrease again. The members should be aware that the tendency of 2017 is following the one at the beginning of 2016.

Decision: The accounts for 2016 were approved.

➤ **Approval budget 2018**

Ms. Deisting presented the budget proposal for 2018. She highlighted that the overall budget proposal remained constant, and indicated two elements: the first was the adhesion of a new member region, Podkarpackie, which is positive in terms of increase of the budget, the second is that the main change is related to the reshaping of the overall communication strategy in 2018, based on the refreshment of the NEREUS website in 2017 (see minutes of the 2016 General Assembly and Budget for 2017).

Decision: the budget proposal for 2018 was approved.

Ms. Deisting thanked the participants and gave the floor back to Ms. Roya Ayazi.

➤ **Approval new members/exclusion of former members**

Ms. Ayazi took the floor and introduced the organizations that made a request to become part of the network. She particularly welcomed the adhesion of a **new Polish region, Podkarpackie**, inviting its regional representative to make a brief statement. **Mr Edgar Szewczyk** took the floor and introduced the region to the network community starting from the importance of aerospace and ICT for Podkarpackie. Aerospace forms part of the region's smart specialization strategy and is a key sector of the regional economy that drives also many sectors related to it. He then made reference to the festive act organized to celebrate the adhesion of the region to the network made during the opening of the Aerospace and Defense Meetings held in Rzeszow, in presence of the Marshall and the NEREUS Secretary General.

Ms Ayazi then gave an overview of the members that requested the adhesion, highlighting the importance of having the **Italian Space Agency** on board, as well as the **Aerospace District from Sardinia** – a region that also has space as part of its Smart Specialization Strategy.

Decision: upon recommendations of the Management Board, the following candidate members were admitted

Full Members

- Podkarpackie Region

Associate Members

- ASI – Agenzia Spaziale Italiana (Italian Space Agency)
- DASS – Distretto Aerospaziale della Sardegna

Decision: upon recommendations of the Management Board, the following members were excluded

Associate Members

- ESSP – European Satellite system Provider
- STAE – STAE Foundation
- TRE – Telerivelamento Europa

After the approval of the adhesion/exclusion of members, Ms Ayazi gave the floor to the Associate Members who were accepted in 2017, inviting them to make brief statements on the core business of their organizations. **Mr Alessandro Chiesa presented Aviospace**, an aerospace and defense Italian company located in Torino, immersed in a wide industrial environment relying on a deep cooperation among high-tech start-ups, companies and academic institutions. Mr. Chiesa added that, as an Airbus Defence and Space company, Aviospace has a long heritage in delivering a full aerospace product life cycle, from early design to manufacturing and prototyping. AvioSpace adhesion to NEREUS in 2016 was motivated by the will to broaden its visibility at international level, be involved in European projects, be involved in business to business opportunities as well as in a dialogue with local and regional authorities.

Ms Ayazi then gave the floor to **Mr. Stéphane Ourévitch**, inviting him to present **SpaceTec Partners**. Mr. Ourévitch mentioned the long term relationship between NEREUS and his consultancy company. Ever since the GRAAL project, and Copernicus4Regions initiative, SpaceTec Partners and NEREUS shared common experiences. As Copernicus Support Office, SpaceTec Partners coordinates the liaisons between the European Commission and the Copernicus Relays and Academies networks. Moreover, SpaceTec Partners coordinates the Copernicus Information and Training Sessions which kicked off in 2017 and will reach over 15 more countries in 2018. These initiatives, he added, are part of the overall Copernicus Uptake Framework Contract funded by the Commission of which also NEREUS is part of. He concluded by inviting all the participants to the Copernicus Goes Local event, as it aims at launching the network of local and regional stakeholders who will act as interfaces for the uptake of Copernicus at academic and institutional level.

➤ **Confirmation NEREUS-membership-fees 2017**

Decision: The annual membership fees for the year 2018 were confirmed as follows: Full Members, EUR 10.000, Associate Members – companies with more than 250 employees: EUR 5.000, SME's with less than 250 employees: EUR 1.000, Local Authorities, Universities, Research Centers, Non-profit Organizations and SME's with less than 50 employees: EUR 500.

➤ **Confirmation / election of NEREUS Management Board, political mandates and treasurer, including brief presentations by all candidates**

Ms. Ayazi invited the General Assembly to proceed with the elections of the Management Board, political mandates and Treasurer. She asked the candidates to stand up and briefly introduce themselves as well as their motivations. President Michele Emiliano (Apulia Region) introduced himself with a video message to the audience, as well as the President of Basilicata Region Mr. Marcello Pittella. Mr. Bernard Plano (Occitania Region) made his statement as candidate to the Vice-Presidency of NEREUS. Mr Folco Ciulli read the statement by Mr. Fabrizio Sala, also candidate for the Vice-Presidency of NEREUS (Lombardy Region). He was followed by Ms. Baerbel Deisting, current Treasurer of the network now candidate for the Vice-Presidency of NEREUS (Bavaria Region), as well as Mr. Mark Lester (East Midlands). Mr. Krzysztof Maczewski (Mazovia Region), Ms. Perdita De Buhr (Hesse Region) and Mr. Francisco Macedo (Azores Region) concluded with their brief statements. Ms Roya Ayazi then asked the General Assembly to vote using the ballot papers and deliver them to the NEREUS Staff.

The scrutiny confirmed all candidacies as stated in the ballot papers.

Decision: The General Assembly elected the following members:

- Mr. Michele Emiliano as President of NEREUS and Management Board Member (Apulia)
- Mr Fabrizio Sala as Vice-President of NEREUS and Management Board Member (Lombardy)
- Mr Bernard Plano as Vice-President of NEREUS and Management Board Member (Occitania)
- Ms. Baerbel Deisting as Vice-President of NEREUS and Management Board Member (Bavaria)
- Mr Mark Lester as Vice-President of NEREUS and Management Board Member (East Midlands)
- Mr Wolfgang Wolf as Treasurer of NEREUS and Management Board Member (Baden-Wuerttemberg)
- Mr Marcello Pittella as Management Board Member (Basilicata)
- Ms Krzysztof Maczewski as Management Board Member (Mazovia)
- Ms Perdita De Buhr as Management Board Member (Hesse)
- Mr Francisco Wallenstein Macedo as Management Board Member (Azores)

CLOSING REMARKS by Loredana Capone, Regional Minister for Economic Development (Apulia Region)

Ms. Loredana Capone took the floor on behalf of the President of NEREUS and of Apulia Region Michele Emiliano. She thanked the General Assembly for confirming Mr. Emiliano as President of the network and confirmed the engagement of Apulia Region in steering NEREUS for the next two years in such exciting times for the space sector. She highlighted the importance of being a platform for exchanges of best practices in better using space technologies for an improved territorial management. She stressed the importance of strengthening as much as possible the relationships amongst the members, and mentioned that NEREUS is like a family and as such cannot step back from its pedagogic mission of promotion of space uses for the benefits of European citizens.

For this reason, she said, Apulia Region has developed a series of initiatives targeting new and diverse, non-specialized audiences such as young people that just finished school. She recalled the "SPACE4YOU" event held in Bari which gathered over 300 participants. The event, she continued, aimed at bringing concrete examples and pragmatic messages to the discussions organized around thematic round table debates. As regional administration, she added, Apulia has a proven track record of experiences in designing funding schemes with the the European Social Fund specifically targeted to bring back researchers in applied sciences which come from the region but work abroad. This scheme, she said, also includes the space sector and has already proven its positive impacts as a great step forward has been done in the nuclear physic field by Apulian researchers.

Apulia Region, she concluded, is proud to steer a network such as NEREUS and looks forward to exchanging best practices in terms of regional policies, uses of European funds, programs and other initiatives aiming at broadening the uses of space applications by local and regional authorities as well as European citizens.

She then invited the General Assembly to applaud Mr. Christian Bruns for his precious commitment over the years. She described the importance of Mr. Brun's engagement not only as Board Member and Vice-President but also as founding father of the network. Before wishing him all the best for the future, she gave him a present from Apulia Region and one from the network.


 Roya Ayazi
 Secretary General


 Bärbel Deisting
 MB Member, Treasurer

ANNEXES:

- Annex I: Presentation by Amanda Regan
- Annex II: Presentation by Christian Bruns
- Annex III: Presentation by Roya Ayazi
- Annex IV: Presentation by Bärbel Desiting

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