



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 3.9.2012
C/2012/ 5512 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Earth monitoring programme (GMES) and its operations (from 2014 onwards) {COM(2011) 831 final}.

The Commission welcomes the support of the Senát for the GMES programme and takes note of its position on the financing of the GMES Fund after 2014.

The Commission agrees that the GMES programme is of strategic importance for the Union and is fully committed to ensuring its long-term success. In this context, it proposed in its November 2011 Communication {COM (2011) 831 final} to set up a specific GMES fund, outside of the EU budget, with financial contributions from all 27 EU Member States. This proposal built on the Communication 'A Budget for Europe 2020' of 29 June 2011, which recognised that the structure of the multi-annual financial framework (MFF) is not well-suited for the funding of this type of large-scale projects and that they carry a risk of cost overruns which would be difficult to accommodate within the limited EU budget.

The Commission budget proposal is now under discussion in the European Parliament and in the Council. Recognising the importance of advancing in the preparations of the future GMES programme, in order to avoid the risk of discontinuity in the operations, the Commission has prepared a complementary Communication {COM(2012) 18 final}, outlining some further elements in support of its November proposal, inviting both institutions to progress in their discussions without delay.

The Commission confirms its intention to pursue an integrated approach on all environment related programmes and notes the support of the Senát on the organisational oversight of the GMES programme in the European GNSS Agency (GSA).

I look forward to continuing our dialogue on these issues.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Mr Milan Štěch
President of the Senate
of the Parliament of the Czech Republic
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4
118 01 Praha 1*