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Support to building of a sustainable mineral sector and facilitating responsible use of mineral resources for socio-economic development and welfare in Namibia

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Finnish-Namibian cooperation project between Geological Survey of Finland and Geological Survey of Namibia 2014-2016.

Namibia is highly dependent on its natural resources and the national economy is relying heavily on export earnings and fiscal revenues from the mining sector. Currently the mining sector shares up to 50% of Namibia's annual export earnings being the major GDP generator and an important source of employment. It is likely that the mineral sector will continue to form the backbone of the national economy and provide the most important long-term means for economic growth and poverty reduction.

The project is a continuation of the long-time Finnish-Namibian cooperation. Geological Survey of Finland (GTK) and Geological Survey of Namibia (GSN) have had collaboration dating back to the 90's. The overall objective of the current project is to contribute to sustainable and environmentally conscious use of georesources in Namibia in a manner that supports socio-economic development and welfare in the country.

The purpose of the project is to support the GSN to implement regional geochemical mapping program (RGSP), and to strengthen the capacity of the Geochemistry and Laboratory Division of the GSN through training and skills development of the staff. The data generated through the RGSP program will support mineral exploration, notably the setting of natural backgrounds with respect to lithology and the delineation of broad geochemical anomalies. The data can also be used for reference network for environmental monitoring and the setting of realistic environmental thresholds. This data will be made available for decision makers providing them with a sound basis for mineral and environmental policies and legislation, thus contributing to optimal use of the georesources for the benefit of socio-economic development, while minimising the negative impacts on the environment.

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The expected results of the project are the following: 1) enhanced skills of the GSN laboratory staff to use standardised, quality controlled sample preparation and analysis methods, 2) laboratory data and information system for storage of quality controlled analytical data and 3) regional geochemical data management system which adheres to global geochemical database guidelines and enables compilation of geochemical baseline maps, interpretation of the geochemical data and generation of diverse output, and importantly 4) the geochemical data and information will be on the Earth Data Namibia for stakeholders and the public.

To ensure effective skills enhancement training will be provided for the GSN staff both in Namibia and in Finland in form of short courses, specialised lectures and as on-the-job training in the laboratory and in the field. The project also ensures implementation of harmonised sample preparation and analytical methods including quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) procedures for the data produced by different analytical techniques.

