

NEWS RELEASE

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Tellus Border Airborne Survey Touches Down for Final Time

Having flown almost 60,000 km – equivalent to one and a half times around the world - the Tellus Border geological survey aircraft has landed at Enniskillen airport for the final time. The small twin-propeller plane, which has become a familiar sight to the people of the border region, has now completed a world-class aerial survey of six counties on behalf of the Geological Surveys of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The aircraft - equipped with the very latest geophysical technology - has been gathering data for the EU-funded Tellus Border project over the last ten months, helping scientists better understand the soils, rocks, water and natural resources of Ireland's border counties. Operated and flown by world leaders in this field, Sander Geophysics Limited from Canada, the airborne survey was part of the wider Tellus Border Project which also included a ground survey focusing on soil, stream water and sediment sampling.

The successful completion of the airborne survey is a major milestone for Tellus Border, which is funded by the European Union's INTERREG IVA Programme. A new phase of the project will begin shortly, whereby scientists at the Geological Surveys of Ireland and Northern Ireland will produce maps for a variety of end-users including environmental managers, policy-makers, the agricultural sector and private industry. Maps and data will be freely available to all in 2013, culminating in a major end of project conference planned for October 2013.

Survey Captain Charles Dicks, pilot with Sander Geophysics Limited said "After ten months, many in-flight hours and various battles with the Irish weather, we're delighted to have successfully completed the survey and have greatly enjoyed our time surveying here in Ireland".

Ray Scanlon, Principal Geologist at the Geological Survey of Ireland said that the completion of this stage of the project will greatly add to our understanding of the environment we live in: "We're excited to begin processing the data collected from both the airborne and ground surveys, which will be combined with the information previously gathered in Northern Ireland to provide a new and exciting take on the geology of this area."

"We would like to thank people in the border region for their support and interest during the airborne survey, as well as the Irish Aviation Authority and the Irish Farmers Association who greatly helped in the smooth progress of the project."

The Tellus Border information line will cease to operate on 27th July 2012 however those interested in the project can email tellusborder@gsi.ie or check the website www.tellusborder.eu for regular updates.