

PRESS RELEASE

CLARET PROJECT- A NEW CONTAMINATED LAND ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE

The launch meeting for the CLARET project (Contaminated Land: Assessment of Remediation by Electrical Tomography) was hosted by the British Geological Survey (BGS) on the 11th January 2007 and marks the start of a two year investigation project aimed at proving a new contaminated land mapping technology.



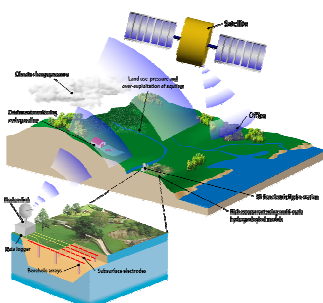
The project is being industry-led by the VHE Group, one of the UK's leading brownfield regeneration specialists and INTERKONSULT LTD, an innovative engineering practice specialising in sub-surface environments. The British Geological Survey, a world leader in the development and application of electrical imaging, provides the research and development expertise whilst South Kesteven District Council as the fourth partner of the consortium provides a regulator's perspective and access to the trial site. CLARET is part funded by the DTI Technology Programme, which supports collaborative research and development in priority areas. The project was awarded funding from their Contaminated Land Remediation Technologies competition.

CLARET has been active now for approximately three months and is due to be completed in October 2008. The project will investigate the use of timelapse electrical resistivity tomography (ERT) for the in-situ monitoring of contaminated land remediation. The same geophysical imaging technology has many other potential applications such as monitoring groundwater resources, seawater intrusion, landfills, geohazards, earthing impedance and pollution plumes.

The strength of CLARET is that it will allow real-time monitoring of sites long after remediation has been completed and complement existing practices, such as intrusive sampling and contaminant transport modelling, to give a more accurate assessment of the success of remediation methods.

CLARET comprises multiple work packages which include instrumentation, laboratory experiments, site trials, cost benefit analysis and market research. The focus of the work will be the assessment of a former gasworks site in the centre of the historic town of Stamford in Lincolnshire. The site has been contaminated by a wide range of chemicals associated with the gasworks and is close to both sensitive environmental and human receptors.

The CLARET system will be non-destructive and minimally invasive, and independent research has shown that the world market for automated ERT systems could be in excess of £15 million. With the increased demand for brownfield sites to be reclaimed for property development there is a clear market need for such technology.



NOTES to EDITORS

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is the nation's principal supplier of objective, impartial and up-to-date geological expertise and information for decision making for governmental, commercial and individual users. The BGS maintains and develops the nation's understanding of its geology to improve policy making, enhance national wealth and reduce risk. It also collaborates with the national and international scientific community in carrying out research in strategic areas, including energy and natural resources, our vulnerability to environmental change and hazards, and our general knowledge of the Earth system. More about the BGS can be found at www.bgs.ac.uk.