

RICE London
Berhane Woldemichael

Duken 20/1 -90

Dear Berhane.

First I must ask you to accept my apologies for bringing confusion to our cooperation, by not clarifying the purpose of the ERA (Goitom) contact. As I told Emnetu, the sole reason for this, was to monitor the possibilities of financial support, by setting up an evaluation project linked to former ERA agricultural projects in the field. I still consider RICE to be a natural, suitable and competent partner.

I have had a new meeting with Mr. Olav Hesjedal at his UN GRID office in Arendal. We both discussed the prospects of a free ERITREA to get status as a main partner for Norwegian bilateral aid, and possibilities of linking my finishing paper at TDH to a preliminary study of aims and means in setting up a "Plan for a national map programme". This would be a very, very interesting work, and quite demanding, covering all the aspects from legal and economic, to administrative and technical. It will be a less costly project, but through my contacts both in Arendal and Bj, I will be able to draw big advantages on both knowhow and hardware/software. The finishing paper will build a platform for a future buildup of all sorts of atlas, maps and GIS (Geographic information systems).

I think this sort of work fits well into the framework of RICE, which I like to compare to two very important Norwegian councils (NAVF Norges almenvitenskapelige forskningsråd, NTVF Norges teknisk vitenskapelige forskningsråd) which monitors and guides the scientific research in Norway, to fulfill official political and economic aims, including both basic and applied research.

Working with remote sensing, mapping and GIS is working with a lot of balls in the air at the same time. Success and effectiveness very much depends on the cooperating ability of all actual parties involved.

I have asked Ellen Borchrewink at the ERA office in OSLO to set up a meeting between concerned NGOs (i.e. potential donors?) Goitom and Emnetu and me from RICE. At the meeting I will stress the importance for all Eritrean organs to put an effort into getting "into position" towards the Norwegian government, and secondly to help finance the project mentioned above.

Yours

C.

copy: Emnetu Tesfaye.