



Charter of BRGM expertise

The BRGM charter of expert knowledge and evaluation follows the application of the national charter of expertise as notified by the French Ministry for Higher Education and Research to the public research institutions on March 2nd, 2010. It conforms to all of its ten articles.

BRGM ASSIGNMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EXPERTISE

Expert knowledge and evaluation is one of BRGM's core missions. It is mentioned in its founding decree of 23 December 1959, as modified, as well as in each of its contracts of agreed objectives signed with the State since 2001.

BRGM, in its role of an establishment for research and assistance to public policy, provides Society with its competence and experience for assisting in decision making.

FIELDS COVERED

In its role of French Geological Survey and of national reference establishment in the domain of sub-surface knowledge, BRGM practices its expert knowledge in the following geoscience domains:

- Mineral resources;
- Post mining;
- Groundwater and hydrogeology;
- Natural risks;
- Polluted soils and waste;
- Metrology;
- Geological mapping and knowledge;
- Geological storage of CO₂;
- Geothermal energy;
- Digital information systems.

In a more transverse manner and through its various fields of competence, BRGM participates in establishing the foundations for sustainable development in a context of climate change.

MODES OF EXPERTISE

The practise of expert knowledge at BRGM entirely follows application of the AFNOR NF X 50-110 standard. It is totally integrated in the BRGM quality-management system that is ISO 9001-2008 certified.

The definition of 'expertise' as used covers: All activities that aim at providing a client, in answer to a specific question, with an interpretation, opinion, or recommendation that is as objective as possible, and which is based on available knowledge and demonstrations accompanied by professional judgement.

This expertise is exclusively of the institutional type, in which BRGM involves its responsibility under all its aspects in its capacity as legal entity. Such institutional expertise can be practised in several ways, including the different forms of collective and collegiate expertise.

BRGM, through its public service activities, carries out its expert evaluations as assistance to the Administration and to the services in charge of water policing. It also carries out third-party expertises concerning classified facilities for environmental protection, as well as expert evaluations of sites, situations, and various files and documents. BRGM can be mobilized for contributing collective scientific expertise, at the request of the Authorities and according to the regulations in force.

BRGM reserves itself the possibility of seizing scientific and technical questions that might lead to expertise results of which it can decide the publication. The *modus operandi* then will be the same as for expert evaluations requested by an outside third party, including a rigorous set of specifications that is approved by the hierarchy.

BRGM has set up suitable means for managing health- or environmental alerts that its staff may have to handle, guaranteeing their consideration and analysis, regardless of whether they result in an expert evaluation.

THE BENEFICIARIES OF BRGM EXPERTISE

Any entity, whether French or foreign, institution or legal entity under public or private law, can ask BRGM to carry out an expert evaluation on a subject of its choice. This entity assumes all costs inherent at this request. A formal contract is then drawn up between BRGM and the beneficiary of the expertise.

BRGM is free not to answer a request, in particular when this creates a conflict with its mission with the public authorities. It notifies its decision of refusal.

PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZATION

General ethical principles underlying expert-evaluation work at BRGM

- An expertise aims at impartiality, reliability, and methodological transparency;
- The product of an expertise should allow its beneficiary to arrive at a clearer decision;
- The beneficiary benefits from BRGM's knowledge in its fields of competence;
- BRGM binds itself to a duty of loyalty toward the beneficiaries of its expertise work;
- Before concluding an expertise contract, BRGM ensures itself of the conditions under which all parties concerned by the expertise will be associated; the ways and means of their implication or information will be determined by the party requesting the expertise;
- BRGM informs the parties interested in an expertise of the possible links between the subject of the expertise or the beneficiary on the one hand, and BRGM staff on the other hand, which might compromise their neutrality;
- Where the expert-evaluation work is subject to internal or external pressures that might adversely affect its quality, the work can be suspended;
- BRGM staff working on an expertise refuses all personal advantages or payments from the beneficiary of the expertise, or from any other third party.

General organization of expertise work at BRGM

Expert-evaluation work is an integral part of the Quality Management System (QMS) of BRGM that has an ISO 9001-2008 certification. In addition to the general practice of the QMS, a specific set of texts is dedicated to governing the practice of the expertise, which is made available to BRGM staff.

An 'expertise delegation' represents BRGM to outside instances dealing with expertise and the internal governance of expertise activity.

Managing requests:

BRGM has set up a procedure for examining requests for expertise, which ensures that the client receives a rapid answer.

Designation of staff involved:

The BRGM hierarchy establishes the forecast budget and planning for the expertise, and designates the interveners, based on the required competence and scientific disciplines as well as the degree of complexity of the subject. Their qualifications are communicated as detailed CVs to the client at his request. If necessary, BRGM will enlist the competences of outside experts.

Contractual link:

All expertise will be governed by a contractual link discussed between the client and BRGM. This link can take on different formats: standardized forms for expertise work related to assisting local or central government departments, or specific contracts for third-party and other expert evaluations.

Carrying out the expertise:

The expertise is carried out under the authority of a designated person. Outside regular advice given to the Administration, it is carried out as individual projects within the framework of the QMS.

The confidentiality of the data provided by the client and of all files and information generated by the expert-evaluation work is governed by the terms of the contract.

Product of an expertise:

The product of an expertise is a report. Its issue follows a validation process that guarantees the client its conformity in terms of the question asked. This process ensures the client of BRGM's commitment to the answers provided.

Barring specific legal, regulatory or contractual provisions, the final report is made public by BRGM.