



GEO X Plenary: ICSU Statement

Geneva, Switzerland, 16 January 2014

It is my great pleasure to address the GEO X Plenary—on behalf of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and its two data specialized organizations: the Committee on Data for Science and Technology: CODATA, and the World Data System: WDS—to give you an update on our current involvement in and contributions to GEO and GEOSS and other relevant activities.

CODATA has been and remains a key player in the GEO Data Sharing Principles and their implementation by the work of the Data Sharing Working Group. This work has progressed significantly and is an important area of GEO activity. There is increasing awareness within the GEO community about the potential not only to implement further the existing GEOSS Data Sharing Principles but also to expand the range of open data sharing efforts across a range of Societal Benefit Areas. The G8 Open Data Charter shows the extent to which governments have moved on these matters. The GEO Community needs also to move in this direction, and seize the opportunity to show leadership in implementing an Open Data vision.

The ICSU World Data System has taken several steps to ensure proper contribution of its developing Open Metadata Catalogue to GEOSS. From a survey of WDS member organizations, it appears that more than 60% are willing to label their datasets as GEOSS Data CORE, which will increase and rationalize datasets contributed to GEOSS. WDS is also in the process of ascertaining additional contributions as it accepts new Members. The first prototype of the WDS Open Metadata Catalogue will be available by mid-2014 and we hope that it will be fully linked to GEOSS. WDS is also leading a new initiative in collaboration with the Research Data Alliance to establish a Global Service for Trusted Research Data Repositories. We hope to engage with relevant GEO activities in this area to ensure proper coordination

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the 'Future Earth: Research for Global Sustainability' programme that was launched at Rio+20 and is sponsored by a unique Alliance of international science organizations, UN bodies and research funders. It will bring together the expertise of 10s of thousands of scientists from different countries and disciplines, all of whom are committed to work with other stakeholders to generate the knowledge required for societies to face the challenges posed by global environmental change. Earth Observations are an essential crosscutting capability for Future Earth and GEOSS should be a critical strategic partner. In this context, a particular challenge for the next decade will be the integration of observations and data from physical, biological, and social sciences.

I would like also to inform the GEO community that ICSU is planning a review of the role of science in the global observing systems, which is scheduled to start late 2014/early 2015. This will consider ICSU's role as a co-sponsor of GCOS, GOOS and GTOS. It will look at both how scientific research can improve observing systems and, vice versa, how earth observations can provide for scientific research. We would be pleased to work with the GEOSS secretariat during the course of this review and make the outcomes available to the GEO plenary, as appropriate.

Finally, I would like to thank the Swiss Confederation for hosting the GEO X Plenary and Ministerial Summit and thank the GEO Secretariat for their continued support to the GEO community.

Statement made by Mustapha Mokrane (Head of ICSU Delegation)