

**CEOS Formal Statement to the  
Tenth Plenary Session of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO-X)  
by Alain Ratier, 2014 CEOS Chair  
European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites**

*Madam Chairman, Distinguished Guests, as Chair of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), it is my pleasure to provide you with the formal statement of recent CEOS key events and activities in support of GEO.*

*CEOS, through the major investments made by its 55 Member and Associate Agencies, continues to develop the space segment of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and to provide space-based Earth observations to GEO.*

*As of November 2013, there were 107 CEOS Earth observation satellites operating 286 instruments in orbit, and CEOS Agencies work together to ensure sustained international coordination of these assets, derived data products and access, and comprehensive interactions with users to achieve maximum societal benefit. CEOS Agencies also launch further missions, including multi-agency collaborative missions, for the benefits of users around the world.*

*In 2013, CEOS led and contributed to almost half of the 2012-2015 GEO Work Plan's Tasks and Components. Through these efforts, CEOS has made substantial contributions to **major global GEO initiatives** in disaster management, forest observations, agricultural monitoring and research, as well as climate monitoring and research, and carbon assessments.*

*I wish to highlight a few achievements and recent decision by CEOS in these areas:*

*In the area of **disaster management**, CEOS has been deeply involved in the GEO Disaster Task and we decided at our 27<sup>th</sup> Plenary in 2013, to give a new impulse to our contributions through the creation of a standing Working Group on Disasters to coordinate the many CEOS activities and initiatives in this area in support to the disaster management community. The new Working Group will prepare CEOS inputs to the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which will be discussed in Sendai (Japan) in March 2015.*

*The coordination of satellite data acquisition and supply by CEOS is fundamental to the **Global Forest Observation Initiative (GFOI)** objectives and supports all countries' participation. In particular, satellite data provide valuable information on forest extent and characterization; support countries in greenhouse gas emission reporting; and assist in independent verification.*

*In the area of **agricultural monitoring and research**, CEOS endorsed the "CEOS Acquisition Strategy for Phase One of the GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring Initiative (GEOGLAM)," which addresses the initial space data provision necessary for GEOGLAM Phase One and anticipates CEOS support to future GEOGLAM Phases.*

*In the area of **Climate Observations and Research**, CEOS has published a "Strategy Towards an Architecture for Climate Monitoring from Space," jointly with the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites (CGMS) and World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This joint activity proved so fruitful that CEOS and CGMS have now agreed to put their collaboration on a more formal footing with the establishment of the joint CEOS-CGMS Climate Working Group to*

*further develop and implement the Architecture through enhanced coordination of satellite missions, space-based climate research and monitoring activities of their Member and Associate Agencies.*

*In support of **GEO carbon-related Tasks**, the CEOS Carbon Task Force is working to release the final draft version of the “CEOS Strategy for Carbon Observations from Space” in response to the GEO Carbon Strategy. This addresses the planning and provision of space-based observations of the carbon cycle and its components in support of the various scientific and societal needs anticipated for carbon-related information.*

*CEOS coordination efforts are also essential to **develop data sharing and support capacity building** both considered as critical to maximize the societal benefits of large investments in space infrastructure, in the context of the implementation of the GEOSS.*

*In the area of **Data Sharing and Access**, CEOS Agencies will continue to provide, free of charge, data access from various satellite missions in support of key GEO global monitoring initiatives. 73% of CEOS missions have already OPEN data policies, and millions of products from over 1800 data collections derived from these missions are searchable and accessible as GEOSS DataCORE. Access to CEOS data holdings via the GEOSS Common Infrastructure has significantly expanded through CEOS coordinated efforts and CEOS is now establishing common interoperability arrangements to harmonize and facilitate access to metadata and data.*

*CEOS Agencies have also enhanced their cooperation **in the area of Capacity Building and Data Democracy** to support GEO’s Individual and Institutional Development Tasks. This involves sharing of remote sensing data for education, training, and capacity building, particularly for traditionally-underserved countries.*

***Amongst its priorities for 2014**, CEOS will continue to enhance cooperation to respond effectively to Earth observation users’ needs and GEO initiatives. We will do so by achieving integration across the full range of Earth observations, by closing important observational gaps, and by promoting the sharing, improved access to and use of data from CEOS Agencies.*

*CEOS Agencies are fully engaged in implementing the space segment of GEOSS and will continue to support GEO in the future, in particular through a number of global-level initiatives and projects identified in the CEOS Montreal Statement released by our 27<sup>th</sup> Plenary.*

*CEOS has prepared a document which summarizes the 2015 CEOS deliverables to GEO, highlighting the diversity and scale of the coordination effort in which space agencies are investing, through the CEOS framework for the benefit of GEO.*

*Lastly, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to our Swiss colleagues and the GEO Secretariat for the excellent organization of this GEO Plenary, and wish you a highly productive and successful meeting.*

*Thank you.*