



**Statement by the Chair of the Steering Committee of the
Global Climate Observing System (GCOS)**

GEO Plenary XI

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Thank you, Chairman.

As Chair of the S/C of the GCOS I would like to update you on the planning and implementation of GCOS through the networks and systems that are operated and managed by its co-sponsors: WMO, IOC of UNESCO, UNEP and ICSU.

This is an important moment in time not only for GEO but also for GCOS. At the end of 2013, GCOS started its third assessment cycle. A Status Report will be prepared for submission to the sponsoring organizations of GCOS and Parties to the UNFCCC in 2015. It will review the overall status of each Essential Climate Variable (ECV), assess progress against the 2010 GCOS Implementation Plan, and identify monitoring gaps. This report will be submitted to COP21, to be held in December 2015 in Paris, France.

In parallel with the Status Report, and that is essentially now, GCOS will start drafting a new Implementation Plan, which requires that GCOS will consider





new developments, systems and frameworks, such as the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) and the revised Strategic Implementation Plan for GEO. We will also need to take into account the findings of the Fifth Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Future Earth programme of ICSU, the IOC-led initiative Blue Planet, and the UNEP-led Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation (PROVIA). The new GCOS Implementation Plan, to be published in late 2016, will be a milestone that will influence the agenda for climate observations on a global and regional scale.

The revision of the GCOS Implementation Plan, which now coincides with the development of the GEO Strategic Plan for 2016-2025, is a unique opportunity to understand and implement better the articulation of GEO/GEOSS and GCOS. This is particularly important given the increased emphasis on climate mitigation and, particularly, adaptation (IPCC WGIII, WG II respectively), which brings the interests and scope of GEOSS and GCOS much closer in areas such as agriculture, energy, disaster risk management and so on.

In this context, climate is best seen as a cross-cutting issue directly related to the components of many if not all the other SBAs. It is hence probably not appropriate that, as in the current scheme, climate is seen as a SBA in parallel with all the others and I would like to encourage that in the restructuring of the





SBA's under discussion further thought is given to this model. It is, by the way, how WB deals with climate – a cross-cutting activity across its 14 global practices.

In this context I would also like to propose that future Climate-related activities of GEO could be better aligned with the mechanisms of the responsible Participating Organization. I would strongly encourage an increased commitment of this community to be further engaged with the GCOS expert panels on atmospheric, terrestrial and ocean observations for climate. These have the capacity to serve a broader community through GCOS but also through an integrated approach with GEOSS.

I believe that both GEO and GCOS can significantly improve the mutual benefit they derive from each other by a more coherent and structured approach to their articulation. We now have a unique opportunity for improved cooperation between GEO and GCOS, and I personally look forward to working with both organizations to achieve this.

Thank you.

