

DRAFT Canada's Statement to GEO-XII Plenary:

Canada recognizes that Earth observations play a critical role in ensuring sound decision making, and in supporting Government priorities.

We are proud to highlight and reiterate our support and engagement in the development and implementation of GEO and GEOSS. In particular, I would like to underscore that it is through GEO that Canada has been able to obtain and share critical data and information to support the management of sectors highly affected by climate change. I am pleased to highlight some specifics::

Agriculture:

Canada recognizes the important contribution the GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring (GEOGLAM) initiative is making to global market transparency and food security, and will continue to provide leadership for the Research and Development component and associated Joint Experiments for Crop Assessment and Monitoring (JECAM) network.

Forest and Forest Fires:

Canadian forestry experts provide support to GEO GFOI through GOFI/GOLD. In particular, this support extends to the areas of:

- Global Early Warning Fire Systems,
- forest observation research and GFOI methods guidance document,
- integration of remote sensing and ground based observations in support of forest carbon tracking in Mexico, and
- in collaboration with the Canadian Space Agency, assessing sensor interoperability to map poorly inventoried and inaccessible northern forests.

Biodiversity:

Canada would like to highlight its support and leadership of GEO BON and their accomplishments, including the implementation of a three- year Strategic Plan and continued progress in developing the Essential Biodiversity Variables. Canada would also like to highlight GEO BON's focus and role in assisting national governments in the design and implementation of national Biodiversity Observing Networks.

Polar Issues:

The state of the Arctic continues to be of particular interest to Canada, and in particular GEO's Cold Regions Initiative. Canada has invested in advancing Canada's knowledge of the Arctic, strengthening Canadian leadership in polar science and technology, and leveraging both domestic and international partners to significantly improve observations in the Canadian Arctic to serve user needs at the local, national and international scale.

Oceans:

Canada has a long history of monitoring its oceans and continues to collect observational data from all three oceans and makes it freely available in support of GEO. The Canadian marine science community is working towards increased coordination of ocean monitoring and data sharing efforts and is also working with the United States and the European Union under the Galway Accord to coordinate international efforts in the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans. Canada will continue to work through relevant international ocean research organizations such as Blue Planet and the International Oceanographic Commission to support the objectives of GEO.

Open Data:

Canada acknowledges the potential of Open Data to deliver and measure priority issues in the global agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Space Observations:

Canada would like to highlight that its RADARSAT Constellation mission, under the leadership of the Canadian Space Agency, when operational in 2018, will contribute space-based imagery to key GEO global initiatives, such as disaster risk management, GEOGLAM and the GFOI.

AmeriGEOSS:

Canada would like to express its thanks to Mexico, Colombia, and the United States for their leadership in developing the AmeriGEOSS. This will be an important initiative for the Americas, focussing efforts on priority areas. Canada looks forward to helping to contribute to the success of AmeriGEOSS.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Canada would like to reaffirm its strong support for the GEO and GEOSS. Over the past couple of days we have had the opportunity to review and discuss the draft *GEO Strategic Plan 2015-2025: Implementing GEOSS*, which will shape GEO over the next decade. This Plan builds on the solid foundation and principles of GEO, while proposing a more structured approach to managing activities. It emphasizes that GEO's value is found in its power to convene, and this GEO Plenary is a perfect display of this. Canada is proud to have been a strong contributor to the development of the Plan, and is encouraged to see the enthusiasm of the community as it moves forward.

Thank you.