



GEO News (Issue #3, 18 May 2009)

BUILDING GEOSS

AEGOS strengthens GEOSS coverage of georesources

By Stuart Marsh, British Geological Survey

Although georesources do not constitute a GEO Societal Benefit Area (SBA), their inclusion in GEOSS is essential. Not only is the Earth's sub-surface an integral part of the Earth system, but georesources – which range from minerals to underground water supplies to geothermal energy – are relevant to several existing SBAs and thus demonstrate the cross-cutting nature of GEOSS. The recent launch of the African European Georesources Observation System (AEGOS), therefore, promises to both broaden and strengthen GEOSS. [Continued...](#)

Remote-sensing community embraces GEOSS at ISRSE-33

The Northern Italian city of Stresa welcomed the world's remote-sensing community to the 33rd International Symposium of the Remote Sensing of the Environment (ISRSE-33) from 4 to 8 May. The event highlighted the increasingly strong commitment that space agencies and other remote-sensing organizations have to the successful implementation of GEOSS. [Continued...](#)

Comprehensive Land Surface Imagery now available via GEOSS

In another exciting advance for the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), ten leading space-related agencies collaborating through the [Committee on Earth Observation Satellites \(CEOS\)](#), its Land Surface Imaging Constellation Study Team, and its Working Group on Information System and Services (WGISS) have developed a [portal](#) that collects and distributes satellite imagery of the Earth's land surface. Users can now access images from all ten partners via a [single web portal](#). This new [portal](#) is a gateway to the world's largest collection of Land Surface Imagery and data (LSI) taken from space. [Read more here.](#)

Landsat archive downloads hit 500,000 mark

On 2 April, the US Geological Survey [announced](#) that the number of remotely-sensed images downloaded free-of-charge from the Landsat archive had already reached 500,000. This compares with the previous record of 25,000 paid downloads for an entire year. The new policy of granting unrestricted access to Landsat archival images was announced by the US at the GEO-V Plenary meeting in November 2008. Together with the free data policy of Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE), the new US approach to satellite data marks a major advance for the GEOSS Data Sharing Principles. The next important step in improving access to Earth observations will take place when the Data Sharing Principles Task Force, established at GEO-V, holds its [first meeting](#) in Geneva on 27-28 May. For more on the Landsat portal, see the earlier [GEO](#)

[web story](#).

EEA Workshop explores how GEOSS can support MEAs

The European Environment Agency (EEA) organized a workshop in Copenhagen on 13-15 May to address the growing mismatch between the expectations of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the ability of space- and ground-based Earth observation systems to support them. The workshop focused on strengthening institutional links, promoting sustained funding, and identifying the most relevant data streams and information services. For more information, see www.eea.europa.eu.

Call for Proposals to support decision making

GEO has issued a Call entitled "Earth Observations in Decision Support Projects" that seeks to identify projects that demonstrate the benefits of Earth observation applications to end users in developing countries, particularly in the fields of agriculture, energy, human health and water. The CFP also seeks to identify individuals and organizations interested in advising project teams. The deadline for submissions of brief concept proposals is 4 June. Details are available on [the CFP page](#).

GEO UPDATE

Austria joins GEO

The Government of Austria, which until now has participated in GEO as an Observer, became a GEO Member on 9 March. This brings the total [GEO membership](#) to 77 national governments plus the European Commission.

Geneva meeting launches reconciliation process

Following a recommendation of the GEO-V Plenary, the first Reconciliation Meeting was organized in Geneva from 30 March to 1 April. It marked the formal start of the reconciliation process, which seeks to ensure that three key processes – the Targets update, the 2009-2011 Work Plan update, and the GEOSS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework – are coordinated and take full account of one another. (For more background on this issue, see the earlier GEO News article.)

[Continued...](#)

Committees update

Three of the GEO Committees (Architecture and Data, Science and Technology, and User Interface) met during the International Symposium for Remote Sensing of the Environment (ISRSE) in Stresa, Italy in May, while the fourth (Capacity Building) met in Athens in April. For a short summary of the main outcomes of these most recent Committee meetings, [read the article here](#).

THE SECRETARIAT

Two new experts now on-board

Mr Robert Koopman from the European Space Agency and Mr Koki Iwao from Japan have joined the Secretariat as [seconded experts](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Greek GEO Office to host SE Europe/Eastern Mediterranean Symposium

The Greek GEO Office together with the GEO Secretariat are organizing and developing the "GEO South–Eastern Europe and Eastern Mediterranean Symposium on Earth Observation Services for Monitoring the Environment and Protecting the General Public". Intended to promote greater awareness of GEOSS in a region that is poorly represented in GEO, the Symposium will be held in Athens from 8 – 10 June. For more information, please contact greekgeo@admin.noa.gr.

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