

Draft ESA Statement for GEO Summit 5th November 2010

Agenda point 8 – Statements by Head of Participating Organizations

GMES

Europe has had the chance at the Plenary, and at this meeting, to underline the relevance of the European GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) programme for GEOSS and its role as key European contribution to GEOSS.

GMES is an initiative led by the European Union (EU) and carried out in partnership with the Member States and the European Space Agency (ESA). The programme has a service component, a space component, and an in-situ component. The GMES Space Component (GSC) is coordinated by ESA, which develops a family of satellites and payloads known as the Sentinel Missions. The first Sentinel satellite is planned to be launched end 2012 with recurring units following in order to provide continuous, reliable, long term data to serve a variety of users, including GEO users. The system achieves its nominal operational configuration once its components are fully deployed, and two spacecraft of each Sentinel-1,-2, and -3 family are simultaneously operational.

ESA Member States have recently approved an open and free data policy for the Sentinel GMES Missions. The GMES Data and Information Policy is in the approval process of the European Union and has gone through approval by Commission and Parliament and the process is expected to be completed next year.

Some concerns still are on-going in Europe to grant sustainability of the programme in the long run, in particular, through adequate EC funds for the initial operations phase, and in the longer term in the context of next Financial Framework 2014-2020.

Data Sharing

ESA Member States have recently approved a retrofit of the data policy for ESA's ENVISAT and ERS Missions with an open and free access to the data. Furthermore, ESA's Earth Explorers data policy is free and open. Such a policy is in line with the Data Sharing Principles of GEO and will benefit GEO Users in various areas of activities such as environment and climate change.

GCI

The recent selection of ESAs GEO Web portal, developed in cooperation with FAO, as the official GEO Web Portal Together with USGS as provider for the GEOSS Clearinghouse. The European contribution to GCI is essential as infrastructure and as a tool for accessing multi-sectorial geospatial information at the national, regional, continental and global scales. ESA plans to operate, maintain and improve the GEO

Portal in cooperation with other European entities and complement it with relevant data and information from European projects both of ESA and the EC .

Other GEO Tasks

Finally ESA, either through CEOS or directly, contributes to various GEO Tasks such as the Forest Carbon Tracking Initiative, , the GEO Hazards Supersites, and the Tiger programme in the context of the GEO Water ESA –Africa Activities and the recently approved ESA’s Climate Change Initiative for the production of (Essential Climate Variables) will contribute further to the Climate Change activities and tasks of GEO.

Support to GEOSec

In addition ESA contributes to support the GEOSec through the secondment of ESA staff to GEOSec.