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GEO Principals

Geneva, 30 April 2009

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Symposium Steering Committee, we are pleased to extend to you an invitation to participate in the 2nd GEO Forest Monitoring Symposium to be held in Chiang Rai, Thailand from 1 - 3 July 2009.

The Symposium is being organized by the Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA) and the Secretariat of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). The Symposium will provide a unique opportunity to advance the implementation of a "GEOSS Forest Monitoring System" capable of meeting the operational needs of the full range of users dealing with forests and forest-related issues.

The Symposium will build on the conclusions and recommendations of the First Symposium on Forest monitoring held in Brazil in 2008. It will enable the GEO community to further advance international cooperation on key observational, interoperability and methodological issues and to accelerate the development of an operational forest monitoring system.

The Symposium will be structured into three main sessions. The first will provide, through the presentation of actual end-to-end user cases, a good understanding of system functionalities and performances that can support a variety of users. The second will discuss the architecture of the system, its main features, its products and services, its development approach to ensure coordination and compatibility with other on-going GEOSS developments. The third will provide a kind of "User review" of the GEOSS Forest Monitoring system to ensure that it will meet user requirements.

The Symposium will be of interest to decision-makers, researchers, non-governmental organizations and project managers active in all aspects of forestry management, from carbon storage and disaster prediction to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem products and services.

Information on logistics, registration and support for visa, plus a detailed description of the Symposium, can be found at <http://conference.gistda.or.th/2ndgeoforest> .



GROUP ON EARTH OBSERVATIONS

Limited funding will be available to cover the expenses of developing country participants. If you would like to request support for travel, we ask you to send an email to the GEO Secretariat at secretariat@geosec.org describing your interest in participating and providing a detailed estimate of travel costs, **no later than 15 May 2009**.

We believe that this Symposium offers a timely and important opportunity to advance international collaboration on forest monitoring, and we thank you for your interest.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'José Achache', written over a vertical line.

José Achache
Secretariat Director