

Our Ref.: 2009582/GEO/WaterCycle/INV

Geneva, 30 September 2009

Subject: Invitation to a GEO Water Cycle Capacity Building Workshop

Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Latin America and Caribbean Capacity Building workshop planned for November 30 to December 4, 2009 to be hosted by Agencia Espacial Del Peru CONIDA in Lima Peru. This event builds upon two earlier Water cycle workshops held in Argentina where the needs for Earth Observations were discussed in detail and on the 2008 and 2009 GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System of Systems) in the Americas symposia held in Brazil and Panama. Based on discussions at these events, it is evident that regional and national water management would benefit from enhanced fundamental services related to Earth Observations and their harmonization, new analytical techniques and services, and effective and comprehensive data management to strengthen information support to the various on-going and planned water-related activities in the Americas.

The workshop planned for Lima Peru is an important step towards coordination of a longer-term GEO activity with similar capacity building goals in the Earth Observations domain. A number of discussions at the Lima workshop will be directed towards developing a basis for such a program. In particular, discussions and capacity building activities at this workshop will be directed towards:

- an assessment of water-related issues in the Latin and Caribbean Americas;
- an inventory of capabilities and activities in each country in terms of observations, modeling and information systems;
- a review of the training programs that support Capacity Development in the Americas;
- knowledge transfer to experts in the Latin and Caribbean Americas by hands-on demonstrations of advanced technologies such as GEONetcast; and
- a longer term strategy for facilitating and supporting capacity building activities throughout the Americas.

Participants in this workshop will include experts of national and international water-related organizations, and scientists capable of assessing the scope of the needs and



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opportunities, with the goal being to explore coordination options within the GEO framework and potential contributions through GEOSS for addressing water-related concerns in the Americas.

We invite you to participate in this workshop. In order to assist you with your decision we have enclosed a description of the workshop's goals and deliverables as well as a preliminary program.

Please note limited funding is available to support travel to this meeting through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Environment Canada, and the GEO Secretariat. Should you require financial assistance to attend the meeting, please submit your request with estimated costs to Rick Lawford (at lawford@umbc.edu) by October 9, 2009 at the latest.

Yours sincerely,

José Achache
Secretariat Director