



Side Event to GEO Plenary XIV 2017 in Washington D.C.  
**Earth Observation for achieving and monitoring mountain-related SDGs:  
 Ecopotential, GEO-GNOME and GEO-ECO**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> of October, 10:30-12:30 hours  
 Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center  
 Meridian C

**Background**

Earth Observation (EO) play an important role in enabling countries to reach, monitor and report on the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the last decades, significant progress has been made in developing EO tools. However, generally these tools have yet to reach practical ecosystem management. Mountain areas are acknowledged to require special attention in the SDGs, in particular for environmental protection and water resource management. At the same time, mountain areas are facing increasing pressures, such as from increasing tourism and climate change. The EU-funded H2020 project Ecopotential works to increase the capacity of protected area managers in Europe and beyond through research and by developing practical software and training for park staff. Many of the participating parks are mountainous and share similar challenges but also opportunities in the use of EO tools.

**Goals of the Side Event**

This event will present concrete examples and stories showcasing the results and value added of EO tools for achieving and monitoring the progress on mountain ecosystems-related SDGs. These include both SDGs which specifically mention mountains (6.6, 15.1, 15.4) and SDGs where mountains and Earth Observation play a significant role. This is followed by a panel discussion with experts working on various mountain regions worldwide on the use of EO for mountain protection followed by questions from the audience. The side event is expected to make an important contribution to further collaborative work across the world's mountain areas within the GEO-GNOME and GEO-ECO initiatives and other GEO Activities.

Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> of October – Meridian C	
10:30 – 10:35	<b>Opening and introduction</b> <i>Presenter: Matthias Jurek, UN Environment</i>
10:35 – 10:50	<b>GNOME and GEO-ECO</b> <i>Presenter: Elisa Palazzi, CNR</i>
10:50- 11:00	<b>Ecopotential</b> <i>Presenter: Ioannis Manakos, CERTH</i>
11:00 – 12:15	<p><b>Panel Discussion – Earth Observation in Mountains and SDGs</b>            Presentations of case studies and practical examples on EO to monitor achievements of mountain-related SDGs (10 minutes each), followed by a interactive discussion and questions from the audience.  <i>Facilitator: Matthias Jurek, UN Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>European Mountains</b>, <i>Presenter: Marc Zebisch, Eurac Research</i></li> <li>○ <b>Hindu-Kush Himalayas</b>, <i>Presenter: Basanta Shrestha, ICIMOD</i></li> <li>○ <b>Global Mountain Exploration</b>, <i>Presenter: Roger Sayre, USGS</i></li> <li>○ <b>Caucasus mountains</b>, <i>Presenter: Gregory Giuliani, GRID-Geneva</i></li> </ul>
12:15 – 12:30	<b>Concluding remarks</b> <i>Presenter: Douglas Cripe, GEOSS</i>