

Draft Speech:

Mr Brendan Boyle
NZ Delegate to GEO IV
Cape Town, South Africa
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Honourable Ministers,
Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

New Zealand expresses gratitude to our host South Africa for making this meeting possible.

New Zealand is committed to the principles of GEOSS and it is a pleasure for me to represent New Zealand at this important meeting.

Observation information has a crucial role to play in supporting sustainable development in our region, especially considering that the vast area of planet earth surrounding New Zealand and our Pacific Island neighbours is considered to be a very important influence on the planet's climate systems.

We are actively pursuing improved ways to harness the power of observational information at both a national and regional level and many of these activities are very relevant to GEOSS.

For example, we are involved in the development of a multi-hazard coastal warning system for New Zealand and our Pacific neighbours – the data from which will be available in the public domain in real time.

The Pacific Island States are of prime concern to us. We are committed to improving our observational network and measurement systems in the Pacific, and to ensuring not only the delivery of high quality data streams, but also the empowerment of local communities to ensure safe and sustainable development.

Our commitment to maintaining a network of surface-based observational networks throughout the country, as well as in Antarctica and the South Pacific is of relevance to GEOSS, as is the ongoing production of a wide range of ground-truth data sets, so vital for the ongoing calibration and the integrity of satellite measurement systems.

New Zealand continues to support the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) and welcomes its efforts particularly the area of capacity development for water and food security in the Asia-Pacific region.

My agency, Land Information New Zealand, has a key role in developing a nationally coordinated approach to the creation, exchange and maintenance of location information. We have recently been mandated as the lead agency for the New Zealand Government's engagement with GEOSS and I look forward to exploring the opportunities for a more active engagement in the future.

Mr Chairman, in closing, we congratulate members on the progress made towards the implementation of GEOSS, we support the Cape Town Declaration, and look forward to the ongoing success of GEOSS.

Thank you.