

GEO X Plenary

Intervention of the Italian GEO Principal

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, colleagues

Once again Italy recalls with pride that it has been one of the GEO founders. As such it has considered a duty to be supportive throughout this first period and, at the same time, sufficiently critical to ensure that our collective time and efforts were well invested.

With the overall coordination of the Italian Ministry of the Environment Land and Sea and of the Directorate General for Sustainable Development and Energy in particular. We have been able to continue to support GEO throughout its first ten years and increase the contributions of a growing number of Italian Institutions, mostly CNR, ISPRA, INGV, CMCC, CIMA and various Universities, **strongly committed to increase the value of GEO information by combining remote sensing and in situ data**, in :

- specific SBAs from mercury to carbon observation and monitoring, from biodiversity to the newly launched initiative on mountain ecosystems;
- cross cutting areas from the recent introduction of the Discovery and Access Broker (DAB) to improve the GCI, to contributions to GEOSS Data CORE;
- the yearly evaluation teams of GEOSS SBAs, a voluntary but useful exercise to learn how to improve future work

We also are increasing our outreach activities through periodic national GEO meetings, through our corner in the EU stand in the exhibition and the newly launched GEO-ITALY Web site where our activities are presented in more details: those which we are leading and those in which we are partners.

The experience from 2003 has been very positive despite some problems which could have been solved in a quicker manner. The final global budget is now in acceptable and we therefore endorse and support the continuation of GEO and GEOSS to 2025 recognizing its positive value.

Earth Observations are ever more necessary for a better understanding of climate changes and for decision making based on easily accessible and shared knowledge to tackle the sustainable development issues highlighted by the Rio+20 Outcomes. We need to move towards greener economies, more resilient

and healthier societies. We need to ensure food, water and energy security, sustainable land use and livable cities.

Data sharing and efficient information systems, built **with and for clearly identified users**, are thus fundamental for the success of GEO.

On this, but not only, GEO and COPERNICUS need to work more closely together.,

By combining ambition and pragmatism, GEO can be a great path finder for ideas, activities and services which can be accompanied in their first steps until they reach enough maturity to be transferred to other entities, such as UN agencies, duly involved from the beginning and willing to take up the responsibility in the work paved by GEO.

So far the GEO structure has lived up to the pioneering spirit of its founders. Based on the Implementation Plan for the next decade, we shall decide if the governance will need to be revised.

Let's look first at **what** we want to do. Then we can fit the **how to do it**. We have had a long and sometimes even frustrating **learning by doing period**. But we have also received strong signals from the evaluation reports that, in spite of achievements of which to be proud, clear improvements need to be made particularly in the way we collect evidence for measuring progress and the real added value provided by to GEO.

After its first cycle, a new more ambitious trajectory is needed: be sure that Italy will be on board to continue to support these efforts.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Prof. Ezio Bussoletti