

COLOMBIA'S STATEMENT
GEO-XII Plenary
Earth Observations to Address Global Challenges
Mexico City, November 13th, 2015

Dear Co-chairs, delegates and participants:

Since our entrance as member in August 2011, we had assumed the commitment of leading this initiative right across Colombia, conducting it to an operational stage within the different GEO SBAs. Since then, Colombia has strengthened its capabilities for the effective and practical use of Earth Observation information.

One of the main progresses has been the implementation and operation of the Forest Monitoring System, which generates official data of forest area, deforestation rates and emissions of greenhouse gases, all of them critical data for planning the territory. This system had GEO's continuous support through GFOI's initiative, which allowed the Coordination of Satellite Data Supply as the basis of the monitoring, Capacity Building to enhance institutional capabilities, as well as Methods & Guidance Documentation to standardize our methodologies.

Within the scope of **GEOBON**, we also want to reiterate our interest and commitment to continue working on strengthening capacity building and implementation of robust biodiversity monitoring systems. We will continue to develop the BON in a Box initiative together with other Latin American countries and extending its application to marine areas and ecosystem services.

Colombia has also advanced in the implementation of **GEOGLAM** and Land Cover initiatives, which are allowing us to complete the analysis of the dynamics of changes in land cover in a common and standardized way that should meet the monitoring needs, especially those related to agriculture in our country.

With the support of the **CEOS** (NASA and CSIRO) our country has started the development of a remote sensing Data Cube to provide a single source of "analysis ready data" to end-users, saving work

and costs to get the satellite “usable”. The implementation of the Data Cube will allow Colombia to consolidate its monitoring processes.

The **Americas Caucus** had another meeting during this week and we have agreed the **AmeriGEOSS** initiative –which has been launched this morning in front of this Plenary– for coordinating GEO activities within our region with special interest in 4 SBAs which are: water, agriculture, risk disaster reduction, and ecosystems and biodiversity. AmeriGEOSS will enable joint investments for the development of regional projects related to the objectives of sustainable development in the Americas.

In Colombia, peace and sustainability are the main axes of the national agenda. Post-conflict scenarios promise unprecedented development in our country, which will be supported by Earth Observations.

Finally, I want to congratulate the Government of Mexico, GEO community and the GEO Secretariat for this successful week in Mexico City. We reiterate our engagement in continuing working with energy and enthusiasm in GEO initiatives and move forward in the consolidation of AmeriGEOSS initiative in order to become a more integrated and strengthened region in the efficient use of data from earth observation.