



Global Human Settlement Working Group

GHS WG

With the support of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), a new Global Human Settlement Working Group was launched at the first Global Human Settlement Workshop hosted by the European Commission, Joint Research Centre, on 21-22 October 2014.

Through the establishment of the Global Human Settlement working group, a new generation of global settlement measurements and products will be developed to support the UN Third Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III, 2016) and the concurrent post-2015 processes on sustainable development, climate change and Hyogo framework for disaster risk reduction.

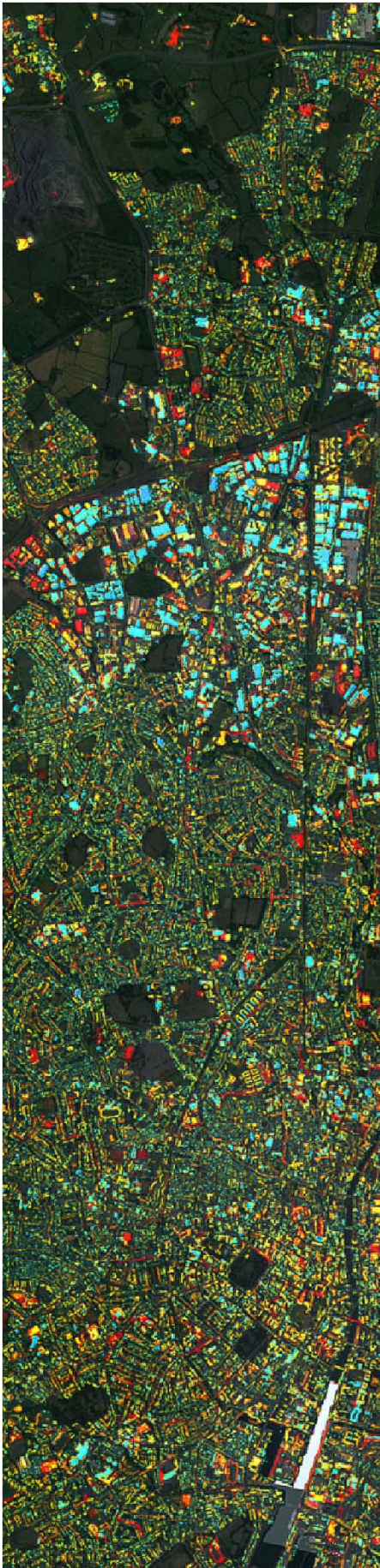
The GHS partners have drafted a final statement describing the general scope and aims of the working group.

For joining the partnership or information please contact: Martino.Pesaresi@jrc.ec.europa.eu

Participant list (alphabetical order)

Sharolyn Anderson, School of Natural and Built Environments at the University of South Australia; **Christoph Aubrecht**, World Bank - Social, Urban, Rural & Resilience (GP-SURR); **Deborah Balk**, City University of New York (CUNY) Institute for Demographic Research; **Yifang Ban**, KTH Royal Institute of Technology; **Peter G.de Bois**, Urban-Knowledge.nl Platform, University of Applied Sciences Amsterdam; **Robert S.Chen**, Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), at Columbia Univ.; **Lewis Dijkstra**, European Commission, Directorate General Regional Policy; **Daniele Ehrlich**, European Commission, Joint Research Centre; **Thomas Esch**, Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt – DLR; **Matina Halkia**, European Commission, Joint Research Centre; **Ellen Hamilton**, World Bank Urban Development; **Thomas Kemper**, European Commission, Joint Research Centre; **Bryan Jones**, City University of New York (CUNY) Institute for Demographic Research; **Catherine Linard**, University of Brussels, WorldPop project; **Linlin Lu**, Chinese Academy of Sciences - Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth; **Paida Mangara**, South African National Space Agency; **Gora Mboup**, Global Observatory linking Research to Action (GORA); **Kytt Mc Manus**, Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), at Columbia Univ.; **Michele Melchiorri** United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Housing and Land Management; **Hiroyuki Miyazaki**, University of Tokyo; **Mark R. Montgomery**, Stony Brook University and Population Council; **Dennis Mwaniki**, Global Observatory linking Research to Action; **Angelica Palma**, Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, Colombia (DANE); **Martino Pesaresi**, European Commission, Joint Research Centre; **Thales Sehn Körting**, Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais (INPE); **Richard Sliuzas**, Dep.of Urban and Regional Planning and Geo-Information Management, Univ.of Twente; **Christopher Small**, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University; **Paul Sutton** University of Denver, CO; **Pierre Soille**, European Commission, Joint Research Centre; **Andrew Tatem**, Univ. of Southampton WorldPop project; **Hannes Taubenböck**, Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt – DLR; **M. Chiara Tosi**, Università IUAV di Venezia, Department of Architecture and Arts





Statement for a Global Human Settlement Partnership

People have endeavored to change the earth since their earliest days. Now a profound global transformation is underway as our population moves from a primarily rural and agricultural society to one that is becoming more urban with every day. We increasingly live in towns, cities, even megacities. Urbanization is happening at a rapid pace.

In the last 50 years, an additional 4 billion people have settled on this planet – the population increases by more than 150 extra people every minute: but exactly where these new people live remains largely unknown. We may believe we know the single branch of the tree on which we sit, but we ignore the tree and the forest within which it grows. The density, the heterogeneity, the dynamics of human settlements and their interactions with the environment are fundamental pieces of information we need to have at hand to help us keep in balance the use and regenerative capacity of our planet's resources.

The current picture of the human footprint is incomplete. The majority of small and medium-sized settlements, critical for accounting and understanding the impact of people on the globe, remain largely invisible. The big dots may be visible, but not the all-important connections between them. And the truly vulnerable, such as those dwelling in refugee camps, shantytowns and slums are effectively missing from our global understanding.

Scientific evidence supported by new technologies should be harnessed to its full extent to generate a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the complexity of human presence and its interactions with the earth's social, economic, and ecological environments. Such vital information should enable global action to prevent and reduce disaster risk, eradicate extreme poverty and promote sustainable development.

This statement for a Global Human Settlement partnership calls for a collaborative and integrated approach with which to advance our knowledge of where people live and how settlements are changing. The statement calls on the GEO (Group on Earth Observations) to facilitate this partnership and to support its work.

The increasing capabilities of Earth Observation satellites combined with rapid advances in geospatial sciences, analytical methods and computing power have made detailed, measurable and globally consistent descriptions of the human-made habitat possible. This statement promotes full and open access to the data offered through these advances, and to the global human settlement information generated from them.

The statement recognizes that bringing together information producers, users and those responsible for associated policies will facilitate the validation of existing and new global human settlement metrics, and will determine their fitness for purpose.

*Through the establishment of a Global Human Settlement partnership, a **new generation of global settlement measurements** and products will be developed to support the concurrent post-2015 processes on sustainable development, climate change and Hyogo framework for disaster risk reduction, and the UN Third Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III, 2016).*