

Earth Observation Summit X
Geneva
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**H.E. Steffen Kongstad,
Norwegian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other
international organisations in Geneva**

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Norwegian Government I would like to thank Switzerland for the invitation to this GEO Summit in Geneva and for their excellent hosting of this event.

Globally Earth Observation is a key instrument for increasing our knowledge about environmental issues, and for managing common challenges related to sustainable development and human well-being.

Norway is an Arctic country with large marine and polar areas. Therefore Norway is an extensive user of, and relying on, Earth Observation data for the sustainable management of these sensitive regions. There are critical issues of climate change and global weather forecast of local, regional and global relevance that best are addressed in the Polar Regions.

Norway appreciates the efforts and progress made since the first Earth Observation Summit in 2003. Now, approaching the end of the first implementation plan, we acknowledge the progress made. However, further efforts are needed to ensure that the vision and intentions of GEO are brought forward. Norway therefore fully supports the Vision for GEO 2025.

Related to the Ministerial Guidance on the evolution of GEOSS we support all five areas of activity to be conducted in the next Implementation Plan. In particular we will focus on the need to develop a comprehensive interdisciplinary knowledge base, defining and documenting observations needed for all disciplines and facilitate availability and accessibility of these observations to user communities.

Our experience is that in establishing efficient operational services two points are vital:

- 1. Long-term data continuity, with guaranteed long term access to data is essential for users to commit to Earth Observation services.**
- 2. Data must be comparable, understandable and timely accessible. For Norway it is mandatory that common standards be implemented in GEOSS to enable efficient use.**

Norway particularly welcomes the efforts being made to establish common principles for full and open data access, and thus supporting the GEOSS Data Sharing Implementation Guidelines and Action Plan.

Norway has played an active role in establishing the Global Forest Observations Initiative. In this work GEO has played an essential and enabling role to ensure that the major organisations, satellite providers and stakeholders are cooperating. We will continue our financial and in-kind support to this task.

Global challenges require global solutions. The implementation of GEOSS must be done in close cooperation with user organisations, especially UN organisations and programmes.

Norway's activities in Earth observation from space have always been based upon international partnerships. Norway is supporting to the European Copernicus initiative and we see Copernicus as a key European contribution to GEOSS.

We place GEO great importance as an essential instrument in a wider context. GEO is a valuable partner that is able to provide relevant and important contributions to a global response to our common challenges, such as climate change, natural disasters and the preventive work undertaken in these areas.

Finally, Norway gives full support to the declaration from this meeting and will continue to support GEO and thereby contribute to realising the vision, purpose and scope of GEO and the establishment of a new GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan.

Thank you.