

The Group on Earth Observations (GEO) Geneva Declaration

Earth Observations to Sustain our Planet

We, the Ministers and Participants assembled at the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) Ministerial Summit in Geneva, Switzerland, on 17 January 2014:

Recognizing that GEO, established to achieve comprehensive, coordinated and sustained observations of the Earth, has advanced the availability of long-term, global data and information as a basis for sound decision-making for improving human welfare; alleviating human suffering, including eradicating poverty; protecting the global environment; and advancing sustainable development;

Recalling the outcomes of the Earth Observation Summits in Washington (2003), Tokyo (2004), Brussels (2005), and the GEO Ministerial Summits in Cape Town (2007) and Beijing (2010) where GEO was created, endorsed and implemented;

Recalling the endorsement by GEO Ministers in 2005 of a 10-Year Implementation Plan for building a Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) represented an essential step forward to improve monitoring of the Earth, increase understanding of Earth processes and enhance prediction of the behaviour of the Earth system;

Recalling that the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development recognized the importance of space technology-based data, *in-situ* monitoring, and reliable geospatial information for sustainable development policymaking, programming and project operations; and noted the efforts in developing global environmental observing systems through GEOSS;

Noting the additional opportunities and potential provided by technological innovation that increases the utility and importance of Earth observation data to allow for better decision-making at all levels;

Recalling the mandate of the Beijing Ministerial Summit, whose declaration stated: “*Resolve to meet before the end of 2013 to review the progress of implementation against the GEOSS Strategic Targets and the recommendations for the governance, role and future work of GEO beyond 2015 and to take the necessary decisions;*”

1. *Note* that GEO has proven its capability to respond positively to calls for action from the international community of States and to address the challenges for which it was established;
2. *Note* with satisfaction the progress towards GEOSS Strategic Targets for 2015 as assessed by the GEO Plenary, as well as the numerous achievements in addressing societal challenges, infrastructure and standards, capacity building and improved access to data, information and services, as illustrated in [Document XXX] and at this Summit from Members and Participants;
3. *Acknowledge* the critical work ahead to complete the 2005-2015 Implementation Plan and *commit* to expand further the availability of consistent and complete datasets with full and open access, to streamline the current GEOSS Common Infrastructure taking into account the latest technological developments and commit to its maintenance, to consolidate observing networks, to improve global coverage and availability of data, to further develop GEO global initiatives and to continue to foster the engagement of GEO users, data providers and citizens so that they can benefit from the high potential of GEO's achievements;
4. *Decide* to renew the mandate of GEO through 2025, retaining the general governance structure and the resourcing mechanism based on voluntary contributions, while exploring modifications; and to develop the work of GEO through 2025 in line with the recommendations put forward by the GEO-X Plenary as the foundation for shaping GEO through 2025.
5. *Reconfirm* that GEO's guiding principles of collaboration in leveraging national, regional and global investments, in developing and coordinating strategies to achieve full and open access to Earth observations data and information to support timely and knowledge-based decision-making—are all catalysts for benefiting the quality of life of people around the world, advancing global sustainability, and preserving the planet;
6. *Commit* to improving the effectiveness of GEO's actions, to broadening engagement and collaboration of stakeholders including decision-makers, and to sustaining resources for GEOSS' continuous development and functioning;
7. *Acknowledge and value* the contributions of GEO Member governments and invite all Member States of the United Nations who are not yet Members to join GEO; *encourage* all countries to strengthen national GEO arrangements; *highlight* the unique contributions of Participating Organizations, and welcome additional participants, in particular UN Organizations and Programmes, to join GEO and seek to build stronger relations;
8. *Commit* to strengthen engagement with developing countries, as well as foster regional cooperation;
9. *Commit* to broaden and strengthen engagement with non-governmental organizations; non-profit organizations, such as multi-lateral development banks; foundations; and the private sector;
10. *Resolve* to develop a specific and strengthened framework or mechanism for steady resource commitments from varied sources by 2016;

11. *Decide* to establish a process to facilitate a seamless transition for GEO through 2025, to be endorsed at the next GEO Ministerial Summit and *request* that a new Implementation Plan through 2025 be prepared for endorsement at the GEO-XII Plenary in 2015, in accordance with the agreed-upon principles and strategic objectives, taking into account commitments to the United Nations Sustainable Development themes;

12. *Extend* deep appreciation to the Swiss Confederation for graciously hosting the 2014 GEO Ministerial Summit; gratitude to the many GEO Participants from around the world for dedicating time, talent and resources to the development and implementation of GEOSS; and appreciation for the hard work of the GEO Secretariat and the Working Groups for preparing the transition through 2025.