Norwegian Space Agency

CEOS

2027 CEOS Chair Theme

Trusted Satellite Data for a Better Future

This paper communicates the headline theme and focus activities of the 2027 CEOS Chair, the Norwegian Space Agency (NOSA). The proposed activities are conceived to be concluded within the 2027 CEOS Chair term with no expectation of ongoing investment and resourcing from the CEOS organisation.

As CEOS Chair, Norway also commits to ensuring that its core obligations are fulfilled, including supporting the progression of existing CEOS priorities, building on past efforts, and minimising the resourcing implications of any new activities. Norway will work closely with the NASA SIT Chair Team to ensure complementarity with SIT Chair priorities.

Norway's CEOS Chair year will build on the strong legacy established by previous CEOS Chairs and ongoing work of CEOS entities and members. Norway's approach is structured around three interlinked priorities:

1. True Green (Tropical Forests)
2. True Blue (Ocean and Polar)
3. True Future (Youth Engagement)

Together, these priorities reflect a holistic Earth system perspective; without the blue, there is no green, and without the future generation, there is no lasting impact.

A central theme across all priorities is the delivery of trustworthy, interoperable, and analysis-ready satellite EO data to support global decision-making. Norway will build upon the strong foundation of CEOS-ARD and seek to elevate activities aimed at increasing the quality, trust, interoperability, and scalability of CEOS-ARD.

Focus Activity #1: True Green (Tropical Forests)

Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) works to protect the world's tropical rainforests. NICFI is a central partner of the Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI) – a long-term CEOS priority and flagship of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). NICFI supports critical country capacity development through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Forestry Programme, including FAO's System for Earth Observation Data Access, Processing and Analysis for Land Monitoring (SEPAL).

A key strategic area of NICFI is transparency and accountability in the protection of forests, biodiversity and high-value ecosystems. NICFI is an important procurer of EO data, with its satellite data program facilitating open-access to satellite imagery that allows tracking of deforestation, degradation and regrowth. The NICFI Satellite Data Program is an important complement to the participation in Copernicus.

Norway's True Green focus activity aims to build upon these well-established relationships and push for the increased provision of open, trustworthy and harmonised satellite-based

data products for tropical forests, leveraging the CEOS-ARD Framework, promoting WGCV resources, and advocating WGISS interoperability principles. Under the banner of the 2027 CEOS Chair year, Norway will bring together its world-leading tropical forest network with CEOS space agencies to help save the world's tropical forests.

The NOSA CEOS Chair team commits to supporting implementation of the anticipated 2026-2031 CEOS-ARD Strategy, and will focus on two key areas:

1. Increasing cloud-native conventions in the CEOS-ARD Framework, in direct response to feedback from users in the forestry community, with a view to increasing the discoverability, accessibility and usability of satellite EO data;
2. Improving data quality and facilitating discussion on broader adoption of a common quality assessment framework by CEOS-ARD, and potentially more broadly across CEOS.

Norway will build upon findings from the NASA SIT Chair's *Civil and Private Sector Earth Observation Data Providers Collaboration Forum* and consider both institutional and commercial EO data in relation to the above and facilitate discussion on related topics such as data platforms and licensing to further increase the availability of EO data for tropical forests.

Focus Activity #2: True Blue (Ocean and Polar)

The vastness and remoteness of the ocean and polar regions make in-situ and ground-based observations challenging, hence satellite data forms the backbone of environmental monitoring for these critical regions. Strengthening observations in these regions is essential for improving our understanding of the Earth system.

Through the True Blue focus activity, Norway will highlight the importance of the oceans and polar regions, and work towards building a resilient and comprehensive ocean observing system through enhanced international cooperation, harmonised approaches and improved access to data.

Norway will encourage early dialogue with space agencies in support of the upcoming International Polar Year (IPY) and make efforts to connect IPY stakeholders with CEOS Agencies. The utility of CEOS-ARD in the context of establishing baseline datasets for the 5th IPY will be explored.

Recognising the importance of Synthetic Aperture Radar to the IPY and polar observations in general, Norway will seek to establish collaborative work with the planned CEOS SAR Virtual Constellation. Efforts will be undertaken to align and integrate the SAR-VC work plan with the True Blue priority, as well as the Chair theme more generally. Potential collaborations include polar acquisition coordination, development and use of simulation tools, validation activities, and alignment of future radar satellite missions with polar user requirements.

Norway will also leverage the OceanEye International Alliance, in close collaboration with the EU and Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), as an important framework for advancing polar and ocean observations. Norway will contribute its expertise in ocean and polar observations to support stronger integration of the polar dimension, including ocean observations, into international observing efforts.

Another key stakeholder is the WMO's Task Team on the Cryosphere and Polar Observation from Space (TT-CPOS), which was established in 2026. One of the first activities of TT-CPOS is to strengthen coordination between the cryosphere community and space agencies, helping translate scientific requirements and observing gaps into coordinated mission planning, acquisition strategies and product development activities. Norway will work with TT-CPOS to support this priority through strategic coordination, helping ensure that the team's work is visible and effectively communicated to the CEOS community.

Norway will also draw upon its expertise in polar calibration and validation facilities to enhance in situ and ground-based observation networks in polar regions, thereby reinforcing the trustworthiness and accuracy of satellite measurements. The team will collaborate with the Working Group on Calibration and Validation (WGCV) as part of their initiative to define cal/val supersites, to ensure polar and ocean observations are well represented.

Focus Activity #3: True Future (CEOS Youth Engagement Programme)

Norway recognises the critical importance of inspiring and engaging the next generation of Earth observation professionals and will therefore continue the legacy of the UK and Australia on the CEOS Youth Engagement Programme.

The aim is to arrange one or two international webinars on the True Blue priority. For the True Green priority Norway plans to present a poster exhibition related to the True Green. Norway will organise a CEOS Youth Summit at the CEOS Plenary in Bergen to promote global collaboration among young professionals and facilitate a discussion between CEOS Principals and youth representatives on key CEOS topics and 2027 CEOS Chair focus activities.