

# A Sustainable CEOS

CEOS SIT-28 Session 6  
Thursday, March 14, 2013

*A “sustainable CEOS” implies the ability of the organization to endure as a responsive and productive entity. Such endurance will require leadership continuity, complementarity among groups and activities and sufficient capacity to ensure our success and meet our goals.*

This session of the CEOS SIT-28 Meeting is strategic in content and purpose. As the final session of the meeting, its purpose is to engage all participants, and especially CEOS Principals, in a top-level discussion on three elements that affect the organization’s ability to meet its near-term commitments and collective priorities with stakeholders: Continuity, Complementarity, and Capacity. This session is interconnected to the CEOS Self-Study Implementation Initiative and does not negate any discussion that is expected to take place in Sessions 3 and 4 of SIT-28.

The duration will be three hours. Three element leads will introduce candidate topics for discussion in three topical areas. This will be followed by a moderator who will lead a discussion with a panel of 5-6 past, present, and identified future CEOS leaders that will also engage all participants in a top-level discussion on the above three elements for a sustainable CEOS.

## Measures of Success

- Communication of overarching, strategic ideas of CEOS leaders, officers, VCs, WGs, and attending stakeholders to CEOS leadership, present and future
- Organization-wide attention on the internal and external causality associated with the three elements
- A more clear understanding by a broader number of CEOS Members and Associates of strategic-level concerns and their own potential to assist in addressing them

## PART 1 – Introduction of the Elements

Brent Smith - **CONTINUITY** for a Sustainable CEOS

Member of the CEOS Secretariat, CEOS representative to the GEO post-2015 Working Group and CEOS representative to the GEO Ministerial Working Group,.

Kerry Sawyer - **COMPLEMENTARITY** for a Sustainable CEOS

CEOS Executive Officer and past Deputy CEOS Executive Officer

Brian Killough - **CAPACITY** for a Sustainable CEOS

Head of the CEOS Systems Engineering Office (SEO) and current SIT Chair designee as GEO IN-01 Task Coordinator

Each element lead will frame his/her topic as a high level examination of issues that impact CEOS operationally. The objective is not to delve into the specifics of any one challenge at the working level, but rather to discuss how the organization as a whole can deal with overarching issues of strategic concern and impact. These include issues that are becoming patterns or which create problems for continuity; add instability to progress on CEOS priorities and commitments toward GEOS, and pose strategic impediments to more efficient harmonization, availability, and access to Earth Observing products and systems.

The three element leads will coordinate on their areas of focus to better facilitate discussion. The objective of this session is not to solve a specific or current problem, but rather to show that these issues exist and are affecting the organization's shared capability to meet high priority commitments for the implementation of GEOSS.

Example topics of discussion within these three element areas include, but are not limited to:

- **Continuity** (e.g., level of engagement by CEOS Agencies with regard to participation in key CEOS, including Plenary, SIT, WG, VC, other activities of interest, including ability to "take their turn" in assuming leadership roles in CEOS, contributing/supporting staff to lead CEOS functions; focus also on how continuity of CEOS itself can be assured in terms of maintaining seamless leadership turnovers for CEOS Chair, SIT Chair, CEO/DCEO, WG Chairs/Vice-Chairs, VC Co-Leads, etc. and thus being able to stay on schedule in relation to its established priorities in support of the GEOSS, GCOS, etc.)
- **Complementarity** (e.g., harmonization of internal and external activities and groups to benefit CEOS objectives). Such coordination adds value and accelerates progress of CEOS toward the GEOSS. Examples of successful complementary activities include CWIC and HMA for improved data access, integration of the work from multiple Ocean Constellations, and shared projects between WGCV and WGISS. In addition to the recognition of successful complementary activities, this topic will also consider the need for coordination in areas such as Space Data Coordination, Cryosphere science, and Outreach.
- **Capacity**: Does CEOS have the proper resources to sustain its purpose and effectiveness into the future? This topic will explore whether CEOS has the necessary resources (people and money) to manage its regular business functions (meetings, website, outreach, etc.) and its technical functions (data access, support to GEO, support to emerging needs, etc.). Challenges in CEOS capacity include limited agency funding and travel, competition for resources among many relevant global initiatives, and realism of expectations.

## **PART 2 – Discussion led by a moderator (Dr. Michael Freilich)**

A panel discussion follows. Five or six past, current, and future identified CEOS leaders, who will have accepted in advance of the SIT, will offer their perspectives from their past and present CEOS experience and active involvement, both internally and externally with stakeholders.

They will speak to the three elements and other strategic-level items of interest they may wish to introduce from their wide experience. The goal is a provocative discussion for all participants to focus closely on continuity, complementarity, and capacity for a more effective and sustainable CEOS in the near-term.