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Results of the 18th CEOS Plenary in Beijing

Minister Xu Guanhua, MOST / NRSCC (China), CEOS Chair 2004

Minister Xu Guanhua, Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) / National Remote Sensing Center of China (NRSCC) chaired the 18th Plenary Meeting of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites, November 16-17, in Beijing, China. Over 80 participants represented 17 CEOS Member space agencies as well as 15 Associates. The Plenary was preceded by: a Special Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) Session on GEOSS and SIT-15 on November 15 that prepared a draft position paper for CEOS; and a 20th Anniversary Symposium in the morning of November 16 to celebrate the CEOS anniversary. MOST also hosted an International Workshop on Earth Observation Technology and Applications, and an Exhibition on Earth Observation in parallel with the Plenary.

Plenary keynote speakers included Minister Xu Guanhua from MOST, Administrator Sun Laiyan from China National Space Administration (CNSA) and Associate Administrator Liu Yingjin from China Meteorological Administration (CMA). Plenary presentations and discussion focused on:

- the membership of the National Space Research and Development Agency of Nigeria (NASRDA), and of the Geo-informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA) of Thailand;
- the CEOS SIT report summarising the activities and achievements since the last CEOS Plenary and the status of the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS) Themes;
- CEOS position regarding the Group on Earth Observations (GEO);



CEOS 20th Anniversary Ceremony

- the Utilization Team report updating on the utilisation efforts undertaken by CEOS agencies since the last Plenary;
- the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) follow-up Programme report on the update of background and status of each of the 5 modules which comprise the CEOS WSSD follow-up activities;
- reports and recommendations of the CEOS WGISS, WGCV and WGEdu standing working groups (see related articles on page4-7).

Additional presentations were made on: the status of the Thailand Earth Observation Satellite (THEOS) project by GISTDA; CEOS-related radio-frequency issues; the status of the CEOS interface to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); CEOS

(to be continued on next page.)



Participants of the 2004 CEOS Plenary in Beijing



Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) : Special Session on GEO Governance and 15th Meeting

Dr. Yoji Furuhashi
MEXT / JAXA (Japan), SIT Chair

On 15th November 2004, we had two SIT meetings held at China World Hotel, Beijing (thanks to NRSCC for hosting us): a Special Session on GEO Governance and the 15th Meeting of SIT. It was my great pleasure to have so many senior representatives attending these meetings.



GEO Governance and 15th SIT Meeting

At request of the CEOS Chair, Minister for Science and Technology of the Peoples Republic of China, Honorable Xu, I organized a small group to develop the CEOS position with regard to GEO. The

Special Session on GEO Governance was convened to discuss the progress on that position and to make recommendations to CEOS Plenary as to the relationship between CEOS and GEO. We had intensive discussions and prepared the recommendation to the CEOS Plenary - namely that Plenary establish a CEOS Task Force with the job of reviewing CEOS structures and processes and recommending how they might adapt to respond to the requirements of the GEO-era. A small team of volunteers was tasked with developing a draft position paper for presentation to CEOS Plenary.

The 15th SIT meeting mainly reviewed the Coastal Theme report to see whether it was ready to proceed to the implementation phase, with the presentation from the Theme team. While a number of issues - such as the space

observation priorities, the Theme team membership/leadership and the resources required for implementation - were missing from the Report itself, we agreed that the Theme team can revise the report to include these issues very easily, since the Theme team's presentation clarified them. As a result, the 15th SIT meeting congratulated the Coastal Theme team on their excellent Report and concluded to recommend to IGOS Partners, on behalf of CEOS, that they adopt the Coastal Theme report at the IGOS P-11bis meeting and that they approve the Theme to move to implementation phase.

The 15th SIT also reviewed very briefly the progress on implementation for the Water Cycle, Carbon, Geo-Hazards and Atmospheric Chemistry Themes and I was pleased to be able to report to CEOS 18th Plenary meeting that the Themes were moving at a good pace in their implementation phase.

We also had the brief status report from the Cryosphere Theme addressing the shortcomings in the Theme proposal identified at the 14th SIT meeting. This Theme is also now progressing in a very satisfactory manner.

And as a new initiative, we invited space agencies to update their status regarding each IGOS-P Theme, which I think was very helpful for each Theme team.

The next SIT meeting is being planned for May 2005. I hope lots of senior representatives from space agencies attend the meeting. ■

(continued from Page 1.)

publications and WWW; a short video on the attractions of London by British National Space Centre (BNSC) and a short update on Argentina's Earth observation programme (CONAE). The CEOS dinner featured a performance by Inner Mongolia dancers.

Plenary outcomes include:

- NASRDA was accepted as a CEOS Member and GISTDA, a current Associate, expressed its interest in qualifying for member status at the 2005 Plenary.
- CEOS statement on its position regarding GEO to be conveyed by the CEOS Chair to the IGOS-Partnership 11bis meeting and subsequently to the GEO co-chairmen;
- a draft input from CEOS to GEO-5, in the form of comments on the 10-year implementation plan;
- approval of terms of reference for the CEOS Task Force led by CEOS SIT Chair;



CEOS 18th Plenary

- agreement that the existing Utilisation Team actions from 17th Plenary would remain open;
- approval of recommendations made by the three CEOS Working Groups.

(to be continued on next page.)

Report from the IGOS-P11bis Meeting

Dr. Colin Hicks
BNSC (UK), CEOS Chair and IGOS-P Co-Chair

The 11th bis IGOS Partners Meeting was co-chaired by Norberto Fernandez (UNEP) and Colin Hicks (CEOS/BNSC). The agenda was dominated by discussions on the IGOS role within the Ad Hoc Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and the actions and positioning required to ensure that IGOS is situated to provide support to the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) 10-year Implementation Plan. The meeting was pleased to welcome senior representatives from GEO Secretariat - Greg Withee (GEO/USA), Tobias Fuchs (GEO/Europe) and Adi Paterson (GEO/S. Africa), to join the discussions.

The general conclusion from of the discussions was that IGOS, through its theme implementation efforts, had 'ready made' accomplishments that could feed directly into the 9 Societal Benefit Areas identified by GEO. Members were reminded that GEO did not

intend to set up rival activities to those already established and would encourage new initiatives where there was no existing organisation to provide such capabilities. It was agreed that IGOS-P had an opportunity to establish a role for itself within the GEO framework but would have to continue to promote its value to GEO - explaining how its activities fit within the GEOSS 10-year Implementation Plan. A statement from IGOS-P to the GEO-5 meeting (Ottawa, early December) was agreed - focussed specifically on points contained within the GEOSS 10-year Implementation Plan.

The IGOS theme reports were brief and focused primarily on decisions required of the Partners. A more comprehensive review will be carried out at the May 2005 IGOS meeting. The Coastal Theme was presented in some detail as it was seeking to move forward to full implementation. Dr Liana McManus presented

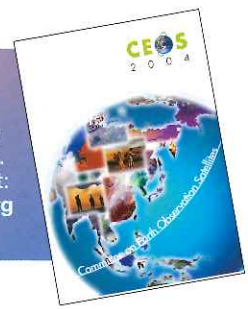
the Theme and the proposed implementation plan. It received a positive endorsement from the SIT Chairman on behalf of CEOS, and from all other IGOS members. It was noted that some issues need to be addressed before the report can be accepted as final - and it was agreed that these would resolved by the Theme team in the near future, as a condition of approval to move to implementation phase. It was agreed that the Coral Reefs sub-Theme should now be fully integrated within the Coastal Theme - as had always been intended.

IGOS gratefully received the International Council for Science (ICSU) report on its workshop which had addressed 'socio-economic data relating to IGOS-P activities' and which included a number of recommendations to IGOS-P and to the wider community. It was agreed that socio-economic issues require more attention by IGOS-P - in the first instance through the individual Themes. ■



CEOS Handbook
European Space Agency published the 2005 CEOS Earth Observation Handbook on behalf of CEOS. The Handbook is to be premiered at the GEO-6 and EOS-III meetings in Brussels in February. Further information can be obtained at: <http://www.ceos.org>

CEOS Brochure
MEXT/JAXA published the CEOS Brochure 2004 - in order to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of CEOS in November 2004 on behalf of CEOS. Further information can be obtained at: <http://www.ceos.org>



(continued from Page 2.)
At the conclusion of the Plenary, Minister Xu turned over the CEOS Chair to the Director General of BNSC, Dr. Colin Hicks, who will chair CEOS during the upcoming year. Dr. Colin Hicks outlined the priorities of BNSC as Chair for 2005: updating the CEOS 5-Year Plan taking into consideration the outcomes from GEO over the coming year; positioning CEOS within the GEO framework by actively representing CEOS and establishing it as an important organisation to deliver within the GEOSS Implementation Plan; encouraging co-ordination of CEOS efforts on disaster management, including through close association with the international Disaster Management Constellation (DMC) consortium and promotion of the use of small agile satellites to provide such services; supporting the activities of CEOS in helping the provision of data and information in a timely fashion for human aid organisations;

continuing to pursue the recommendations of the CEOS Utilisation Team; supporting CEOS to coordinate the role of space agencies in providing the data and information for long-term climate studies. The 19th Plenary is scheduled to take place in London in the week of November 14, 2005. CONAE will chair CEOS in 2006. ■



The turn over of the Chairmanship



World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Follow-up Programme in 2005

Mr. Gordon Bridge, CEOS Ad-hoc WSSD Follow-up Team Leader

Mr. Michael Hales, Former CEOS Ad-hoc WSSD Follow-up Team Leader

The CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme highlighted several activities at the 18th Plenary undertaken by each of the CEOS WSSD Modules during the past year. It was reported in detail how space agencies and users of remote sensing data had cooperated on a number of activities in response to the 2002 WSSD Plan of Implementation.

One example of this cooperation was highlighted at the second TIGER Workshop sponsored by ESA, UNESCO and the CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme in Pretoria, South Africa in November 2004. Modules 1, 2 and 3 collaborated at the workshop and strengthened all of their efforts related to capacity building, water resources management, and disaster management activities. This collaboration is expected to continue given the 10-year Strategic Plan of TIGER that was developed in South Africa and the broad group of participants who attended the workshop, including ninety representatives from throughout Africa. The TIGER 10 Year Plan aims at providing practical solutions to the challenges set out in the Africa Water Vision 2025, which was adopted by Heads of State of the African Union.

Other highlights at the 18th Plenary included the transition of the leadership of the CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme from NOAA to EUMETSAT. The CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme also stands to significantly benefit from the valuable expertise of the Nigerian National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA) who officially became a CEOS Member Agency at the 18th Plenary.

With BNSC as the new CEOS Chair and EUMETSAT as

the new leader of the CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme, the next year offers many promising opportunities. EUMETSAT is highly involved with an EU sponsored project benefiting Africa called PUMA (Preparing for the Use of Meteosat Second Generation in Africa), which is complemented by a growing outreach to Latin America. EUMETSAT has also been heavily involved in the development of the 10-year implementation plan for the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), which includes many shared goals with the CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme.

In 2005, the CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme will have the opportunity to collaborate with the CEOS WGEdu on the implementation of the "Principles of Satellite Data Provision in Support of Earth Observation Training and Education" to address the needs of users who are seeking to build operational capacity. The Programme will also collaborate with the new leadership of the CEOS Africa Advisory Group (see article on next page) as well as build on the significant work being accomplished through TIGER in Africa. Furthermore, the CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme is also strengthening its cooperation with the IGOS Water Cycle Theme, and working to establish linkages to other themes such as the IGOS GeoHazards Theme and IGOS Coastal Theme. The CEOS WSSD Follow-up Programme is focused on highlighting much of its current work at the Thirteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in April 2005 at UN Headquarters in New York. ■

TIGER made significant progress in 2004

Dr. Josef Aschbacher, ESA (France)

The TIGER initiative originates from the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. It focuses on the use of space technology for water resources management in Africa.

A number of actions were carried out during 2004, some of which are listed below:

- Funding of four major projects by ESA, focusing on global wetlands, aquifers, epidemiology and food security.
- Approval to obtain free ERS and ENVISAT data for TIGER projects. The call for proposals resulted in 95 responses, which is

10 times higher than originally expected and confirms the strong interest of the user community in Africa.

- Establishment of a TIGER secretariat and steering committee in order to broaden ownership and improve management.
- Hiring of a TIGER Coordinator by ESA to assist the implementation of TIGER.
- Organisation of the 2nd TIGER Workshop in Pretoria, South Africa, in November 2004. A 10-year strategic plan for TIGER was developed by the 140 participants, which sets a long-term framework for TIGER and

engages the African user community and donor agencies in a sustainable process.

- Significant contributions to TIGER have been made during 2004 by a number of CEOS Members and Associates, in particular by CSA, JAXA, EUMETSAT, NOAA, NASA, UNESCO and UNOOSA (in addition to ESA).

Access to significant donor funding is the main objective of the next phase during 2005-2006. The CEOS community will be kept informed of the progress made. ■

Working Group on Education, Training, and Capacity Building (WGEdu)

Dr. Sergio Camacho

UNOOSA (Austria), Chair, WGEdu

The Working Group on Education, Training, and Capacity Building had a productive 2004. The WGEdu completed the development of the CEOS Education, Training, and Capacity Building Resources Portal and demonstrated its functions to the 18th CEOS Plenary. Initially, the Education Portal will make the Earth Observation (EO) education and training resources of CEOS members and associates more accessible, in particular, to developing countries. It will provide numerous links to sites where educators, students and professionals may access education materials, including satellite data free of charge. Subsequently, the Education Portal will include education materials from non-CEOS institutions. Refer to: <http://wgedu.ceos.org>.

In 2004, the WGEdu identified four categories of EO data to which educators, students and practitioners should obtain increased access. The WGEdu noted that data sets from three categories are available through the Internet and through ad hoc arrangements. For the fourth category, the "Principles of Satellite Data Provision in Support of Earth Observation Training and Education", proposed by the WGEdu and adopted by the 17th CEOS Plenary, provide a framework for agencies to support of EO education, training and capacity building consistent with agency data policies. The WGEdu presented a progress report to the 18th Plenary on a plan of implementation for the principles.

The work planned for 2005 includes actively inviting Members and Associates, in particular the institutions of the WGEdu's membership, to populate the database of the Education Portal with education, training and capacity building materials, revising the draft plan of implementation

of the CEOS Data Principles adopted at the 17th CEOS Plenary and carrying out a pilot project as a practical test of the revised draft plan of implementation of the Data Principles to be presented to the 19th Plenary. The pilot project would include three types of users: the African Advisory Group, a group of universities (coordinated by Peking University) and the Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education, affiliated to the United Nations. The WGEdu will continue to work with Module 1 of the CEOS World Summit on Sustainable Development Follow up Programme in capacity building activities, particularly in support of the work of other Modules of the WSSD Follow up Programme. The WGEdu will also maintain linkages, and contribute as possible, to the broader EO capacity building community, in particular to the efforts of the soon to be established follow-on mechanism to the Group on Earth Observations (GEO).

Due to assuming new responsibilities within the Canada Center for Remote Sensing (CCRS), Christine Hutton stepped down as Co-Chair of WGEdu as of the 18th CEOS Plenary. The Plenary recognized the outstanding contributions of Christine Hutton to the work of the WGEdu and appreciated that she will continue as a member of the Working Group. The Plenary welcomed Yolanda Berenguer, of UNESCO as new Co-Chair of the WGEdu. Yolanda Berenguer is an active member of the WGEdu and is professionally involved in space education. ■

CEOS' African Advisory Group: New Leadership and Opportunities for Collaboration

Ms. Renée A. Leduc Clarke, NOAA (USA)

A few members of the African Advisory Group to CEOS (AAG) held a productive meeting on 10 November 2004 in Pretoria, South Africa. The meeting was held as a side session to the TIGER workshop held at the CSIR Conference Centre.

At the meeting, Wilber Ottichilo of the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) in Kenya was nominated to be Chair of the AAG, with Souleye Wade of Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Senegal as Vice-Chair. It was also decided that EIS-Africa, the network for the cooperative management of information in Africa, based in South Africa, will serve as the secretariat, and will host monthly columns about

AAG and CEOS activities in its widely distributed newsletter.

The AAG is enthusiastic to engage more closely with CEOS Members and Associates during the next year, particularly in the review and implementation of the CEOS WGEdu data access principles, TIGER and other CEOS WSSD activities. The AAG appreciates the ongoing CEOS Plenary action that encourages CEOS Agencies and working groups to engage the AAG in its implementation activities in the region. Much AAG energy will be focused on AFRICAGIS 2005 in September in which it is hoped that many CEOS Agencies will participate. Agencies and working groups are encouraged to

contact Wilber Ottichilo at ottichilo@rcmr.org for more information about collaboration opportunities with the AAG.

The African Advisory Group to CEOS was created at the CEOS WSSD Module 1 Capacity Building Workshop in Stellenbosch, South Africa in October 2003. The group consists of stakeholders from all regions of Africa including representatives of academia, government and NGOs who have an interest in CEOS' work as data users and remote sensing capacity building experts. The group was formed to provide advice, input and feedback on CEOS' sustainable development activities as well as other implementation efforts. ■



The Working Group on Calibration and Validation (WGCV)

Dr. Stephen G. Ungar
NASA / GSFC (USA), *Chair, WGCV*

A general description of the 22nd WGCV Plenary (WGCV-22), held in June 2004 at the USGS EROS Data Center (EDC) in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, was presented in CEOS Newsletter 23. The WGCV Infrared/Visible Optical Systems (IVOS) Subgroup held a highly successful Large Scale Optical Sensor Inter-comparison Workshop and subgroup meeting in October 2004 at ESTEC in Noordwijk, the Netherlands. Six recommendations, growing out of the WGCV 22 Plenary and refined during the IVOS meeting, were presented at the CEOS Plenary in Beijing.

These recommendations, formulated to enable WGCV to fulfill the CEOS commitment to GEOSS, are summarized below:

- a) CEOS Chair will poll members to seek leader and points of contact in interested agencies for the sensor inter-comparison activity and will ensure appropriate linkages and harmonization with the CEOS/WMO database activities and points of contact
- b) An action be adopted encouraging CEOS agencies to continue and extend their support for the WGCV LPV subgroup activities.

- c) In co-operation with the WGCV Chair, CEOS Chair will circulate a short note explaining the benefits of using the CEOS Land Validation Core Sites and of adopting the FAO/UNEP Land Cover Classification System (LCCS).
- d) In co-operation with the WGCV Chair, CEOS Chair will identify CEOS agencies producing/supplying space-borne DEM data, and explore with them the possibilities for increased user feedback – building on the experience of the MODIS QA activity.
- e) WGCV Chair to contact CEOS agencies planning atmospheric measurement missions to encourage due consideration to validation measurements, particularly the ground systems, to ensure that satellite long-term trends and inter-annual variability of atmospheric composition are adequately validated.

The next WGCV Plenary (WGCV 23), to be held near Cordoba, Argentina at the CONAE Ground Receiving Station from 7 March through 11 March 2005, will be preceded by an International Field Measurements Exercise at the "INTA Manfredi" Agricultural Experimental Center, located some 50 km SE from Cordoba.



Field Measurements in Support of EO-1 at Barreal Blanco, near Mendoza, Argentina February 2004

The WGCV Plenary will be held contemporaneously with the WGISS Plenary. A joint WGISS /WGCV session is planned for Wednesday, 9 March 2005. All CEOS agencies are invited to participate in the Field Measurements Exercise. Participants will be given the opportunity to inter-compare their ground measurements with those of their colleagues. Data from a variety of Earth Observing Platforms will be acquired, within a one month time interval surrounding the Field Measurement Exercise. All data will be made available to participants through the WGCV website. The purpose of this exercise is to prototype techniques and approaches to be adopted for a comprehensive International Field Measurements Campaign, under consideration by IVOS, to be held in late 2005 or early 2006 in support of CEOS-GOESS objectives. If you are interested in participating in the field measurement exercise or supplying a representative to the WGCV, please contact the WGCV secretariat stuart.frye@gfsc.nasa.gov. ■

The Working Group on Information Systems and Services (WGISS)

Mr. John Faundeen
USGS (USA), *Chair, WGISS*

WGISS held its 18th meeting in conjunction with its two Sub-Groups, Technology & Services and Projects & Applications in Beijing, China 6-10 September 2004. Our hosts, the Ministry of Science and Technology and the National Remote Sensing Center of China provided an excellent venue in addition to exposing the participants to a ground receiving station tour, part of the Great Wall,



1967 EO Image of Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City.

and culinary delights.

This meeting initiated more rigor into the Task Team reports with a new template being requested by each Task Team containing the objectives derived from the WGISS 5-year plan, members, timetables, and metrics for success. Task Team creation and closure procedures were also adopted ensuring WGISS follows a process in these areas. The Technology and Services Sub-Group has been led by Wyn Cudlip, BNSC / QinetiQ, for the past two years and by our Terms of Reference, a new chair was required. Paul Kopp from CNES agreed to lead this Sub-Group and Dingsheng Liu from

NRSCC volunteered to become the Sub-Group Vice-Chair. Those changes, combined with the previous transitions, totaled seven new leadership volunteers within WGISS during the last 12 months. This meeting also benefited from the participation of the WGCV Chair, Dr. Stephen Ungar. It was a rare opportunity to have two Working Group Chairs together for an entire week.

A successful Earth Observation and GEO spatial information (EOGEO) Workshop was held 23-25 June 2004 at University College London. This was the eighth workshop

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National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA)

The 18th CEOS Plenary meeting held on 16-17 November 2004 at Beijing (China) approved NASRDA as a new CEOS Member.

Mr. Francis Chizea and Mr. Kayode Odimayomi
NASRDA (Nigeria)

The National Space Research and Development Agency was established on the 5th of May, 1999. The Agency is to coordinate all research projects on Space Science and Technology which before its establishment was scattered in various ministries and parastatals as projects.

NASRDA is charged to develop indigenous competence in the design and building of appropriate hardware and software in Space Technology as an essential tool for its socio-economic development and the enhancement of the quality of life of the people of its country.

In order to achieve the above goals, NASRDA has embarked on the development of the following areas of space science and technology which are indispensable for the achievement of its objectives.

- Basic Space Science and Technology
- Remote Sensing
- Satellite Meteorology
- Communication and Information Technology

- Defence and security

In order to achieve the above objectives the following Centres of Excellency were established to develop the relevant fields and coordinate various programmes.

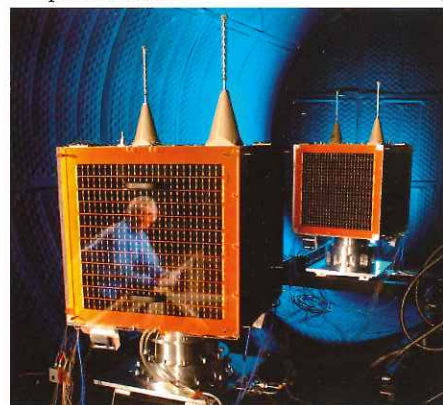
- Centre for Basic Space Science
- Centre for Remote Sensing
- Centre for Satellite Technology Development
- Centre for Geodesy and Geodynamics
- Centre for Space Transport and Propulsion
- Centre for Space Science, Technology and Education

Major Achievement of National Space Research and Development Agency

- Produced the Nigerian Space Policy.
- Built and launch its first satellite (NigeriaSat-1) about a year ago.
- Nigeria is a member of the Disaster Monitoring Constellation (DMC).
- Nigeria has also signed the contract for the launch of its first

Communication Satellite.

- Work is presently ongoing on the NigeriaSat-2 Project (High Resolution Spacecraft).
- Produced a draft National Geospatial data infrastructure policy which has been submitted to Government for approval.
- Member of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)
- Member of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of COPUOS
- All the activity centres are fully operational. ■



NigeriaSat-1 and UK-DMC

(continued from Page 6.)

conducted since 1996. These events are forums for Earth observation technology and service exchange. The London workshop included sessions on Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) and Web services, free and open source software, catalogs/directories/metadata, semantics and ontologies, plus an entire day on Grid technologies. The next EOGEO Workshop will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in June of 2005.

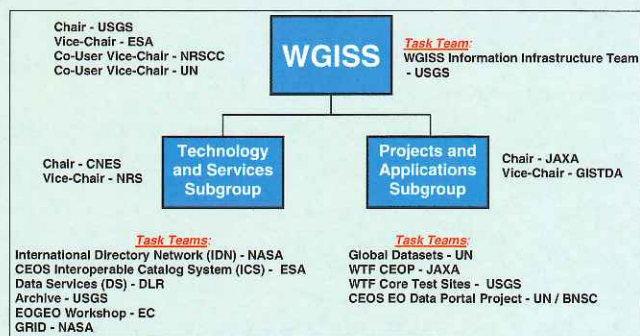
WGISS was able to participate in significant outreach activities benefiting CEOS. A paper, composed by 11 CEOS organizations, was presented at the ISPRS XXth Congress in Istanbul, Turkey in July of 2004. Entitled, "Global Environmental Databases From CEOS

Agencies," it represented an excellent forum from which to illustrate CEOS relevance and importance. WGISS also participated in the European Space Agency-sponsored Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation and Adding Value to the Scientific and Technical Data (PV-2004) Symposium held in Frascati, Italy, in October 2004. Referencing CEOS, four papers plus a keynote address were provided.

As an initial response to CEOS Plenary Action 17-04, WGISS designed, developed, and implemented a directory portal featuring CEOS-specific datasets. Involvement from BNSC, ESA, NASA, FAO, JAXA, CNES, CCRS, NRSCC, and

USGS led to the portal.

The next meeting, WGISS-19, will be unique! CONAE has agreed to host this meeting near Cordoba, Argentina in conjunction with the WGCV. This will be an excellent opportunity for both Working Groups to learn more about each other and to discuss areas for future collaboration. ■



Current WGISS Structure.

New Leadership from a New Chair

Dr. Colin Hicks
BNSC (UK)
CEOS Chairman



It is with my best intentions that I have accepted the chair of such a highly respected voluntary organisation from my predecessor Minister Xu Guanhua, of China, at the 18th Plenary in Beijing. I look forward to the future challenges and a successful year in working with you all and in building upon the good work of previous CEOS Chairs.

These are times of change. It is essential for CEOS to look to the future, and to remain flexible and responsive, in order to maintain the success and high profile that it has achieved over the past 20 years. CEOS should continue to build upon its role in coordinating the international EO space community. We are all aware of the changes that are being driven by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and which are embodied in the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) 10-Year

Implementation Plan, which will be presented for approval to the Earth Observation Summit (EOS) III in Brussels in February 2005. CEOS must establish a prominent role and build upon its well-respected international role within the future framework being established by GEO.

Much effort has already been afforded in preparing CEOS to have a major role within the GEO framework and this activity will continue to dominate for the foreseeable future as the framework is being fully established. GEO offers a major opportunity for CEOS. My team and I will make every effort to ensure that we are fully prepared to meet the demands of the future.

Alongside this, CEOS still needs to perform its core functions many of which will continue in the future in support of GEO. The interaction

with IGOS and its Themes through the Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) will continue, but Theme selection will increasingly need to be focussed to support the societal benefit areas identified by GEO. Many of the Themes already underway fall into this category. We must not forget the good work of these groups - we need, as an organisation, to support and offer guidance in a more positive way.

I would like to also thank in advance the Secretariat: it works largely behind the scenes, but without its driving force and enthusiasm CEOS would slowly grind to a halt. I look forward to the year ahead but fully realise there remain many hurdles for us to overcome. We all need to be proactive, not only within CEOS but within our own Agencies and organisations in order to promote and support the CEOS principles. ■

Contributions for future issues of the CEOS Newsletter from the CEOS Members and Associates, and subscriptions to the CEOS Newsletter, please contact CEOS Japan Secretariat : ceos-jpn@jaxa.jp, or misawa@restec.or.jp <http://www.ceos.org/pages/pub.html#newsletter>

Meeting Calendar

As of Jan. 2005

Activities	2005											
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
CEOS Plenary												▲ 14-16 18th Plenary BNSC, London, UK
CEOS Task Force		▲ 24 Geneva	△ Brussels			△ 23 Geneva						
WSSD Follow-up Team						△ 17-20 Paris						
CEOS SIT (Strategic Implementation Team)						△ 24 SIT-16 Geneva					△ SIT-17 TBD	
CEOS WGISS (Working Group on Information Systems & Services)			▲ 7-11 WGISS-19 CONAE, Cordoba, Argentina				▲ 16-18 EOGEO, Minneapolis, MN			△ WGISS-20 NSAU, TBD, Ukraine		
CEOS WGCV (Working Group on Calibration and Validation)			▲ 7-11 WGCV-23 (WGISS/WGCV joint meeting)									
CEOS WGEdu (Working Group on Education, Training, and Capacity Building)						△ 18-20 UNESCO, Paris						
IGOS Partners			▲ 2/28-3/4 CEOP / IGWCO Tokyo			△ 25 IGOS-P12 Geneva						
Others	▲ 24-25 WMO CG-5	▲ 16 EO Summit-3 Brussels		▲ 11-22 CSD New York				▲ 25-29 IGARSS Seoul, Korea		17-21 ▲ IAF Fukuoka, Japan	▲ 1-4 CGMS Tokyo	
	▲ 24-28 APAN Bangkok	▲ 14-15 GEO-6 Brussels		△ GEO-7 TBD								

▲: determined △: to be determined (Date, Host organization/Location) CEOS-related meetings are open only to designated participants.

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