

Earth Observation Summit VII
Beijing
05 November 2010

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Norway

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

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

Recent natural disasters reminds us of the urgent need for better warning systems and rapid response systems for mitigation.

Norway appreciates the efforts and progress made since the first Earth Observation Summit in 2003. Half way into the implementation plan we acknowledge progress in many areas. However, we all need to increase the efforts to ensure that the intentions in the 10-Year Implementation Plan are achieved.

Global challenges require global solutions. Efficient multi-hazard warning systems can only be established and efficiently managed through international cooperation. The implementation of GEOSS must be done in close cooperation with user organisations, especially UN organisations and programmes.

Norway is an Arctic country with large marine and polar areas. Norway is an extensive user of Earth Observation and we rely on Earth Observation data for the sustainable management of these areas. 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 is a key provider of infrastructure to Earth Observation systems. Our Polar satellite ground stations are ideally located to acquire and distribute data from polar orbiting satellites, and they are serving ever more Earth Observation systems. And as of this summer our first vessel surveillance satellite, AISSAT-1, is in orbit.

We see two main challenges in establishing efficient global operational services:

- 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 a common principle 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 GEO Forest Carbon Tracking task. 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.

Norway also welcomes the establishment of a task force for the planning of the Global Forest Observation Initiative and will consider increasing our support for this initiative. A sustained GFOI will not only support the REDD+ initiative. It will also secure several tasks in the GEO Work Plan access to coordinated acquisition of satellite data.

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

Norway will contribute to realising the vision, purpose and scope of the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan. Norway supports the adoption of the Resolution of this Earth Observation Summit.

Thank you.