

## **Canada's Statement to GEO-X Plenary:**

Canada is proud to highlight and reiterate our support and engagement in the development and implementation of GEO and GEOSS activities and initiatives. I would like to underscore some specifics:

### ***Agriculture:***

The sustainability and stability of the global food supply is of critical importance, and Canada actively supports the Global Agricultural Monitoring initiative (GEO-GLAM)'s work to improve global crop monitoring and reduce food price volatility worldwide.

In particular, Canada is a member of the core implementation team, and is pleased to continue in a leadership and coordination role for the development and implementation of JECAM (the Joint Experiment for Crop Assessment and Monitoring initiative), including hosting its global secretariat and the JECAM coordination website and providing space-based data.

### ***Ocean and Fresh Water:***

As a maritime nation, Canada recognises the importance of ocean and freshwater as a key component of the earth system and the nine societal benefit areas of GEO. Canada was involved in pre-conception phases of the Blue Planet, and was pleased to support the inaugural Blue Planet Symposium.

Canada will continue to support and participate in Blue Planet for the further integration of ocean and freshwater components in the next phase of GEOSS.

### ***Biodiversity:***

In the area of biodiversity, Canada has recently confirmed its support for the Vice-Chair position of the GEO-BON Steering Committee, and is committed to support continued implementation of GEO-BON.

At the regional level, as an Arctic nation, Canada has led the implementation of the Arctic Council's Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (the Arctic component of GEO-BON).

### ***Space Observations:***

In 2013, Canada served as Chair of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), and was pleased to host the 2013 CEOS Plenary in Montreal, where a new mission statement was approved, and governance was reviewed. For the first time, biodiversity issues were on the CEOS agenda; other

discussions related to disasters, climate, forestry, agriculture, oceans, and global carbon and water cycle monitoring.

***Geomatics:***

Recognizing the importance of capacity building, Canada is leading the development of a national geomatics plan in Senegal, and will also be the lead in a new geoscience project in Africa that will be heavily influenced by a new SDI platform to be housed in the to-be created African Mineral Development Centre.

At home, Canada is also working on a Federal Geospatial Platform, which is largely synergistic with GEO's work to build a GEOSS.

***Forest Observations, Fires and Land Cover:***

Given that about half of Canada's land surface – nearly 400 million hectares ---is tree-covered, Canadian forestry experts are providing support to other nations under GEO's GOFI/GOLD (Global Observation of Forest Cover/Land Cover Dynamics) in the areas of Global Early Warning Fire Systems, and contributing to forest observation and land cover research, to integrate remote sensing and ground based observations in support of forest carbon tracking.

***Polar Issues:***

Finally, in the area of enhanced Polar monitoring, Canada participated in WMO's Polar Space Task Group, leading the development and implementation of a multi-year strategy for the observation of ice sheets using space-based EO platforms. The satellite assets of the Polar Space task Group member agencies will continue to monitor ice sheets and contribute to the legacy of archived Earth observation satellite products of the Arctic and Antarctica.

Recognizing that there are critical gaps in weather and environmental monitoring in the vast Arctic region, Canada is exploring concepts for a possible Polar Communications and Weather satellite mission. A space industry consultation process has been initiated to obtain an understanding of technical solutions and implementation models that will help the Government assess the viability of such a mission.

***Conclusion:***

In conclusion, Canada would like to reaffirm its strong support for the added-value GEO offers in leveraging access to critical earth observations.

Thank you.