

Madam Chair,

COSPAR, the ICSU Committee on Space Research established in 1958, was accepted as a Participating Organization in GEO in 2007. Since then, it has continuously worked at strengthening the links between the research communities involved in space-based observation of the Earth's atmosphere, ocean and land with the GEO community, notably through our participation to the former Science and Technology Committee. Science is but one user of GEO, but a critical one and actually the key contributor to the improvement of the uses of GEOSS for the benefit of society. Science altogether offers and improves applications of Earth observation, validates its products, and responds to society's requests for new applications.

During the past year COSPAR has been involved in the Data Sharing Working Group and the Post-2015 Working Group, with the support of our Task Group on GEO, which gathers all interested members of our Scientific Commission on Earth science, and has taken part to the Monitoring and Evaluation process of GEO. COSPAR is also engaged in a program of capacity building workshops including a significant component devoted to Earth observation, with recent such events in Thailand in last November, supported by GEO, and in Indonesia going on as we speak. COSPAR gratefully acknowledges GEO member countries for supporting their scientists' outstanding contribution to COSPAR's Task Group on GEO.

Last year our delegation at GEO-IX offered to sponsor a scientific study of the global and regional Integrated Earth System Science that will be made possible by GEOSS in the decade 2015-2025, during the second chapter of GEO. This study was further recommended by the COSPAR Scientific Advisory Committee, and is now being undertaken. An international study group of about twenty distinguished scientists belonging to the modeling and Earth observation communities is now at work with the goal of delivering its report later this year, at a dedicated GEO session during the next COSPAR Scientific Assembly to be held in early August in Moscow. COSPAR held yesterday a well-attended and lively side event where the current status of this study was presented. We hope that the study, the results of which will be published and widely distributed among research institutions and space agencies, will be helpful in encouraging these institutions to support new research and observation, in stimulating the continued interest of the GEO community in science, and in focusing the efforts of the worldwide research community into the new domains opened by the sustained development of the global observing system of systems and the eased access to data enabled by the GEO Data Sharing Principles.

COSPAR is thankful to Switzerland for the splendid organization of this Plenary, and to the GEO Secretariat and its Director Dr Ryan for their excellent work and spirit of collaboration.

Thank you for your attention.