Additional feedback from the UN-SDG/GEO Side Event
22 April 2015


….there is no doubt that this was a very successful and "awakening" side event in many respects. It was great to work in partnership with GEO on this, and reflects the combined strengths we can bring to the Member States on such global topics as the SDG agenda. Having a combined voice is very powerful and unifying. See article released by UN Communications:


This was their take (they were in the room). We had no input at all. Nice to see that the messages were picked up by non-experts!!

I’d like to think that we helped the audience understand the direct ties of Earth obs to specific SDGs (rather than oblique references) - and we made the point to include geospatial experts in the process to develop the indicators framework.

While it may be hard to ever see direct returns from a 75-minute event at the United Nations, it was a really well attended event - the 100+ people seemed to be a lot more than what the organizers expected (credit to Denmark for getting meeting flyers out to delegations the morning of the event - and providing a light lunch). There was real interest and great questions/discussion by the attendees.

….example, one was about how to ensure the info was being used to promote good resource management (opposed to ulterior motives) - gave us a chance to promote the value of open data so that the info was out there for all to use in tracking progress to the goals.

Another question was about the complexity of the data and whether countries have capabilities to analyze the data like we showed - this gave a chance to say that groups like GEO are interested in helping further build capabilities in using the data/info. Also gave a chance to say that some organizations (e.g. POs like RCMRD, ICIMOD, SERVIR, etc.) centrally provide some info products and tools, so that countries can use info without having to process data themselves.