

## **NL Statement at GEO-X Ministerial Summit**

The government of the Netherlands has endorsed the vision of GEO in 2005. Consequently, Dutch organizations have been, and still are, active in research activities in various GEO Societal Benefit Areas including capacity building. We are happy to take notice of the progress achieved, especially in the area of the policy for free and open data. We are also very pleased with the achievements of international collaboration that demonstrate the added value of GEO for society. GEO has been e.g. the incubator for new projects with Dutch contributions in the area of agriculture (GEOGLAM), climate (GFOI) and biodiversity (GEO BON).

Another issue I want to mention is the Netherlands government, together with ESA and principal investigator KNMI, is developing the TROPOMI instrument on the Sentinel-5 Precursor satellite for monitoring air pollution and climate gases on a global level. The instrument is expected to be launched end of 2015 and thus will ensure continuity in world-wide atmospheric and climate observations.

Food security and water safety are high on the Dutch political agenda. Bilateral activities with Dutch partner countries are ongoing or being planned, in which satellite observations play an important role in providing information for decision by national policy makers and/or other stakeholders. However, global food security does not start with governments, but with local small holder farmers producing food.

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economic Affairs have recognized the potential value of earth observations for agriculture and food security in combination with the rapidly increasing mobile phone penetration in developing countries. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has therefore initiated the 40 million euro program Geodata for Agriculture and Water which aim is to stimulate public-private partnerships to invest to reach 3 million farmers in 15 targeted Dutch partner countries with timely and better information in response to their needs. In summer 2014 a second call for proposals is expected.

With the Ministry of Economic Affairs the Netherlands Space Office will investigate if and how the Netherlands can further contribute to GEO, especially in the area of agriculture and food security.

Finally, the Netherlands' government has been supportive to GEO from its initiation and will do so in the coming decade. The Netherlands endorses the vision for GEO in 2025 and will support its further implementation by providing additional resources where possible.

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