

EARTH OBSERVATION SYMPOSIUM (B1)
International Cooperation in Earth Observation Missions (1)

Author: Ms. Tiffany Chow
Secure World Foundation, United States

Mr. Jacob Sutherlun
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), United States

CEOS WORKING GROUP ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND DATA DEMOCRACY:
OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

Abstract

This paper will examine the opportunities for intergovernmental and non-governmental organization (NGO) cooperation within the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) Working Group on Capacity Building and Data Democracy (WGCBD). It will outline the objectives of the working group, discuss the advantage of cooperative methods for achieving those objectives, provide potential implementation activities, and suggest ways the WGCBD experience can inform cooperation on other Earth Observation activities.

The CEOS WGCBD exists to improve the ability of end users, particularly in less developed regions of the world, to access Earth Observation (EO) data and utilize it for achieving sustainable development. The WGCBD was born out of the CEOS Data Democracy Initiative, which began in 2008 under the CEOS Chairmanship of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and continued under the subsequent chairmanships of Thailand's GEO-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA) in 2009 and Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE) in 2010.

In the spirit of CEOS, the WGCBD operates under the belief that intergovernmental and interagency coordination and cooperation is the best way forward for maximizing the usefulness and effectiveness to less developed nations of Earth Observation satellites and the data they produce. The use of this data can dramatically facilitate sustainable development. However, there is currently a lack of awareness of and access to this data in developing regions of the world. The WGCBD aims to target these underserved communities and build their capacity to access and utilize EO data to reach their development goals. Intergovernmental and interagency coordination, as well as cooperation with NGOs, will maximize the working group's ability to achieve that goal. Some potential implementation activities were determined at the working group's strategy planning meeting held in early 2012.