

Brazil 2007: Earth Observations for Coastal Management

Participants characterized the coastal zone as an important laboratory for GEOSS implementation, where many economic, social, and scientific interests intersect and real conflicts of interest arise. They discussed the economic importance of ecosystem health to fisheries and tourism, the linkage of sea-level rise to disasters, the need for multi-hazard warning systems, decreasing vulnerability to climate change through capacity building, and the need for increased access to data and products.

The session also provided an opportunity to discuss the special needs of the Caribbean, particularly small island states. These included the challenge of historical data gathering and in-country data archiving, as well as a specific need to rehabilitate the Caribbean sea-level network. The following initiatives and activities were highlighted:

- GEO Coastal Zone Community of Practice (building on IGOS-P Coastal Theme);
- Activities of GOOS and IO/Caribe, supported by UNESCO/IOC;
- The Large Marine Ecosystem Program;
- Caribbean Marine Atlas.



Panama 2008: Outcomes from the breakout group on Sea-level Rise and Coastal Inundation Risks

Outcomes and Recommendations:

- 1) Strongly view the concept of the Coastal Zone Community of Practice as a mechanism to advance discussion of issues and to provide a way forward for implementing coastal area GEOSS activities in the region
 - recommend that a regional '*Americas Coastal Zone Community of Practice*' (CoP) be established
 - ensure some regional participation in the GEO Coastal Zone Community of Practice, but the high-level of focus and effort be put into the CoP in order to meet *regional* needs and capacities
 - use as a forum to further identify data gaps and tools, encourage continuous updating with current data, promote public education and awareness, examine interoperability issues, establish partnerships and new collaborations,



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- 1) Encourage that an Americas Coastal Zone CoP regional Workshop be organized and held in 2009-2010 timeframe
 - hold at earliest possible opportunity as this Workshop is viewed as a catalyst for increasing regional interest in GEO/GEOSS, especially in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (will significantly help to bring in other members to GEO)
 - need to identify potential host country/organization, source(s) of funds, etc.



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- 1) Need to find ways to increase **awareness** of GEO/GEOSS and the regional importance of the *GEOSS in the Americas* initiative in order to achieve buy-in at the political level, especially in the Caribbean islands, and to bring in new GEO member states and regional organizations
 - recommend development of an **engagement strategy** to directly reach-out to appropriate levels including potential GEO champions and the 'best' government departments to be engaged (consider face-to-face tour)
 - provide concrete examples of successful on-the-ground GEOSS activities
 - encourage a regional **SAR Agricultural Monitoring Workshop**



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- 1) Promote the development of **pilot studies** that will lead to concrete actions and outputs
- 2) Encourage the registration of relevant regional data and tools in GEOSS for access by decision makers, especially those related to disasters
- 3) Establish linkages with other GEO Communities of Practice such as the Agricultural Monitoring CoP

Key Messages:

- end-users are critical part of the system (the GEOSS value chain)
- must turn information and data into salient outputs and tools (from information to decisions)
- interoperability, interoperability, **interoperability**

Thank You



GEOSS in the Americas



GROUP ON
EARTH OBSERVATIONS