



Our Ref.: 2009594/GEO/Water

GEO Principals

Geneva, 25 November 2009

Dear GEO Principal,

There is no need to restate the importance of water and coastal-zone management in Africa, in particular to face adaptation to climate change. Demonstrating that the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) under development is the appropriate tool for supporting this effort would be a proof-of-concept for GEO, the Group on Earth Observations.

To promote informed decision-making for efficient management of Africa's water resources, on behalf of the Member countries and Participating Organizations in GEO, we are pleased to invite you to attend the above-mentioned Pan-African Workshop scheduled for 15-17 February, 2010, hosted in Cotonou by the Government of Benin.

The workshop enlists the participation of marine, water, climate and environmental scientists and resource managers, from Africa and elsewhere. In order to respond to concerns surrounding modeling of coastal oceans, water resources and climate change in Africa while addressing socio-economic issues and fostering capacities for decision-making, the workshop will focus on identifying gaps in Earth observation systems capabilities as well as scientific and research infrastructures needs.

Additionally, the workshop will include a high level Governance Forum for top officials from government agencies, regional and international institutions. This Forum is conceived to be the premier venue for African leaders to consider frameworks for addressing critical water issues in Africa, as well as to assess the results and implications for the economies and populations of Africa subsequent to the Copenhagen Conference of Parties (COP 15) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).


The Workshop is a joint initiative of the Global Ocean Observing System in Africa (GOOS-AFRICA) sponsored by the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the International Hydrological Programme of UNESCO, the GEO Coastal Zone Community of Practice (CZCP) and the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE). The African regional institutions, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the African Large Marine Ecosystems Commissions and programmes are also key partners and sponsors of the Workshop.

Additional details and registration information may be obtained from the workshop website (<http://www.czcp.org/workshops/Cotonou/>) or by contacting the workshop Scientific Steering Committee (SC) co-chairs as attached in page 2.

Yours sincerely,


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