

## ***Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS)***

In recognition of the multidisciplinary nature of satellite Earth observation and the value of coordination across all proposed missions, the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) was created in 1984 to coordinate international civil spaceborne missions designed to observe and study planet Earth. Comprising 23 Members (most of which are space agencies) and 21 Associates (associated national and international organizations), CEOS is recognized as the major international forum for the coordination of Earth observation satellite programs and for interaction of these programs with users of satellite data worldwide.

The three primary objectives of CEOS are:

- to optimize benefits of spaceborne Earth observations through cooperation of its participants in mission planning and in development of compatible data products, formats, services, applications, and policies;
- to serve as a focal point for international coordination of space-related Earth observation activities; and
- to exchange policy and technical information to encourage complementarity and compatibility of observation and data exchange systems.<sup>1</sup>

The members meet in Plenary annually and discuss and coordinate activities that are undertaken throughout the year by the Secretariat and the 4 Working Groups. The Chair of the Plenary rotates each year with the National Remote Sensing Center of China (NRSCC) being the Chair for 2004. The permanent Secretariat is maintained by ESA, NASA/NOAA and JAXA together with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. The activities of the Secretariat are led by the active CEOS Chair with the past and forthcoming Chairs and the Chairs of the Working Groups included as well.



CEOS has 3 Working Groups<sup>2</sup>:

- The Working Group on Information Systems and Services (WGISS) aims to stimulate, coordinate, and monitor the development of the systems and services which manage and supply the data and information from participating agencies' missions;
- The Working Group on Calibration and Validation (WGCV) aims to ensure long-term confidence in the accuracy and quality of Earth observation data and products;
- The Working Group on Education, Training and Capacity Building (WGEdu) aims at facilitating activities that enhance international education and training in Earth Observation (EO) techniques, data analysis, interpretation and applications.

In July 2003 an Ad hoc Group on Earth Observations (GEO) was created to develop a 10-Year Implementation Plan for a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustained Earth observation system.

A Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) was created to define, characterize, and develop the vision for CEOS's participation in the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS), to define and coordinate the space component of IGOS, and to address, with the relevant IGOS Partners, the interface between the space component and the in situ component.

### **References:**

CEOS Website: <http://www.ceos.org>

ESA's CEOS Website <http://ceos.esrin.esa.it> (not quite up to date)

CNES' CEOS Website <http://ceos.cnes.fr:8100/cdrom/ceos1/abtceos/ceoscon.htm>

IGOS <http://www.igospartners.org>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ceos.org/pages/overview.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ceos.org/pages/subs.html#geo>