

Country Capacity Building in Forest Monitoring in the Developing World in GEOSS Framework

The note underlines the critical need for enhancing capacities and developing institutions in the developing countries for timely and reliable planning and implementation of activities included under GEOSS.

While most of industrialized countries have regular monitoring of forests based on statistically designed field inventories and remote sensing based mapping, the same is not true for the majority of developing countries. According to FAO 1990 and 2000 Forest Assessments, the situation looks like follows:

- Only 5% have forest monitoring based on field inventory and remote sensing based wall to wall mapping;
- About 25% have one time field inventory done during 1960-2000 based on externally supported projects; and
- About 75% have one time remote sensing based mapping.

In view of above, regular updating of GEOSS databases and intended action can not be accomplished in a cost and time effective manner.

Based on my personal experience of coordinating Global Forest Assessments at FAO, **I strongly recommend that GEOSS, together with FAO and donor Agencies including World Bank, develop a Forest Inventory Capacity / Institution Building Programme to enable effective participation of the developing countries in GEOSS activities. Without such an effort, GEOSS databases and intended outcome will be only marginally achieved.**