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GEO Principals

Geneva, 14 December 2009

Dear GEO Principal,

Around the globe geohazards are a major threat to society, disrupting infrastructure and destroying livelihoods. Gaining a comprehensive knowledge of these hazards is pivotal for risk assessment, hazard mitigation and adaptation. Demonstrating that the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) under development is the appropriate tool for supporting this effort would be another proof-of-concept for GEO, the Group on Earth Observations.

Communities of Practice support GEO by serving as a mechanism to link GEO to the users of products and services provided by GEOSS. In this context, we are pleased to extend to you an invitation to participate in a Workshop of the GEO Geohazards Community of Practice (GHCP), hosted by UNESCO at their headquarters in Paris, France, 18-21 January 2010, and supported under the auspices of their joint program with the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) on the Geological Applications of Remote Sensing (GARS).

The principal goal of the Workshop will be the development of a Roadmap for the GHCP that will lead to active support for GEOSS implementation in a wide range of geohazards-related issues. Planned sessions will focus on relationships between the geohazards community and each of the GEO Societal Benefit Areas (SBAs), the key geohazards tasks, initiatives such as Super Sites, and the overall organization of the GHCP. Finally, the Workshop will consider how to mobilize resources in order to achieve a sustainable GHCP. As such, the Workshop will be of interest to the entire GEO and geohazards community, as well as space agencies, geological surveys, end users such as civil protection agencies, the key observing systems (geodetic, seismic, magnetic) and the international networks for the major hazards addressed by the GHCP (earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, subsidence).

Participation of important players in the field of geohazards and Earth observations will be invaluable in achieving the goals of this Workshop, and we kindly ask that you nominate an expert to attend from your country or Participating Organization. Some limited funding to support participation is available from the UNESCO-IUGS GARS Program. For information on registration, the Workshop program, support for attendance and other logistic matters, please visit: http://www.geohazcop.org/workshops/Paris_2010/.

Yours sincerely,



José Achache
Secretariat Director