



Scientists from GeoBene supporting Summit aimed at creating Global Earth Observation System of Systems

Media Advisory

LAXENBURG, 28 November 2007 – A team of scientists from the Austria-based International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) is in Cape Town, South Africa, to participate in the GEO IV Ministerial Summit to advance an internationally agreed plan for building a Global Earth Observation System of Systems, or GEOSS.

If successful, GEOSS could benefit millions of people by providing help in fields ranging from disasters, health, energy, climate and weather, to water, ecosystems, agriculture and biodiversity.

Two IIASA scientists, Michael Obersteiner and Steffen Fritz, are attending the Summit under the auspices of one of the European Union's flagship projects for the GEOSS process, entitled GeoBene (Global Earth Observation – Benefit Estimation: Now, Next and Emerging). They are there to provide expert information emerging from GeoBene that demonstrates the enormous potential of the proposed GEOSS scheme.

The EU-funded GeoBene project consists of 12 international consortium members and aims at defining policy conclusions from the modeling exercises to support the implementation of this international agreement.

“Global earth observations may be instrumental in achieving sustainable development, but to date there have been no integrated assessments of their economic, social and environmental benefits”, said GeoBene coordinator Michael Obersteiner. “The objective of this EU-funded project, GeoBene, is to develop methodologies and analytical tools to assess the societal benefits of GEOSS.”

Officials from over 100 governments and international organizations will be meeting in Cape Town from 28 to 30 November. The GEO Ministerial Summit itself is on 30 November and will consider a progress report highlighting the first 100 Steps to GEOSS.

GEO Members include 72 governments and the European Commission, plus GEO's 46 participating organizations.

For media questions, please contact the GeoBene coordinator Michael Obersteiner (oberstei@iiasa.ac.at) or visit <http://www.geo-bene.eu> or <http://www.earthobservations.org>

