

Session #2 – | 31 May 2016 13:30-15:30  
 Erich-Klausener-Saal

**Essential Variables and Sustainable Development Goals**

Moderator | Giovanni Rum, GEO Secretariat

Rapporteur | Ian McCallum, IIASA

Format | Presentations & World Café

**Objectives**

The concept of Essential Variables (EV) has been used by a number of Earth observation (EO) communities to identify and prioritize observations that are key to the mission of the groups that are defining them. An example of an expert based approach of defining EVs is the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which developed a set of Essential Climate Variables (ECVs). Similarly, the ocean community is engaged in refining a set of Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs) for physical, biogeochemistry and biology/ecosystem observations. These are tied to the ECVs where appropriate. GEOBON is in the progress of identifying a set of Essential Biodiversity Variables (EBVs). On the other hand, in the 2030 Agenda, the UN has defined a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each of them associated with a number of targets. Indicators are used to measure progress towards these targets. In this goal based approach, many of the indicators combine socio-economic and environmental information and require information extracted from EVs. This session has the goal to link relevant European EO communities to the 2030 Agenda and to the GEO Initiative 18 “Earth Observations in Service of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” Applying the goal-based approach to the SDGs shows that (1) information about the built environment plays an important role in the current monitoring framework, which raises the question to what extent information about the built environment could be extracted from EOs, and (2) monitoring progress towards the SDG targets would benefit from a set of environmental indicators.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Talk</b>
13:30-13:45	Opening Remarks Giovanni Rum-GEO Secretariat
13:35-13:50	Information on Land Degradation: UNCCD and SDGs User needs Sara Minelli –UNCCD Secretariat:
13:50-14:05	The GEO Initiative Earth Observations in Service of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Marc Paganini, ESA
14:05-14:20	A Goal-Based Approach to Link the Sustainable Development Goals to Essential Variables Hans-Peter Plag, Tiwah U.G.:
14:25-15:20	Panel: Supporting Monitoring and Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals with Integrated Socio-Economic and Environmental Information.

15:20-15:30

Ian McCallum, IASA: Summary of key outcomes and recommendations of the panel discussion