

Barbara J. Ryan Re-appointed as GEO Secretariat Director



Barbara J. Ryan has been re-appointed, without competition, to a second three-year term as the secretariat director of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). Ryan's re-appointment was made by unanimous consent of the GEO Executive Committee. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, GEO is a voluntary partnership of governments and organisations that envisions a future wherein decisions and actions for the benefit of humankind are informed by co-ordinated, comprehensive and sustained Earth observations and information.

GEO membership includes 90 nations and the European Commission, and 77 participating organisations comprised of international bodies with a mandate in Earth observations. GEO's initial ten year mandate was extended for another decade by its

Ministerial body in January of this year.

GEO's primary focus is to create a Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) to address environmental and societal challenges facing decision leaders and individual citizens across nine essential areas: agriculture, biodiversity, climate, disasters, ecosystems, energy, health, water and weather.

Prior to joining GEO in 2012, Ryan served as director of the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) Space Programme, and – in 2007 – as chair of the international Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), which coordinates information from more than 100 civilian satellites. Prior to that, she served as the associate director for geography of the United States Geological Survey with responsibility for the Landsat programme, and the agency's other remote sensing, geography and civilian mapping functions.

Ryan earned a BA in geology from the State University of New York Cortland, and masters degrees in geography from the University of Denver and in civil engineering from Stanford University. She was recently awarded an honorary doctorate of science from SUNY Cortland.