



THE AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF REMOTE SENSING OF THE ENVIRONMENT (AARSE)

UNESCO WORKSHOP ON “AFRICA STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES MOBILISATION TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL OCEAN OBSERVING AND FORECASTING SYSTEMS FOR AFRICA (ROOFS-AFRICA)”

Copanong Hotel and Conference Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa

27 to 30 October, 2003

Dr. Tsehaie Woldai (AARSE Secretary General)

Dr. Jide Kufoniyi (AARSE Vice-President for West Africa)

The GOOS-AFRICA Workshop on Stakeholders and Resources Mobilization towards Implementation of the Regional Ocean Observing and Forecasting Systems for Africa, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 27 to 30 October 2003, was organized in partnership with the Secretariat of the Steering Committee of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the South African Weather Service, the Satellite Applications Centre and the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of the Republic of South Africa as the host country.

Around 60-90 participants attended the conference coming from Africa, Europe, South and North America. AARSE was presented via its Secretary General Dr. Tsehaie Woldai and the Councillor for West Africa Dr. Jide Kufoniyi. The main aim of the three days workshop was to develop the strategy for mainstreaming the ROOFS-AFRICA project into the NEPAD development programme initiative.

In response to the call of both the NEPAD Secretariat and the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of Republic of South Africa as host of the WSSD, the African Partnership Conference and this Workshop, the workshop resolved that in order to achieve the above objectives and to ensure efficient assimilation of resources and capacity building, through a phased and prioritized approach, GOOS-AFRICA shall:

1. Create and coordinate an African Network of national and regional ocean observing, monitoring and forecasting systems;
1. Build a structure which supports integration, that is sustainable, and remains adaptive and beneficial to the continent;
2. Implement African national and regional contributions to climate observations in the global ocean in collaboration with on-going climate-related programmes in Africa (e.g. GCOS-AFRICA);
3. Coordinate and reinforce existing data management systems;
4. Coordinate and reinforce existing education and outreach efforts with a view to increasing knowledge and availability of ocean products and services based on user needs;
5. Plan programmes to establish new capabilities in forecasting and modeling systems, as well as expand and coordinate observing systems that meet Africa's user-requirements;
6. Continue, expand, and enhance existing observing and modeling systems; and
7. Undertake a continuous impact assessment.

Critical requirements for the success of the above outlined activities were noted as: Capacity building, Space Application and Networking. The participants emphasized the need for an efficient, effective and widespread use of earth observation technologies in oceanic and coastal management. For the development of needed indigenous personnel the UN-Sponsored Regional centres for Space Science and Technology in Morocco and Nigeria; the UNECA-sponsored Regional Remote Sensing Centres in Kenya (RCMRD) and Nigeria (RECTAS), and at recognised universities with cognate space science and technology programmes, measurements and observations of the key ocean and marine coastal indicators and parameters and,

oceans services and products as decision-making tools were highlighted. UNESCO was asked to involve these organizations including Institution such as the ITC (for coastal zone management and remote sensing/GIS education through the BILKO programme). The AARSE Secretary General also called for the GOOS-AFRICA Programme to establish a 'Trust Fund' to support research initiatives by African scientists in order to contribute to the achievements of the objectives of the Programme, including the publication of the results of such scientific research efforts (e.g. FIRME - The enabling fund for meteorological research and applications of ACMAD), which was adopted in the final resolution.

To assist NEPAD to make the best use of existing successful space programmes, the Workshop agreed to establish an Africa Space Task Team (ASTT) which shall include senior representatives of Governmental and Non Governmental space related entities in Africa as well as independent African space experts (e.g. AARSE). The mission of the ASTT will include identification of those aspects of space applications that are relevant to the accomplishment of the core tasks of the NEPAD.

In this connection, the Workshop requested UNESCO and its IOC to provide appropriate resources and support of the operation of this task team including its participation in and contribution to the deliberations of both Preparatory Meeting (Algiers, 15-16 November 2003) and the African Donors Conference on Capacity Building for the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD (Algiers, 15-17 December, 2003).

The workshop provided an excellent opportunity for networking with various UN Organizations including, the USGS, and European organizations including potential clients from a number of countries in Africa.

Wolda as Secretary General of AARSE was invited to deliver a power- point presentation on: "Contribution of the African Association of Remote Sensing for Environment (AARSE) to the Remote Sensing and Satellites Applications for Sustainable Development in Africa: "Case for Ocean Applications. He also on behalf of AARSE President delivered a review of the Draft Position Paper of the AARSE Task Force for Remote Sensing to Support NEPAD Strategy for Development of Satellite Applications and Remote Sensing in Africa. Dr Kufoniyi on his part chaired the technical sessions on 29th and 30th October. Both served on Working Group 2 (Remote Sensing Applications) and on the Resolution Committee of the Workshop.