

Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

DIVERSITAS is the international global scientific programme dedicated to biodiversity science.

DIVERSITAS is placed under the auspices of ICSU, the International Council for Science and UNESCO, and headquartered in Paris at the French Museum of Natural History.

The mission of DIVERSITAS is to engage scientists in international scientific programmes that produce new knowledge to inform decision making on biodiversity.

Together with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, of the USA, DIVERSITAS has been mandated by GEO to lead the planning phase of the elaboration of a global biodiversity observing system.

Biodiversity is one of the 9 Societal Benefit Areas of GEOSS. Building such a global system to monitor biodiversity represents a formidable challenge for our community because it has never been attempted before, is extremely complex, and has to build on the efforts of many partners around the world.

DIVERSITAS and the thousand of scientists it represents worldwide believe that such a system needs to be based on a robust and visionary scientific framework.

DIVERSITAS, its partner NASA, and the many scientific programmes and organisations around the world such as GBIF, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, the BIOTA-Africa programmes, displayed here at the GEOSS exhibition, or UNEP-WCMC (UNEP World Conservation and Monitoring Centre) stand ready to address this challenge.

We call upon nations members of GEO to recognise and support our efforts to design and soon implement the global biodiversity observation system that the world needs to meet its many commitments towards the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for the benefits of humanity.

Thank you for your attention.