



Barbara Ryan

Secretariat Director of the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

Keynote Speech title:

"Building a Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)"

Barbara J. Ryan is Secretariat Director of the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) located in Geneva, Switzerland. In this capacity, she leads the Secretariat in coordinating the activities of nearly 90 Member States and 77 Participating Organizations who are striving to integrate Earth observations so that informed decisions can be made across nine Societal Benefit Areas including agriculture, biodiversity, climate, ecosystems, energy, disasters, health, water and weather.

Before assuming this position in July 2012, she was the Director of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Space Programme. She had responsibility for the space-based component of the WMO Global Observing System (GOS), coordinated space-based assets to meet the needs of WMO Members in the topical areas of weather, water, climate and related natural disasters, and also served as the technical focal point for WMO's activities with GEO.

Before joining WMO in October 2008, she was the Associate Director for Geography at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Reston, Virginia where she had responsibility for the Landsat, remote sensing, geography and civilian mapping programs of the agency. It was under her leadership that implementation of the Landsat data policy was reformed to release all data over the internet at no additional cost to the user - an action that has resulted in the release of more than 12 million Landsat scenes to date.

As the 2007 Chair of the international Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) she led the spaceagency response to the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) satellite requirements for sustained measurement of the GCOS Essential Climate Variables (ECVs). She holds a Bachelor's degree in Geology from the State University of New York at Cortland, a Master's degree in Geography from the University of Denver, and a Master's degree in Civil Engineering from Stanford University.