

Agenda Item 6 – “Remote Sensing”

Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

Remote sensing using satellites has been a useful and essential tool for improving our daily lives and tackling global issues. I am pleased to present Japan’s recent activities with respect to remote sensing technologies.

Madam Chair,

To begin, I would like to highlight Japan’s remote sensing activities to monitor climate change. In 2009, Japan launched the Greenhouse Gases Observing Satellite (GOSAT), the first satellite of the GOSAT series, and in 2017 its successor satellite GOSAT-2 was launched. These satellite missions are a joint project by the Ministry of the Environment, JAXA, and the National Institute for Environmental Studies to observe the global concentration of greenhouse gases.

Last month, Japan organized the 13th Asia-Oceania Group on Earth Observations (AOGEO) Symposium. The symposium convened representatives from governments and researchers from 20 different countries. Participants exchanged views and shared their progress on utilizing earth observation data for addressing global challenges, focusing on topics such as the SDGs, capacity building and the Pacific islands. The symposium ended with the adoption of the AOGEO statement, which reaffirms the importance of utilizing earth observation data and recognizes the significance of science and technology in response to current global agendas. A dedicated session on SDG featuring speakers from statistical community highlighted the usefulness of earth observation data to be integrated with and to complement traditional data systems, and emphasized the need to share best practices to maximize the use of earth observation data for compiling SDG indicators.

Madam Chair,

I would also like to highlight how remote sensing data is being effectively utilized to observe changes in the environment and human society in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Last year JAXA published the “Earth Observing Dashboard” together with ESA and NASA, a website which integrates indicators derived from earth observation data of the three organizations to visualize the impacts of COVID-19 and track changes in air and water quality, greenhouse gases, economic activity, and agriculture. To date, the dashboard has generated

a wide range of data such as the temporary reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions stemming from large cities and other human activities, which indicates the effect of lockdowns and other social distancing measures implemented in response to COVID-19.

Madam Chair,

Japan believes that remote sensing technologies can continue making positive contributions to our lives and will continue to further develop these technologies.

Thank you for your attention.