



TA1.16 Session Summary

Innovative Ways for Increasing Timeliness and Coverage of SDG Indicators

OVERVIEW. On April 25th, 2023 during the United Nations World Data Forum, the International Research Center of Big Data for Sustainable Development Goals (CBAS) convened a parallel session under the theme “Innovative Ways for Increasing Timeliness and Coverage of SDG Indicators (TA1.16).” The session was joined by the United Nations Trade and Development Conference (UNCTAD), the Environmental System Research Institute (Esri), the PVBLIC Foundation, and the CAST-UN Consultative Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (CCDRR), as co-organizers. The session welcomed 70+ in-person attendees and 350+ viewers joining the online live streaming.

PROCEEDINGS. The session began with opening remarks made by Prof. Huadong Guo, CAS Academician and Director of CBAS and Ms. Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director. In his remarks, Prof. Guo stressed the value of accurate, diversified, and equitable data to serve cross-disciplinary communities through innovative digital technologies like Big Earth Data and partnership mechanisms, which CBAS strives to build and facilitate. Ms. Gevorgyan pointed out the complex dynamical interaction between the various SDGs and the challenges they pose in the post-covid world. She called for better utilization of Science & Technology and for strengthening the efforts of outreach for the SDGs to nurture the culture of trust and to build social capital with cross-sectorial stakeholders at all levels.

Following the introductory remarks was a panel discussion moderated by Prof. Qunli Han of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR). Experts sitting at the panel were Mr. Charles Brigham of Esri; Mr. Daniel Hopp of UNCTAD; Prof. Gretchen Kalonji of the Institute of Disaster Management and Reconstruction at Sichuan University; Mr. John Kedar of the SDG Data Alliance; and Prof. Jianhui Li of CBAS and CODATA. The panelists engaged in open discussion following two guiding themes: (1) nurturing partnerships that leave no one behind and (2) addressing data gaps with innovative solutions, both of which received enthusiastic responses from the audiences.

SESSION OUTPUTS. Through open and candid discussion, the session’s panelists jointly raised the following key messages for the Forum’s HLG-PCCB, Programme Committee, and Secretariat to consider:

- **We need** to incentivize collaboration through policies and practices that promote cooperation and shared benefits with target-oriented and localized mechanisms preferably at national level.
- **We need** to view the SDGs as an inter-linked framework and to adopt a holistic approach that involves all sectors of society to address the complex and cross-disciplinary challenges.
- **We need** to break down traditional silos and fully leverage science and technology to create a culture of open science and knowledge-sharing, and to develop innovative technologies that are accessible and affordable to all.
- **We need** to invest in capacity development, particularly in developing countries, and to integrate our efforts with transformations in higher education, focusing on innovative models of integrating research, education, and international collaboration, as well as enhanced collaborative academic and professional training, technology transfer, and institutional strengthening.
- **Pay attention** to data quality, availability, and relevance for decision-making and invest in data collection and management systems.
- **Pay attention** to the key role country plays in the SDG’s monitor and progress as it gives ownership to those most keen to make a difference locally, noting examples from SDG Data Alliance, GEO, CBAS, and other initiatives.