

Artimino Declaration

The GLCN initiative has been launched at the conference "Strategies for Global Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring" held in Artimino, Florence May 6-8, 2002. Following is the declaration signed by all participants.

We, the experts, participating in the International Expert Consultation on Strategies for Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring, being jointly organized by FAO and UNEP in cooperation with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Istituto Agronomico per l'Oltremare, and the support of the Regione Toscana, from 6 to 8 May 2002, at Artimino, Florence, Italy,

Realising that the Earth eco-systems are increasingly experiencing anthropogenic pressures and that environmental degradation, poverty and food insecurity are strongly inter-linked and continue to be the major factors threatening sustainable development in the new millennium;

Recognizing that baseline natural resource and environmental information, including in particular land cover and land cover change information is key for addressing issues relating to poverty, food insecurity and environmental degradation and for developing operational solutions to sustainable development, and that consistent critical information components are lacking at the local, national, and global levels;

Recognizing also that a number of initiatives on land cover mapping and monitoring are already in existence, but no single initiative at national, regional or international levels can effectively address the issues alone, and believing that an added value will be generated through synergy and harmonization of various initiatives among interested stakeholders;

Hereby fully support the establishment of a **Global Land Cover Network** in response to user needs and operational applications focusing on national perspectives and globally distributed responsibilities, with the objective of enabling the provision of information on land cover and its dynamics for better decision-making at all levels in support of sustainable development, through networking and harmonizing technical approaches at global, regional, national and local levels;

Invite FAO and UNEP to take the lead, in partnership with other UN agencies and international organizations and programmes, to provide technical and operational support for the development and the maintenance of the Network;

Call for building a coalition among governmental/inter-governmental agencies, academic institutions, the private sector and other interested stakeholders in the processes of

institutional networking, strengthening national capacity, harmonizing land cover classification and mapping, and developing global land cover databases;

Request the donor community to financially support the development and successful operation of the *Global Land Cover Network*;

Call further for all stakeholders concerned to integrate the recommendations of this Expert Consultation into their policy considerations and action plans.