



SICA
Sistema de la Integración
Centroamericana

**JOINT STATEMENT
BETWEEN THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND
THE SISTEMA DE LA INTEGRACIÓN CENTROAMERICANA
FOR ACTIVITIES IN APPLIED SCIENCE RESEARCH AND EARTH
OBSERVATIONS FOR SOCIETAL BENEFIT**

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA, *Central American Integration System*) share a desire to make Earth observations and remote sensing data and products more readily available in SICA Member Countries to help inform decision making. To accomplish this, NASA and SICA will work with regional and local stakeholders in SICA Member Countries, including countries in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, in using Earth observing satellite information and geospatial technologies to better manage and protect natural resources, and to mitigate environmental and disaster risks. This includes focusing on issues such as forest cover and protected areas; water resources and hydrometeorology; agriculture and food security; flooding, especially in marine coastal areas; changes in land cover such as landslides and volcanic eruptions; disaster risk reduction and resilience; biodiversity and ecosystems; and health.

Earth observations and geospatial technologies can also be used to monitor progress on indicators of certain United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, including those related to hunger, health, water and sanitation, sustainable cities and communities, climate action, life below water, and life on land.

NASA's Earth Science Division seeks to understand the Earth as an integrated system through the use of remote sensing satellites, airborne science missions, and ground-based research to help address some of the critical challenges facing our planet. This important work informs our understanding of past, present, and future trends that may affect both our planet and its civilizations.

In NASA's Earth Science Division, the Applied Sciences Program brings together technology, science, and unique global Earth observations to provide important scientific information and data products to the general public and interested governmental and nongovernmental entities. The program also funds projects that enable innovative uses of NASA Earth science data to develop solutions and inform decision-making. Specifically, the Applied Sciences Program works in the areas of disaster response and risk reduction, ecological forecasting, public health and air quality, agriculture, and water resources. The program includes a Capacity Building element that engages with the remote sensing community, offering training opportunities that inform and build capacity

among data users and decision makers on the value, relevance, and utilization of Earth observation data and data products for societal benefit and environmental management. NASA Earth observation data are free and publicly available.

SICA is an economic and political organization of Central American states – consisting of the governments of Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama – that seeks to integrate and establish the region as one of peace, liberty, democracy, and socio-economic development. SICA was established under the Tegucigalpa Protocol of 1991 and formally entered into operation on February 1, 1993.

The UN formally recognized SICA as Observer of the UN System in UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution A/RES/48/161 on December 10, 1993. The SICA General Secretariat is in San Salvador, El Salvador. One of the fundamental objectives of SICA is to identify, establish, and maintain coordination and concrete action for the preservation of the environment through responsible stewardship in harmony with nature and sustainable development. The SICA Regional Strategic Agenda is in harmony and consistent with the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals identified in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In addition to its General Secretariat in San Salvador, the SICA institutional framework has several secretariats, including Executive Secretariat of the Central American Commission on the Environment and Development (SE-CCAD); Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (SE-CAC); Executive Secretariat of the Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (SE-CEPREDENAC); Executive Secretariat of the Council of Health Ministers of Central America (SE-COMISCA); and Executive Secretariat of the Regional Committee of Water Resources (SE-CRRH). These SICA Secretariats align with programmatic elements of NASA Earth Science, in particular, Applied Sciences.

NASA and SICA will look for opportunities to:

- Identify relevant NASA data and Earth observation products appropriate for decision-making platforms and processes for use by SICA and SICA stakeholders;

- Identify SICA stakeholders and users who could benefit from incorporating appropriate and relevant Earth observation data and data products into decision-making processes;

- Coordinate the involvement of scientists from SICA Member Countries in research and applications using NASA Earth observation data and data products;

- Explore opportunities for exchanges of personnel for research, analysis, applications, and capacity building activities, to be formalized in separate agreements as necessary;

Explore opportunities for data calibration and validation campaigns in SICA Member Countries, to be formalized in separate agreements as necessary;

Establish selection criteria for priority study areas (including watersheds, disease risk hotspots, and areas of intensive disaster risk, exposure and vulnerability), and identify appropriate study sites;

Identify the needs and key sectors for assessing the vulnerability of SICA Member Countries to climate variability, vulnerability and exposure, biodiversity loss, and other natural and environmental hazards;

Promote open data policies in SICA Member Countries; and

Promote active participation by SICA Member Countries in the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), especially in GEO initiatives including, but not limited to:

- AmeriGEO Regional Initiative;
- Earth Observations for Health (EO4HEALTH);
- GEO Global Agriculture Monitoring Initiative (GEOGLAM);
- GEO Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON);
- GEO Global Water Sustainability (GEOGLOWS);
- Earth Observations for the Sustainable Development Goals (EO4SDG);
- Earth Observations for Ecosystem Accounting (EO4EA);
- Geo Vision for Energy (GEO-VENER);
- Data Access for Risk Management (GEO-DARMA);
- Global Wildfire Information System (GWIS); and
- Global Flood Risk Monitoring (GFRM).

In addition, SICA plans to develop, maintain, and operate an integrated web site, as part of the SICA Environmental Data and Information System that provides access to data and information projects resulting from these activities.

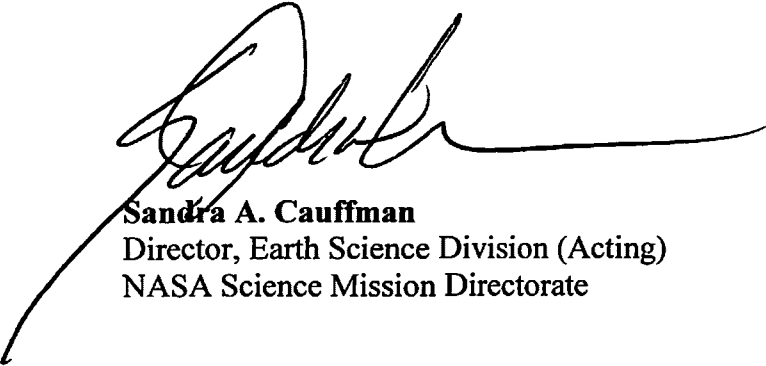
NASA and SICA will have access to and use of all scientific data in support of these activities.

Notwithstanding any provision in this Joint Statement, permission to use “National Aeronautics and Space Administration” and “NASA” (NASA name) or the NASA insignia must be obtained by the NASA Associate Administrator for the Office of Communications or designees, before any proposed use of the NASA name or insignia can occur.


Done at the Corobici Hotel in San José, Republic of Costa Rica, in two originals, in the English and Spanish language, both texts being equally authentic, this 20th day of March, 2019.

FOR THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS
AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

FOR SISTEMA DE LA INTEGRACIÓN
CENTROAMERICANA



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