



GROUP ON
EARTH OBSERVATIONS

Rules of Procedure

Updated on 18 November 2009

Rules of Procedure

1 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 ***GEO***: The intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations, established by the Resolution of the Third Earth Observation Summit in February of 2005, consisting of a Plenary, an Executive Committee, a Secretariat, and committees and working groups as appropriate.
- 1.2 ***GEOSS***: The Global Earth Observation System of Systems.
- 1.3 ***Implementation Plan***: The GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan endorsed by the Third Earth Observation Summit in February of 2005.
- 1.4 ***Plenary***: The GEO Plenary, the main body of GEO Principals representing GEO Members and Participating Organizations.
- 1.5 ***Principal***: The designated representative of a GEO Member or Participating Organization.
- 1.6 ***Principal Alternate***: The alternate representative of a GEO Member or Participating Organization.
- 1.7 ***Executive Committee***: The GEO Executive Committee.
- 1.8 ***Secretariat***: The GEO Secretariat.
- 1.9 ***Director***: The Director of the GEO Secretariat
- 1.10 ***Committee***: A committee of the Plenary, consisting of representatives of GEO Members and Participating Organizations.
- 1.11 ***Working Group***: An ad hoc working group of the Plenary convened to address a specific topic for limited-time duration, consisting of representatives of GEO Members and Participating Organizations.

2 PLENARY

- 2.1 **Membership and Participation:** Membership in GEO is open to all member States of the United Nations and to the European Commission. GEO welcomes, as Participating Organizations, intergovernmental, international, and regional organizations with a mandate in Earth observation or related activities, subject to approval by GEO Members. GEO may invite other relevant entities to participate in its activities as observers. Membership and Participation is contingent upon formal endorsement of the Implementation Plan.
- 2.2 **Decisions:** Plenary decisions will be made by consensus of GEO Members present.
- 2.3 **GEO Co-Chairs:** Four GEO Members will co-chair meetings of the Plenary and the Executive Committee. The composition of and method of selection for the Co-Chairs is provided in Rules 3.3 and 3.4. Between Executive Committee meetings, the Co-Chairs will act on behalf of the Executive Committee to provide guidance to the Secretariat and will report to the Executive Committee on actions taken.
- 2.4 **Meetings:** The GEO Plenary will meet at least once annually to adopt (as a minimum) the Annual Work Plan and associated budget for the following year and to receive reports from the Executive Committee, Secretariat, committees, and working groups.
- 2.5 **Principal and Principal Alternate Designation:** All GEO Members and GEO Participating organizations should designate one GEO Principal and not more than two GEO Principal Alternates to serve as the representatives of that Member or Participating Organization in the Plenary, and to receive and submit all official communication to and from the Secretariat. When a GEO Member serves as a GEO Co-Chair, the designated GEO Co-Chair will serve as the GEO Principal for that GEO Member. These designations, including complete contact information, should be submitted in writing to the GEO Secretariat using the form provided by the Secretariat.
- 2.6 **Official Delegations:** The GEO Secretariat will issue a call for official delegation lists no later than 6 weeks prior to any Plenary meeting. The GEO Principal, the GEO Alternate, or their designated representative on file with the Secretariat should submit an official delegation list to the GEO Secretariat no later than 2 weeks prior to any Plenary meeting. Submission may also be forwarded by means of a Note Verbale to the Secretariat by the Member's Permanent Mission in Geneva. All official delegates should register with the GEO Secretariat no later than 1 week before any Plenary meeting. A roster of registered official delegates will be made available to delegates arriving for the Plenary meeting. On-site registrants will be excluded from this official list but included in the final record of the meeting.
- 2.7 **Documents:** All new documents for final decision by Plenary will be numbered and released by the Secretariat to all Principals for comment in sufficient time to allow for a full review period in advance of the Plenary meeting at which the document will be formally considered. Documents originating outside the Secretariat should be provided to the Secretariat at least seven weeks prior

to the Plenary meeting at which the document will be formally considered. No documents may be considered unless numbered and circulated by the Secretariat. Working papers may be circulated for informational purposes as necessary. Documents not meeting the above criteria may be considered for decision by the Plenary if the Plenary so decides.

- 2.8 **Reports:** The Secretariat will produce a draft summary of Plenary proceedings including decisions, actions, and timelines for completing actions and disseminate it to GEO Principals no later than four working weeks following each Plenary meeting. Based on the comments and corrections received, the Secretariat will prepare a draft report for distribution to the entire GEO community no later than six working weeks following each Plenary meeting.

3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 3.1 **Function:** The role of the Executive Committee is to facilitate the decisions of the GEO Plenary and to oversee and to make recommendations on the implementation of those decisions. The Plenary remains the GEO's primary decision-making body.

- 3.2 **Duties:** Acting by consensus, the Executive Committee will:

- a. Ensure the efficient conduct of GEO business between meetings of the plenary;
- b. Supervise the work of the Director of the Secretariat and ensure that it is consistent with the direction received from Plenary;
- c. Examine the draft Annual Work Plan and budget in preparation for its presentation to Plenary;
- d. Report in writing at least annually to GEO;
- e. Fix the date and location of the next Plenary for approval by each Plenary before the end of meeting, and, through the Director, convene the meeting, produce the necessary documents and ensure the production of a timely meeting report;
- f. Maintain detailed Rules of Procedure for GEO, to be reviewed regularly;
- g. Provide recommendations to GEO regarding the need for and effectiveness of the committees and working groups, and recommend continuation or adjustments as needed;
- h. Undertake such other tasks as may be delegated to the Executive Committee by the Plenary.

- 3.3 **Composition:** The Executive Committee will consist of 13 GEO Members based on the following geographic distribution: Africa (2), Americas (3), Asia and Oceania (4), CIS (1), and Europe (3). Four Executive Committee Members will serve collectively as Co-Chairs of the Plenary and the Executive Committee, with two Co-Chairs representing developed countries and two Co-Chairs representing developing countries. One Co-Chair will serve as lead to guide the discussion for each meeting. The lead Co-Chair will rotate among the Co-Chairs as agreed by the Co-Chairs. Individuals serving on the Executive Committee do not serve in their individual capacity but as Member representatives.

- 3.4 **Selection:** Executive Committee Members, including those Members serving as Co-Chairs, will be nominated through regional caucuses. Based on the conclusions of the regional caucuses and

further consultations as necessary, the Director of the Secretariat will present a slate of nominees, including those nominated to serve as Co-Chairs, to the Plenary for its approval. Upon approval, Executive Committee members will serve a term of up to two years. The process will be guided by the following principles: (1) preserving sufficient continuity in the Executive Committee's membership; (2) ensuring sufficient opportunity for participation of GEO Members in the Executive Committee by rotation; (3) preserving the balance of developed and developing countries at the level of the Co-chairs. If a Member chooses not to complete its term of service, then the regional caucus may select another Member to represent it in the Executive Committee to complete the remaining term of service.

- 3.5 **Decisions:** Executive Committee decisions will be made by consensus of the GEO Members present. The Executive Committee will not take any decision involving a commitment beyond that which has been approved by the GEO in Plenary, unless the activity is fully in accord with the approved Annual Work Plan and the additional costs are guaranteed by a Member or Participating Organization.
- 3.6 **Meetings:** The GEO Executive Committee will meet at least once annually and may hold additional meetings as agreed by the Executive Committee. The Committee will work mainly by electronic mail and telephone conference.
- 3.7 **Documents:** The GEO Secretariat will prepare all documents for the Executive Committee's consideration and will release them to all GEO Members and Participating Organizations for information at least 15 calendar days prior to any Executive Committee meeting. The GEO Co-Chairs will approve draft Executive Committee agendas.
- 3.8 **Reports:** The Secretariat will release a preliminary report of Executive Committee proceedings to the Members of the Executive Committee within two weeks and to the full GEO community no later than six weeks following the Executive Committee meeting.

4 GEO SECRETARIAT

- 4.1 **Function:** The Secretariat, led by the Director, will facilitate and support GEO activities. The Secretariat will consist of co-located, well-qualified, professional and administrative staff.
- 4.2 **Duties:** The Secretariat will:
- a. Prepare and submit, for Plenary approval, the Annual Work Plan - including activities and budgets;
 - b. Support the implementation by Members and Participating Organizations of the Annual Work Plan and execute expenditure of the budget;
 - c. Provide annual reports on the performance of GEOSS including milestones of the Annual Work Plan;

- d. Provide annual reports on Secretariat operations, including execution of annual budget expenditures;
- e. Organize, prepare, and support meetings and other work of the GEO Plenary, Executive Committee, and other GEO committees and working groups;
- f. Pursue activities to identify and secure funds for Secretariat operations and GEO activities in accordance with the direction of GEO;
- g. Oversee the implementation of the GEO communication strategy as outlined in the Annual Work Plan;
- h. Organize the GEOSS user and other fora as required in coordination with GEO committees as appropriate;
- i. Facilitate overall cooperation and liaise with GEO Members and Participating Organizations, and other programmes and bodies as appropriate or as needed to support the work of GEO, with particular emphasis on existing systems and Earth observation coordination mechanisms;
- j. Identify staffing and other resources necessary to support the Annual Work Plan, develop indicators for Secretariat performance, and report to Plenary on Secretariat performance against indicators;
- k. Ensure an open and transparent process is utilized for all employment to the Secretariat, including short-term contractors, and for the designation of experts to the various GEO committees and working groups;
- l. Facilitate and coordinate the updating of the 10-Year Implementation Plan as directed by the Plenary;
- m. Conduct the day-to-day administrative activities of the Secretariat;
- n. Carry out additional duties as required by the GEO.

5 GEO COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

- 5.1 ***Purpose and Function:*** The GEO Plenary may establish committees and working groups to address aspects of GEOSS implementation and provide a mechanism for GEO Members and Participating Organizations to engage fully in the work of GEO. The committees and working groups will provide high-level review advice, recommendations, and support in the ongoing development and implementation of the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan. The committees or working groups will also actively promote the implementation of GEOSS activities as described in Annual Work Plans.
- 5.2 ***Duration and Terms of Reference:*** The Plenary may establish and develop terms of reference for committees and/or working groups. The maximum duration for Working Groups will be 3 years, with the possibility of extension by the Plenary. All committees and working groups are listed in Annex B, which will be updated as appropriate, and their terms of reference are appended to these Rules of Procedure.
- 5.3 ***Membership:*** All GEO Members and Participating Organizations are welcome to participate in any committee or working group through their GEO Principals or their designated representatives. Each committee or working group will include a member of the Executive Committee to serve as a

link between that committee or working group and the Executive Committee. Additional technical experts may participate in committee or working group deliberations at the invitation of a GEO Member or Participating Organization.

- 5.4 **Leadership:** All GEO Members and Participating Organizations are welcome to volunteer to serve as the designated leadership chairs of any committee or working group. Committee and working group chairs will be nominated and approved by the GEO Plenary.
- 5.5 **Meetings:** Committees and working groups will meet at such times and places as determined by their Members, and will work mainly through e-mail and teleconferences. Committees and working groups will work by consensus of their Members.
- 5.6 **Reporting:** Committees and working groups will post a report on the GEO website of each meeting held, including a list of all participants and highlighting outcomes. In addition, Committee and working group chairs will report to the GEO Plenary and will deliver progress reports to the GEO Executive Committee as necessary.
- 5.7 **Funding:** Unless otherwise agreed, any costs arising from committee or working group activities will be borne by the Member or Participating Organization that incurs them, and will be subject to the availability of funds, personnel, and other resources.
- 5.8 **Review and Renewal:** The effectiveness and need for the committees and working groups will be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee, which will make recommendations to the Plenary concerning committee or working group renewal.
- 5.9 **Support and Coordination:** The Secretariat will provide full administrative support to all GEO committees and working groups. The activities of the committees and working groups will be closely coordinated with the Secretariat to maintain consistency with the approved GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan and to maximize the effectiveness of the GEO in pursuit of a GEOSS. All GEO committees or working groups will liaise with the Executive Committee and the GEO Secretariat.

6 GEO TRUST FUND AND FINANCES

- 6.1 **Trust Fund Establishment:** The ad hoc Group on Earth Observations at its sixth session (Brussels, Belgium 14-15 February 2005) decided to enter into a Standing Arrangement between GEO and WMO, which arranges for the GEO Secretariat to be located at WMO. In order to provide for a mechanism for GEO to support the GEO Secretariat and other GEO activities as approved by the GEO Plenary, GEO also agreed to undertake steps to create a GEO-WMO Trust Fund to support the work of GEO. (See GEO-WMO Trust Fund Terms of Reference, Annex A).

- 6.2 ***Finances:*** The Annual Work Plan and associated budget produced by the Secretariat will detail all operating expenses for the coming year, and will contain provisions for monitoring and execution of the budget throughout the year. Indicative budgets shall also be provided for a further two years. The Secretariat will report quarterly to the Executive Committee on the progress of budget execution, including income and expenditures. Priorities for the expenditure of GEO funds will include:
- a. Approved Secretariat staff salaries and benefits
 - b. Annual Work Plan development activities
 - c. Annual Work Plan implementation activities
 - d. Secretariat operating costs
 - e. Meeting support costs
 - f. Other approved costs
- 6.3 ***Solvency and Audit:*** The Secretariat shall maintain solvency at all times. No expenditure may be authorized in the absence of available funds. Notwithstanding the principle of a single external auditor of WMO, GEO may engage independent financial reviews of the GEO budget against expenditures.
- 6.4 ***Revenue Continuity:*** GEO Members and Participating Organizations will endeavor to provide assured multi-year revenue for the Secretariat to maintain approved staff levels and continuity of Secretariat operations, subject to the budget systems and cycles of GEO Members and Participating Organizations. Additional contributions may be earmarked for specific purposes and special projects.
- 6.5 ***Surplus Funds:*** Surplus funds remaining in the GEO Trust Fund at the end of the calendar year will immediately be made available for the following year unless otherwise restricted by the donor. In the event the GEO Trust Fund is dissolved, any remaining funds will be dispersed under the terms of the GEO Trust Fund Terms of Reference.

7 EFFECTIVE DATE AND AMENDMENT

- 7.1 ***Effective Date:*** These Rules of Procedure will take effect immediately upon adoption.
- 7.2 ***Amendment:*** These Rules of Procedure may be amended by the Plenary at any meeting. Proposals to amend these rules of procedure should be submitted to the Secretariat at least 8 weeks prior to the Plenary meeting at which the amendment will be considered.

ANNEX A

GEO-WMO Trust Fund for the GEO/GEOSS

Terms of Reference and Rules

Introduction and Purpose of the Fund

- 1 The Fifty-Sixth Session of the WMO Executive Council in its Resolution 9 (EC-LVI) authorized the WMO Secretary General to confirm to the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) strong support for the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS) concept; to work closely with his counterparts in the other Earth-observing United Nations agencies and programmes to ensure an effectively coordinated United Nations system role in the implementation of GEOSS; and to indicate WMO readiness to host the GEO Secretariat.
- 2 The ad hoc Group on Earth Observations at its sixth session (Brussels, Belgium 14-15 February 2005) finalized the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation plan. At the sixth session, GEO agreed to enter into a Standing Arrangement between GEO and WMO and to arrange for a GEO Secretariat to be located at WMO. In order to provide for a mechanism for GEO to fund the GEO Secretariat and GEO activities, GEO also agreed to undertake steps to create a GEO-WMO Trust Fund to support the work of GEO/GEOSS. The Third Earth Observation Summit (Brussels, Belgium 16 February 2005) established the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and endorsed the GEOSS Ten-Year Implementation Plan, and instructed GEO to take those steps necessary to implement GEOSS in accordance with its implementation plan.
- 3 The primary purpose of the GEO-WMO Trust Fund will be to support the direct and indirect costs of GEO/GEOSS and its Secretariat as well as related GEO activities. The full cost of the GEO Secretariat contains direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are those directly attributable to the GEO Secretariat, such as salaries of GEO Secretariat staff, travel expenses by GEO Secretariat staff, cost of equipment used by GEO Secretariat staff. The direct costs of the GEO Secretariat shall be covered by GEO. Indirect costs are those incurred by WMO for the provision of administrative services to GEO. As a principle, WMO shall not charge GEO for the total indirect costs, but rather for the incremental costs only. The incremental costs of administrative services provided by WMO to GEO shall be identified in a Service Level Arrangement to be concluded between GEO and WMO.
- 4 The GEO-WMO Trust Fund will also be used to accomplish GEO/GEOSS objectives and goals through the preparation of necessary studies, reports and relevant materials, the use of consultants to assist the GEO Secretariat, and other activities relevant to the GEO/GEOSS as approved by the GEO Plenary.
- 5 The Trust Fund will be established from voluntary cash contributions from GEO Members, organizations involved in Earth observations, grants, donations, funds deposited for specific purposes, hereafter referred to as deposits, and other contributions. Contributions shall be normally made in Swiss Francs or any other convertible currency.

Administration of the Fund

- 6 Financial arrangements for administration of the Fund are specified in: (1) the GEO-WMO Standing Arrangement; (2) the WMO Financial Rules and Regulations; (3) delegations of responsibility from the Secretary-General to the GEO Director.
- 7 The accounting of the expenditures of the Fund shall be as provided for in paragraph 6 above, including any other directly identifiable charges related to the administration of the Fund. No additional programme support cost charges will be incurred. The interest accrued from any investment of the principal of the Fund will constitute an income to the Fund.
- 8 The Fund shall be maintained on a continuous basis and amounts standing to the credit of the Fund at the end of any annual period shall remain in the Fund for use in the subsequent period.
- 9 Financial reports on the Fund will be made in Swiss Francs. The United Nations rate of exchange prevailing on the date of the transaction or report will apply for the conversion into Swiss Francs of contributions or income received and payments made or charges incurred in any other currency. The GEO Director shall submit a financial report, annually, to Trust Fund contributors, to the GEO Executive Committee, and report to GEO on the overall use of the Fund
- 10 External audit will be conducted as provided for in the WMO Financial Regulations.
- 11 At the closure of the Fund, any cash balance of the Fund will be returned to GEO Members.

Procedures for the utilization of the Fund

- 12 The utilization of the Fund shall be based upon a general budget prepared by the GEO Secretariat and approved by the Plenary. Day-to-day spending decisions shall be by the GEO Secretariat Director.
- 13 The GEO Director will not enter into any financial commitments unless he/she has received the funds required.

8 LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 14 Under no circumstances will the Fund be made liable to pay and/or reimburse any taxes on emoluments or honorarium, or any customs and import duties, value added taxes or similar charges. If applicable, these will be payable by the beneficiaries of the support provided.

ANNEX B

Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

List of Committees and Working Groups

As of 20 November 2008

- Architecture and Data Committee
- Capacity Building Committee
- Science and Technology Committee
- User Interface Committee
- Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group

APPENDIX 1 to ANNEX B

Architecture and Data Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Architecture and Data Committee will support the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in all architecture and data management aspects of the design, coordination, and implementation of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) for comprehensive, coordinated, and sustained Earth observations.

Objectives

- 1 The Architecture and Data Committee will enable GEO, based upon user requirements and building on existing systems and initiatives, to define the components of GEOSS, and to converge or harmonize observation methods, and to promote the use of standards and references, intercalibration, and data assimilation.
- 2 The Architecture and Data Committee will enable GEO to define and update interoperability arrangements to which GEO Members and Participating Organizations agree to adhere, including technical specifications for collecting, processing, storing, and disseminating shared data, metadata and products.
- 3 The Architecture and Data Committee will enable GEO to facilitate data management, information management, and common services, and will help to promote data sharing principles in support of the GEO Plenary for the full and open sharing and exchange of data and information, recognizing relevant international instruments and national policies and legislation.

Approach and Functions

- 1 The Architecture and Data Committee's approach to providing advice and recommendation to GEO may include: providing a forum for dialogue and resolution of issues at varying levels; advocacy within and across existing systems; coordinating with, collaborating with, or referring specific tasks to, participating international organizations or national agencies; and, establishment of subordinate teams to accomplish specific tasks assigned to this Committee in the Annual Work Plan.
- 2 The Architecture and Data Committee will liaise closely and work in a complementary fashion with the existing operating authorities of GEOSS components, where needed and agreed to by the GEO Plenary, avoiding any duplication of the work of existing organizations and structures, and recognizing the disparities in technology among GEO Members and Participating Organizations.
- 3 The Architecture and Data Committee will monitor and report to Plenary on the achievement of milestones and deliverables in the implementation of relevant elements of the GEO annual work plans.

APPENDIX 2 to ANNEX B

Capacity Building Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Capacity Building Committee will support the GEO in strengthening the capability of all countries, in particular developing countries, to use Earth observation data and products in a sustainable manner and to contribute observations and systems to GEOSS. The GEO capacity building strategy will follow the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) concept of a global partnership between those whose capacity needs development and those who are able to assist in the process, recognizing that activities have intertwined social, environmental, and economic impacts.

Objectives

- 1 To facilitate Earth observation capacity building activities among GEO Members, in concert with GEO Participating Organizations.
- 2 To build the capacity of all GEO Members to access, retrieve, analyze, include into appropriate models, and interpret relevant data from global data systems.
- 3 To build the capacity of all GEO Members to integrate Earth observation data and information with data and information from other sources, improving understanding of problems in order to identify sustainable solutions.
- 4 Support the GEO in developing a coordinated GEOSS capacity building strategy based on the principles articulated in the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan Reference Document.
- 5 Recommend strategies for resource mobilization.

Approach and Functions

- 1 In collaboration with existing capacity building mechanisms of GEO Members and participating organizations, identify priority areas in which Earth observation capacity building would have significant impact and benefit.
- 2 Examine existing and proposed Earth observation capacity building activities by national governments, participating organizations, and other relevant institutions, and identify mechanisms for leveraging, developing and coordinating Earth observation capacity building initiatives.
- 3 The Capacity Building Committee will monitor and report to Plenary on the achievement of milestones and deliverables in the implementation of relevant elements of the GEO annual work plans.

APPENDIX 3 to ANNEX B

Science and Technology Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Science and Technology Committee will engage the scientific and technological communities in the development, implementation and use of a sustained GEOSS in order to ensure that GEO has access to sound scientific and technological advice.

Objectives

- 1 Enable GEO to make decisions on best available and sound scientific and technological advice, through the solicitation of input from a broad, trans-disciplinary scientific and technological community
- 2 Ensure scientific and technological integrity and soundness of GEO Annual Work Plans.
- 3 Monitor and review output and deliverables of GEO Annual Work Plans.
- 4 In collaboration with GEO Members and participating organizations, and through transparent processes, identify individual experts and groups to participate in GEO working groups.
- 5 Facilitate linkages and partnership with major relevant international research programmes as well as organizations willing to contribute to GEO activities.

Approach and Functions

- 1 The Science and Technology Committee will make recommendations to ensure the above objectives are fulfilled.
- 2 It may establish ad hoc expert groups as appropriate with clearly defined task and defined lifetime.
- 3 The Science and Technology Committee will provide best scientific and technological advice and recommendations available in order to support the GEO with fulfilling its tasks, thereby contributing to the realisation of GEOSS.
- 4 The Science and Technology Committee will monitor and report to Plenary on the achievement of milestones and deliverables in the implementation of relevant elements of the GEO annual work plans.

APPENDIX 4 to ANNEX B

User Interface Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The User Interface Committee will engage users in the nine societal benefit areas in the development, implementation, and use of a sustained GEOSS that provides the data and information required by user groups on national, regional and global scales.

The User Interface Committee has a specific goal to address cross-cutting issues by coordinating user communities of practice, ensuring continuity and avoiding duplication.

Objectives

- 1 Enable GEO to address the needs and concerns of a broad range of user communities in developing and developed countries, across issues and trans-disciplinary needs, with a particular focus on fostering new or less organized communities.
- 2 Enable GEO, in the implementation of GEOSS, to engage a continuum of users, from producers to the final beneficiaries of the data and information
- 3 Facilitate linkages and partnerships between established communities of practice and new groups or organizations interested in collaborating.

Approach and Functions

The User Interface Committee will work with all end-user communities, to ensure that the best intelligence and information are available to support GEO, and to contribute to the realization of benefits through GEOSS implementation. Its work will be coordinated with the Secretariat, consistent with the decisions of the GEO Plenary, on those activities requiring direct efforts by GEO Members and Participating Organizations, at national, regional and global level, without duplicating the work of existing organizations and structures. These activities could be:

- 1 Make recommendations to GEO to improve the delivery of targets identified in the GEOSS Reference document.
- 2 Encourage the development of communities of practice.
- 3 Work with the communities of practice to identify existing inventories of major user requirements, their present status and gaps to be filled, including those carried out by existing mechanisms.
- 4 Recommend a mechanism to identify, document, and prioritize requirements of major stakeholders for current and future Earth observations, and review and update these requirements through consultation with stakeholders and in coordination with the GEO Science and Technology Committee.
- 5 Monitor and report to Plenary on the achievement of milestones and deliverables in the implementation of relevant elements of the GEO annual work plans.

APPENDIX 5 to ANNEX B

Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (M&E WG) will coordinate monitoring and evaluation of GEOSS implementation until 2015, the end of the 10-year Plan.

Objectives

The M&E WG is convened to:

- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework document defining the monitoring and evaluation of GEOSS implementation, including outcome performance indicators and drawing from the outline prepared at the September 10-12, 2008 workshop where appropriate.
- Develop a plan for the first evaluation of GEOSS implementation, including provisions for overseeing the execution of the plan. The final report of this evaluation should be completed by mid 2010, for use in planning the Earth Observation Summit anticipated in November 2010. Develop plans for subsequent evaluations, responding to lessons learned from previous evaluations.
- Provide oversight of the execution of the M&E process

Approach and Functions

- Adapt best practices and tools in use by other organizations for monitoring and evaluation as applicable to the GEOSS context.
- Identify criteria for evaluating the success of GEOSS based on the Societal Benefit Areas, (crosscutting areas) Strategic Targets and Tasks in the GEO Work Plan.
- Develop a set of viable, yet uncomplicated indicators to monitor GEOSS implementation with particular emphasis on outcomes, as stated in the strategic targets for GEOSS.
- Ensure that the evaluation covers subtasks and overarching tasks of the Workplan, strategic targets, and other high-level collaborations within GEO.
- Implement the monitoring and evaluation framework through a phased approach.
- Review the existing GEOSS reporting system and utilize it in the monitoring and evaluation process as appropriate.
- Build, where appropriate, on tools and methodologies being used by task contributors for monitoring and evaluation of task activities.
- Provide recommendations to Executive Committee for mobilizing financial and human resources to implement the framework and accomplish the first evaluation of GEOSS implementation.
- Report to the GEO Executive Committee and the GEO Plenary the results of the first and subsequent evaluations and respond to lessons learned.

ANNEX C

Guidance for Recognition of New GEO Participating Organizations and Observers

Entities requesting official recognition as a GEO Participating Organization will be considered based on the following guidelines:

- 1 The entity must meet the criteria specified in Section 3. 3 of the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan:

Membership in [the Group on Earth Observations] GEO is open to all member States of the United Nations and to the European Commission. GEO welcomes, as Participating Organizations, intergovernmental, international, and regional organizations with a mandate in Earth observation or related activities, subject to approval by GEO Members. GEO may invite other relevant entities to participate in its activities as observers.

- 2 The entity must endorse the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan, consistent with Rule 2. 1 of the GEO Rules of Procedure:

Membership and Participation is contingent upon formal endorsement of the Implementation Plan.

- 3 A sub-programme or subgroup of a currently recognized Participating Organization need not be considered for independent recognition.

- 4 Joint programmes (programmes established under the auspices of two or more recognized Participating Organizations) may be designated by the Plenary as observers or Participating Organizations. Such programmes must fulfill the above criteria (1 and 2).

- 5 GEO may invite other relevant entities to participate in its activities as observers. Observers may be invited to send representatives to GEO Committees and to participate fully in specific GEO activities.

- 6 Before each Plenary, the Executive Committee will review requests for recognition received by the Secretariat, and will recommend Participating Organizations and observers for recognition by the Plenary.

- 7 The Plenary will make decisions on the requests for recognition according to Paragraph 2. 2 of the GEO Rules of Procedure, taking into account the recommendation by the Executive Committee. Paragraph 2. 2 of the Rules of Procedure states:

2. 2 Decisions. Plenary decisions will be made by consensus of GEO Members present.

ANNEX D

Guidelines for the Use of Additional Contributions to the GEO Trust Fund

- 1 The GEO Secretariat Operations Budget for each calendar year will be approved by the Plenary in the preceding year and will reflect contributions pledged at or before that Plenary meeting. These contributions will be referred to as “pledged contributions.”
- 2 Subsequent contributions pledged and received for that calendar year will be referred to as “additional contributions” and will be reported in the quarterly financial update.
- 3 The Secretariat will operate under the approved budget for the calendar year.
- 4 In the event that all pledged contributions are received, additional contributions, unless otherwise specified by the donor, will be carried forward to the budget for the following calendar year.
- 5 In the event that some portion of the pledged contributions is not received by the Secretariat within the calendar year, the Secretariat will use additional contributions to maintain a balanced budget, and will report this adjustment in the final annual report of resources and expenditures.
- 6 If the donor requires its additional contribution be used to finance specific additional activities within the current calendar year, the Secretariat will produce a revised budget including these activities, to be reviewed by the Executive Committee and approved by the Plenary.
- 7 For all specific activities, the Secretariat will provide to the donor a detailed statement of expenditure incurred in undertaking the activity.

ANNEX E

GEO Secretariat Arrangements and Procedures

Authority

1. GEO Rules of Procedure 3.2 (b, h) establish the authority of the Plenary to delegate tasks to the Executive Committee, including those pertaining to the supervision of the GEO Secretariat.
 - 3.2 **Duties:** Acting by consensus, the Executive Committee will:
 - b. Supervise the work of the Director of the Secretariat and ensure that it is consistent with the direction received by the Plenary;
 - h. Undertake such other tasks as may be delegated to the Executive Committee by the Plenary.
2. The Group on Earth Observations at its first session (Geneva, Switzerland 3-4 May 2005) created the Executive Committee and authorized the Executive Committee to recruit and select the Director and approve interim staff, including secondments. GEO also agreed that the WMO Secretary-General will appoint the Director as a WMO staff member.
3. The Third Plenary Meeting of the Group on Earth Observations (Bonn, Germany 28-29 November 2006) noted that the GEO Secretariat was to remain being filled by its Director and staff. GEO affirmed delegation of authority to the Executive Committee to ensure continuity of Secretariat operations and functioning.
4. The Standing Arrangement Between WMO and GEO states that the GEO Secretariat Director is selected by, and under the management authority, of GEO while under the administrative authority of the Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). It does not detail the process of recruitment, selection, renewal, or term of the Director. It does provide language affirming the applicability of WMO Staff and Financial Regulations.

Procedures

- The Director may serve a maximum of three three-year terms¹.
- In due time, the Executive Committee shall establish a selection panel (the Panel). The Panel shall be open to all members of the Executive Committee.
- The Panel may recommend the Executive Committee to re-appoint the incumbent Director for a second term without further competition. The Executive Committee should approve such a recommendation through unanimous consent, no less than nine months before the end of a Director's term.

¹ Current WMO procedures limit positions below DG to a 2 year term and it is proposed to establish an exception for the GEOSEC Director position to support a smooth alignment with GEO Ministerial Summits.

- If the Panel recommends opening the selection process to competition, then the Panel will oversee the announcement of the position, the review of the candidates, the interview process and the ultimate selection and recommendation to the Executive Committee.
- A Director who wishes to serve a third term shall take part in the open competition
- The decision of the Executive Committee on the selection process will be made no less than six months before the end of a Director's term and passed to the WMO Secretary General for formal appointment.
- In the event of the post of Director becoming vacant before the term expires, the Executive Committee will appoint an Acting Director, whose term of office shall not extend beyond the tenure of the incumbent Director.