

Reconciliation Meeting Report

GEOSS Targets

GEO 2009-2011 Work Plan

GEOSS Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

RECORD

Following the recommendation of the GEO-V Plenary, a reconciliation meeting was organized to ensure that the three key processes – (1) Targets update, (2) 2009-2011 Work Plan update, and (3) GEOSS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) – take full account of one another. The results and actions coming out of the meeting are summarized below.

In addition to the sessions listed in the Agenda (Appendix A), two parallel break-out sessions were organized on the morning of April 1st to foster progress around two specific issues: (i) the formulation of strategic target outcomes and (ii) Work Plan Task coordination. Also the question as to whether a second reconciliation meeting would be needed remained open.

Participants in the meeting included members of the Target Task Team (T3), Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) working group, Committee Co-Chair Coordination (C4), and GEO Secretariat (Appendix B). The presentations and documents used throughout the meeting are available at: ftp://ftp.wmo.int/Projects/GEO/TEMP/ReconciliationMtg_Documents/

1 TARGETS

1.1 Results

- Detailed plan of actions for improving the definitions of strategic targets, and in particular for:
 - Making targets suitable for evaluation i.e. measurable in terms of user-oriented outcomes;
 - Aligning targets with GEO official documents (including 6 and 10-yr targets).
- Review of strategic target document (rev5.2) and proposal to add an “outcome” section to each target definition. Development of “outcome” section examples for Architecture, Capacity Building, Energy and Health;
- Assessment of strategic target (rev5.2) consistency with GEO official documents (10-year Implementation Plan, Reference Document 6- and 10-year Targets, Cape Town Declaration and Report on Progress). Identification of inconsistencies in the Disasters, Health, Climate, Ecosystems and Agriculture areas – based on a systematic mapping of strategic targets (rev5.2) onto 10-year targets. Plan to amend strategic target definitions such as to resolve inconsistencies.

1.2 Actions

- **A1.** By early June, the T3 will recast the definition of strategic targets as follows: (i) one-sentence high-level definition (ministerial level); (ii) three-to-six bulleted noun-phrases providing examples of measurable user-oriented outcomes to assist with evaluation of GEOSS implementation; (iii) detailed supporting text providing steps towards outcomes and target. M&E working group will contribute as appropriate throughout this process and help complete the effort by 15th Executive Committee.
- **A2.** T3 and M&E working group will explore options for quantifying strategic target outcomes.
- **A3.** T3 will propose changes to strategic target definitions to improve consistency with 6- and 10-yr targets as follows: Disasters (use of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) to be emphasized); Health (disease surveillance and integration of environmental/epidemics data, to be emphasized); Climate (modelling/prediction and information systems to be included at the same level as observing systems; Australia/GCOS, WCRP and WMO to propose revised text); Ecosystems (information and ecosystem services e.g. for human health, food supply or flood prevention to be emphasized); Agriculture (desertification and global information services to be emphasized). In addition, T3 will consider options for reflecting the Commonality 10-year target “Develop a plan to sustain and evolve a system of systems beyond 10 years”, possibly in the introduction of the document.
- **A4.** T3 will ensure that the target document captures all the elements of the Cape Town Declaration 2nd “Reaffirming” and “We confirm that” statements.
- **A5.** T3 will add a bullet to the “Strategic Goals” section of the document to better address GEOSS services to end-users.
- **A6.** The phrase “GEO will aim to” will be replaced by “GEO aims to” throughout the document.
- **A7.** T3 will consider whether to refer to Members, Participating Organizations and/or programmes at the target level (see GCOS, GOOS, GTOS, ICSU, IOC, WMO, ... references under the Climate strategic target) or to restrict this reference to the Work Plan level. The general recommendation was that references at the target level should be avoided. A rationale should be developed.

1.3 Comments

- The document in its revised form should ensure “buy in” at both: political (ministerial) level and working (Work Plan) level including Committees, Communities of Practice and Task Leads;
- Target definitions should be harmonized. In rev5.2, some definitions focus on the entire chain of information production whereas others focus only on observing systems. Particular consideration should be given to information systems and delivery of services to the end-user. Also some definitions are too detailed while others are too vague;
- The document, consistently with GEOSS itself, should be user-driven (as opposed to e.g. architecture-driven or technology-driven).

2 GEO 2009-2011 WORK PLAN

2.1 Results

- Assessment of the 2009-2011 Work Plan alignment with GEOSS Targets (strategic targets and 6- & 10-year targets) – based on a systematic mapping of Work Plan Tasks onto strategic targets (rev5.2):
 - All strategic targets (rev5.2) were found to be well addressed by the 2009-2011 Work Plan however:
 - the Climate strategic target was found to leave out key aspects of several Work Plan Tasks¹ including for CL-06-01a (data assimilation and modelling required for reanalysis), CL-09-01a (climate prediction), WA-06-02a (forecasting droughts & floods);
 - the Ecosystems strategic target was found to leave out key aspects of Work Plan Tasks¹ EN-07-02 (forecasting environmental impact) and EC-09-02 a,b,c (forecasting global change and tourism/transport impact on ecosystems);
 - the Agriculture strategic target was found to leave out key aspects of Work Plan Tasks¹ AG-07-03b (linking Earth system models to end-user application models to improve food-supply prediction).
 - The 6- and 10-year targets were found to be well addressed by the 2009-2011 Work Plan to the exception of the Ecosystems 10-year target (“Facilitate the production of spatially-resolved information on ecosystem change, condition and trend, in relation to their capacity to deliver sustainable ecosystem services in sufficient quantities to meet societal needs; (...)”) and Agriculture 10-year Plan definition (“Issues addressed by GEOSS will include: (...) changes in the extent and severity of land degradation and desertification”);
 - Conversely all 2009-2011 Work Plan Tasks (and sub-tasks) were found to address GEOSS Targets (strategic targets (rev5.2) and 6- and 10-year targets).
- Plan to amend Climate, Ecosystems and Agriculture strategic targets to resolve consistency issues with 6- and 10-year targets (see Section 1 above). Acknowledgment that strategic targets are still evolving and not yet (rev5.2) an adequate reference for the implementation of the 2009-2011 Work Plan (the 6- and 10-year targets remain such a reference);
- Plan to invite new contributions to the 2009-2011 Work Plan to fill gaps in Ecosystems and Agriculture areas;
- Plan to modify the Task Sheet Template to better meet monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements;
- Proposal to develop a “Letter of Intent” to provide guidance for each Task Lead and improve Work Plan management at the sub-task level;
- Definition of possible functions for a coordinator at the overarching Task level. Proposal to further engage Committees, Communities of Practice and the GEO Secretariat in overarching Task coordination (see related presentation).

1 note that these Tasks do address 6- and/or 10-year targets

2.2 Actions

- **A8.** In early June as part of the consultation on the 2009 Work Plan update, the GEO Secretariat will invite new contributions from GEO Members and Participating Organizations to help address gaps related to the Ecosystems and Agriculture areas.
- **A9.** By end of May, the GEO Secretariat will revise the Task Sheet template based on the following M&E working group recommendations: (i) Allow for the identification of key milestones, with expected dates for achievement of these milestones; (ii) Enable the identification and reporting of quantitative indicators of progress, where these are appropriate and available; (iii) Enable the collection of information on usage of portals; and (iv) Distinguish planning from reporting activities.
- **A10.** By end of April, the C4 Co-Chairs will prepare a draft of “Letter of Intent” with support from the GEO Secretariat. The draft letter will be presented to, and reviewed by, Committees and C4 in April/May.
- **A11.** By end of April, the GEO Secretariat will include recommendations on overarching Task coordination in a proposal to be submitted for review to Committees in April/May and Executive Committee in June.

2.3 Comments

Australia/GCOS suggested that the Climate Societal Benefit Area may have to be treated differently from other Societal Benefit Areas and that a Task should be devoted to GCOS implementation in the Work Plan. There was no consensus as to whether the Climate Societal Benefit Area should be treated differently from other Societal Benefit Areas. With regard to the Task on GCOS implementation, the GEO Secretariat clarified that such a Task already existed in the 2009-2011 Work Plan (see AR-09-03) – only that following WMO/ICSU/IOC recommendation over the GEO-V Plenary, the Task had been moved from the Climate area to the Architecture area.

3 GEOSS MONITORING & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

3.1 Results

- Presentation and proposal by the M&E working group Co-Chairs of a preliminary approach to GEOSS monitoring and evaluation (derived from the outcomes of the first working group meeting). Following this approach:
 - Monitoring would focus on: (i) Progress toward the completion of planned activities, outputs (deliverables) of Tasks (including sub-tasks); (ii) Collection of information to support monitoring through the existing mechanism of Task Sheets; (iii) Adequate reporting of progress;
 - Evaluation (What difference has GEOSS made?) would be based on targets and address the Cape Town Declaration (and other Cape Town Ministerial Documents).
- Endorsement by T3 and C4 of the proposed approach to GEOSS monitoring and evaluation;
- Presentation of the GEOSS roadmap and proposal by Japan (JAXA) to contribute to the evaluation effort. Request to Japan from T3, C4 and M&E working group to maintain and further develop the GEOSS roadmap as a diagnostic tool, in collaboration with the GEO Secretariat;
- Proposals for improving the structure of the strategic target and Task Sheet template documents – all accepted by T3 and C4 (and under implementation, see Sections 1 and 2 above);

- Recommendation to carefully consider flexibility, transparency and credibility issues.

3.2 Actions

- **A12.** M&E working group will work with T3, C4 and GEO Secretariat to help implement the following recommendations: (i) to ensure effective evaluation of the Targets, their definition should be amended to be measurable; (ii) to be properly monitored the Tasks should include intermediate milestones and measurable outputs; and (iii) for the medium-long term, Tasks should be better linked to outcomes in a way that can be measured.
- **A13.** In early June (and as planned prior to the Reconciliation meeting), the M&E working group will submit drafts of the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework Document and the Evaluation Plan Outline to the Executive Committee for review.
- **A14.** In the coming months, Japan will produce a new roadmap mapping Work Plan Tasks onto 10-year Targets and/or strategic targets (depending on the status of strategic targets).

3.3 Comments

In its initial development phase, the new GEOSS roadmap should remain a working document, internal to the Reconciliation process. Communities of Practice and Committees should be involved in the mapping process as appropriate and the rationale used should be clearly outlined. Ultimately, the GEOSS roadmap may provide a visual, independent assessment of Work Plan task implementation, and accompany the semi-annual Work Plan Progress Report provided to the Executive Committee.

APPENDIX A

RECONCILIATION MEETING GEOSS Targets GEO 2009-2011 Work Plan GEOSS Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Framework

30-31 March, 1 April 2009

GEO Secretariat, Geneva

Room C1

AGENDA

Participants

Committee Co-Chair Coordination (C4)

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) working group

Target Task Team (T3)

Monday 30 March

13:30 1. Introduction

Welcoming Remarks

Motivation and Objectives

Overview (current status, plans and schedule):

- Draft Strategic Targets
- 2009-2011 Work Plan
- Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

Adoption of the Agenda

15:00 Coffee Break**15:15 2. Reconciliation – Strategic Targets and GEO Official Documents**

Are draft Strategic Targets consistent with GEO Official Documents?

Presentation of Strategic Targets [Doc 2.1]

Consistency check vis-à-vis GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan & Reference Doc (10- year Targets) [Docs 2.2-2.4]

Consistency check vis-à-vis Ministerial Documents (Declarations, Cape Town 2007 Report on Progress) [Docs 2.5-2.6]

Discussion of any Issue arising

Adjustment of strategic Target Text (as appropriate)

18:15 Adjourn**Tuesday 31 March****09:00 3. Reconciliation – 2009-2011 Work Plan and GEOSS Targets**

Are GEOSS Targets well addressed by the 2009-2011 Work Plan?

Do 2009-2011 Work Plan overarching Tasks all address GEOSS Targets?

Brief Presentation of 2009-2011 Work Plan [Doc 3.1]

Mapping of Overarching Tasks (& sub-tasks) on Strategic Targets

11:00 Coffee Break

11:15 Discussion of any Issue arising from Mapping Exercise

Recommendations for Next Work Plan Update

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Discussion of any Issue arising from Mapping Exercise
Recommendations for Next Work Plan Update

15:30 Coffee Break

15:45 4. Reconciliation – Monitoring & Evaluation, Targets and 2009-2011 Work Plan

How do Targets and Work Plan Tasks fit into M&E Framework ?

Can this be improved?

Report on Outcomes of M&E Working Group 1st Meeting [Docs 4.1-4.3]

Presentation of:

- M&E Framework Elements
- Plan for 1st Evaluation
- Draft Indicators for Progress and/or Performance

17:30 Adjourn

Wednesday 1 April

09:00 4. Reconciliation – Monitoring & Evaluation, Targets and 2009-2011 Work Plan (cont')

Review of Strategic Targets, Overarching Tasks and Sub-tasks as Possible Elements of the M&E Framework

The New GEOSS Roadmap (presented by Japan) [Docs 4.4-4.5]

Presentation of New Task Sheet Template: linking Input (resources), Activities & Outputs

Discussion

Recommendations for:

- Next Revision of Strategic Target Document
- Next Work Plan Update
- M&E Framework Development

13:00 Lunch

14:00 5. Wrap-up and Conclusion

Summary of Outcomes and Recommendations

Way Forward:

- Draft Strategic Targets
- 2009-2011 Work Plan
- Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

Reconciliation - Next Steps

Any Other Business

16:30 Adjourn

APPENDIX B

**GEO Reconciliation Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland
30 March – 1 April 2009**

List of Participants

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