

# Report from WG8 to the GEO BON Steering Committee, Geneva, June 2011

## 1. WG overall and near term goals

Provide advice and guidance to the thematic work groups on the implementation of the GEO BON informatics architecture and its implementation in accordance with the GEOSS Common Infrastructure (GCI).

## 2. Implementation plan

- Implementation plan (see Table 1 below) as envisaged 12 months ago has proven to be unrealistic due to lack of funding to establish a technical support unit.
- The operational/implementation phase of GEO BON will largely be driven by the specific needs of the thematic work groups. It is therefore necessary for them to identify clear products/deliverables so that WG8 in collaboration with a technical support unit can advise on the informatics framework that will support delivery of such products. The questionnaire circulated after the Asilomar meeting can be used to begin the process of gathering requirements.
- GBIF is currently engaged in discussions with BioFRESH about mobilising and publishing their data via the GBIF network.
- GBIF is engaged in a series of workshops with the Genomic Standards Consortium (GSC) on interoperability issues, e.g., harmonising standards used in the two communities (Darwin Core and GSC Checklists); workshop reports will be forwarded to appropriate GEO BON thematic groups once available.
- GBIF is participating in the GEOSS AIP-4 call with several EuroGEOSS partners.

Table 1. GEO BON network implementation plan as envisaged in 2010.

#	Activities/Milestones	Time Frame
1	Establish a working group and coordinating unit for technical implementation	Q3-Q4 2010
2	Review of existing data provider networks; establish partnerships commence	Q3 2010 - ongoing
3	Review of data processing needs of other Working Groups	Q3-Q4 2010
4	Design the information architecture of GEO BON	Q4 2010, Q1 - Q2 2011
5	Public review of the proposed architecture, symposium	Q1 - Q3 2011
6	Call for contributions to implement architecture	Q3 2011
7	Build the components such as portal, registry, ontologies	Q4 2011, 2012, 2013
8	Helpdesk and registration of components and networks	Q2 2011 - ongoing
9	Training and capacity building events	Q2 2011 – ongoing

### 3. Plans

- Work with the GEO BON steering committee to identify funding opportunities for a technical coordination unit for GEO BON.
- Participate in upcoming EU FP7 call relating to GEO BON.
- Outreach to DataONE network.

### 4. Issues and constraints

- The need for a funded technical coordination unit to support actual implementation of GEO BON as the *informatics network* foreseen in the Concept Document. This should ideally work directly in tandem with the implementation of at least a few of the thematic observation systems. The current EU FP7 call may provide a source of funding for the technical support unit.
- Several barriers (e.g., those outlined in Table 2) impede progress of GEO BON. GBIF continues to work on these through its annual work programmes, liaising with appropriate organisations/initiatives as appropriate, e.g., TDWG, GSC, academic publishers.

Table 2. Barriers impeding the progress of GEO BON.

#	Barrier	Possible Solution
1	Lack of key data in a usable format, in particular, monitoring data	Thematic groups agree on data requirements for particular products; WG8 then advise on formats/standards
2	Integration of data is still technically very hard to do	Promote collaboration around development of standards
3	Data sharing does not yet bring scientific recognition directly, constraining data availability	Promote “data papers” and associated citation mechanism
4	Lack of funding	Position GEO BON in funding calls

### 5. Self assessment

Due to a lack of GEO BON uptake or response to the WG8 reports and timelines (as outlined in Table 1), there has been little activity since delivering the two documents for the GEO BON detailed implementation plan but individual members and the co-chairs continue to interact with the steering committee and other work groups, contributing where possible (e.g., around defining the nature of regional BONs).