

**IPWG Digest n. 1  
(Reference to Agenda points)**

**1. Setting the stage**

The meeting began with a welcome from the Secretariat Director Barbara Ryan and brief introductions from each member of the Implementation Plan Working Group (IPWG). The two Facilitators appointed by the GEO Co-chairs, Danielle Lacasse - Canada and Stuart Minchin – Australia, then briefly addressed the IPWG, recalling that members are appointed not as a representative of their nominating Member or Participating Organization, but as individuals acting in their own right because of their expertise. They stated that the facilitators' key functions will be to draw out from the IPWG the maximum knowledge and insight from the deliberations and make sure that everyone is heard.

Rudolf Strohmeier, the GEO Co-Chair from the European Commission, connected through video conference, addressed the IPWG and recalled the importance of the work ahead and the steps leading up to the establishment of the IPWG. He also recalled that the GEO Executive Committee and GEO Co-chairs received the mandate from the GEO-X Plenary to oversee and steer the process of developing the new 10-year Implementation Plan (IP) and, in this spirit, the GEO Co-chairs had held a teleconference during which they discussed and agreed to a two-phase approach which would guide the IPWG work: The process of developing the Implementation Plan (IP) would therefore take place in two distinct phases – an initial reflective phase, followed by a longer 'synthesis and formulation' phase. The initial phase – or 'fresh perspectives' exercise - lasts from the 1<sup>st</sup> IPWG meeting in April until the middle of June, when a summary report will be submitted to the GEO Executive Committee. The second 'synthesis and formulation' phase begins immediately following the July meeting of GEO Executive Committee and lasts until the end of the exercise with the adoption of the Implementation Plan by the GEO XII Plenary and ratification at the final Ministerial Summit. Mr. Strohmeier also reminded the IPWG that the Geneva Ministerial Summit Declaration and associated GEO-X documents should form the reference documents for the work of the IPWG.

The discussion confirmed that the co-facilitators have been asked to lead the initial phase (up to the July meeting of the Executive Committee), and that it would be up to the Working Group to determine how they want to organize themselves for the second phase.

The Director provided an introduction on GEO and GEOSS with the overview of the establishment of GEO.

Finally, the Facilitators guided a quick discussion that allowed the IPWG to reach a common position regarding the documents to be considered as the reference for their work.

The IPWG reinforced the need to reach out to stakeholders, both within the GEO community and beyond, to build on their extensive experience and to understand their expectations for the future.

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**2. Context/Environmental Scan**

The session was devoted to setting the context for the work of the IPWG by discussing several essential elements which should be taken into account when shaping the new 10-year IP:

- The changes in Political, Economic, Environmental, Societal, Technological Factors that have taken place since GEO's establishment;
- Established policies and on-going processes of a global nature relevant to GEO and GEOSS;
- Lessons learned from the past decade of GEO's implementation and work, both in terms of achievements and "success stories", and open issues and challenges that remain to further enhance and advance the development, implementation and operation of the GEOSS.

The discussion was open and productive and it was felt that there was a shared understanding of the overall context.

**3. Creative/Brainstorming Phase**

The brainstorming session was organized in splinter meetings followed by plenary sessions of the IPWG and was guided by the following four questions:

1. What would success look like for GEO in 2025?
2. What is the unique value proposition of GEO?
3. What are the biggest opportunities, challenges and gaps for GEO going forward?
4. What key strategic outcomes should GEO aim for over the next 10 years?

A great amount of input was collected from IPWG, including references to work carried out in framework of GEO and this "raw" material is expected to form the basis for the first report that the IPWG will submit by the 20th of June for the Executive Committee's review. This has been considered as the start of a transparent process with other inputs to be requested at different stages of the IPWG.

**4. Summary and Next Steps (Phase I).**

The IPWG discussed and reached an agreement on the next steps for the completion of Phase 1. In particular:

- Specific actions were agreed to approach key current and potential stakeholders in order to understand their ideas and expectations for GEO and bring to use this input to inform the work of the IPWG.
  - List the key stakeholder categories from which we agreed to seek input;
  - GEO Community [The IPWG noted that the GEO Work Plan Symposium, scheduled for 28-30 April, represents one important occasion to consult the GEO Community and it was agreed to make use of this opportunity];
  - Private Sector and international donor community;
  - Etc. ;.

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- The IPWG agreed that the consolidated input from stakeholders should be reflected in the report for the Executive Committee.
- A preliminary table of contents for the June report for the Executive Committee has been agreed and writing assignments accepted.

The IPWG has agreed to hold two teleconferences before 20<sup>th</sup> of June - at the beginning and the end of May, as well as one face-to-face meeting at the beginning of June with the main objective of discussing and consolidating the results of the IPWG actions in time for the meeting of the Executive Committee. Consultation with the GEO Co-Chairs is also being scheduled.

**5. Future Work of IPWG (Phase II, June – Sept 2014 and beyond)**

The planning discussion was centered on Phase 1 and its expected results. Only limited time was dedicated to exchanging views on how to plan the work in Phase II. Input will be collected from IPWG and a corresponding agenda item will be discussed at the next meeting, with the objective to present a preliminary plan to the 31<sup>st</sup> Executive Committee meeting in July 2014.