

Capacity Building in the GEO

First Review of the GEO 2017 – 2019 Work Programme

Overview

The GEO Strategic Plan 2016 – 2025: Implementing GEOSS identifies as one of its six core functions, *Cultivating awareness, building capacity and promoting innovation*: building capacity, as well as sustaining and enhancing existing capacity, is essential for developing competencies in the effective use of Earth observations for responding to societal challenges and addressing sustainable development issues. GEO will realize this, amongst other means, through assisting countries and regions in increasing their capacity to acquire, share, store, maintain, and utilize Earth observation data and information.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

To support the implementation of the above mentioned core function, two processes were put in place i) Identified Capacity Building Coordination as a Foundational Task, and ii) Call for GEO Initiatives and Flagships to highlight capacity building activities in their programmes.

Capacity Building Coordination

This Foundational Task undertakes coordination of the GEO capacity building activities associated with the acquisition, processing and use of EO data and information for policy and decision-making. The activities include definition and implementation of clear mechanisms for identification of the GEO “global Capacity Building offer”, its gaps and promotion of coordinated actions to address gaps.

The Foundational Task is implemented by a Capacity Building Coordination Task Team (CBC-TT) and supported by the GEO Secretariat. The 2017 activities of the task team include undertaking a baseline assessment of capacity building in GEO Work Programme, to be followed by annual review of status of capacity building in GEO. This assessment aims to understand progress that GEO is making to meet the core function and as well as identify gaps and means to address them.

Capacity Building in the GEO 2017 – 2019 Work Programme

The Programme Board developed the *GEO 2017-2019 Work Programme Application* form for candidate GEO Initiatives and GEO Flagships to populate. The application form included a section on *Description of Activities (4 pages)* made up of:

- Tasks definition, overall logic and phasing
- Geographical scope
- Tasks description (for each of them: description, planning, partners responsibilities, resources)
- ***Capacity building/science & technology/training activities; communication/outreach/branding***
- Expected connections to other areas of the GEO Work Programme

After assessment and review of proposed contributions to the Work Programme, the Programme Board’s recommendations of 4 Flagships, 22 GEO Initiatives, 33 Community Activities and 10 Foundational Tasks, were approved by the GEO Plenary in November 2016.

2017 – 2019 Work Programme Assessment and Challenges

The GEO 2017 – 2019 Work Programme contains 69 activities, made up of 4 Flagships, 22 GEO Initiatives, 33 Community Activities and 10 Foundational Tasks. The Capacity Building Coordination Task Team undertook an assessment of the Work Programme, in particular looking for capacity building activities.

Table 1 GEO 2017-2019 Work Programme Activities with capacity building

	Total	With Capacity Building
GEO Flagships	4	3
GEO Initiatives	22	16
Community Activities	33	15
Foundational Tasks	10	3
TOTAL	69	37

In addition the information was mapped according to the GEO Societal Benefit Areas (SBAs) in order to see the spread of efforts to inform potential coordination and synergies and where there are major gaps.

Table 2 Capacity building in SBAs and other thematic areas of the Work Programme

SBA	Flagships and Initiatives	Community Activities & FTs
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Sustainability	GEOBON	Forest biodiversity Asia – Pacific: capacity building
	GFOI	LC and LCC
	GEO-Wetlands	
	Blue Planet	
	GWIS	
Disaster Resilience	GEO-DARMA	
	GEOCRI	
	GSNL	
Energy and Mineral Resources Management	GEO VENER	African geochemical baselines
Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture	GEOGLAM	
Public Health Surveillance	GOS4POPS	EO4HEALTH
Sustainable Urban Development	Geo Human Planet Initiative	
Water Resource Management	GEOGLOWS	In-situ Observations and Practices for the Water Cycle

SBA	Flagships and Initiatives	Community Activities & FTs
		AquaWatch
		DIAS
Climate Change	Climate Change on Africa's coastal zones	C3S
Data Management & Communication Infrastructure	GEOSS-EVOLVE	Research data science summer schools
		GCI operations
		GEONETCast
Regional Initiatives and SDGs	AfriGEOSS	Himalayan GEOSS
	AmeriGEOSS	
	AOGEOSS	
	EO4SDGs	
Other		EO for Cultural heritage documentation
		Space and security

All SBAs with the exception of Infrastructure and Transport Management SBA, have capacity building activities. This is positive coverage for GEO.

Further assessment has been inhibited by challenges in available information including:

- a) Difficulty in finding (searching needed) capacity building related information in the Implementation Plans. Initiatives and Flagships did not always provide information in the specific section or sub-section. Community Activities were not particularly asked to provide the information on capacity building.
- b) Lack of consistency in the level of detail provided from activity to activity
- c) Lack of detailed or appropriately tailored for reporting information.

Recommendation to Programme Board

Better information to support the work of the CBC-TT, Programme Board, and reporting on progress on capacity building will require more structured and common ways of providing information. To this end, the CBC-TT recommends that:

- The CBC-TT continue to work with the GEO Secretariat Monitoring and Evaluation Officer to define the data fields and tools required to support more informative reporting on capacity building activities and resources. This work will build on the fields and tool presented to the GEO community during the Capacity Building Forum and the M&E breakaway session at the GEO Work Programme Symposium on 12-13 May 2017.
- The CBC-TT engage with individual activities in the Work Programme to obtain the required data and to use this data to support coordination of capacity building activities and in publicizing capacity building events and resources.
- The CBC-TT seek to develop, over time, more automated methods of obtaining the required data and thereby minimize manual reporting requirements on providers.