

Update to 9th Programme Board Meeting

This note provides an **update** of the activities undertaken that relate to the Sendai Strategic Engagement Priority of GEO. It is not an exhaustive list. Programme Board are asked to **note** the activities undertaken and planned, and to **provide guidance** on areas for increased focus.

Background.

The Sendai Subgroup agreed the following activities should be undertaken through a combination on Subgroup Members as well as GEOSEC staff. The Terms of Reference for the Sendai Subgroup are submitted to Programme Board for information.

1. Sendai Subgroup

It was agreed at the 8th Programme Board that a subgroup should be set up to support GEOs strategic engagement priority area on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The subgroup has now been convened with the stated aim to encourage GEO Members and Participating Organisations to champion and support the development of policy objectives that add value, drive efficiencies, and promote the uptake of Earth observations, in alignment with the Sendai Framework and other Disaster Risk Reduction activities.

The Subgroup currently has 18 active members and has met virtually twice since the last Programme Board. To date the activities have been confined to ‘understanding the ask’ and refining the actions that the subgroup can take to further promote the role that Earth observations, and in-situ observations play in DRR. This can be expressed in the three primary activities:

- Identifying the connections between the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement, and Sustainable Development Goals;
- Share best practice and resources amongst GEO Work Programme activities – including the regional GEOSS initiatives – and foster synergies; and
- Provide value statements of the need to use Earth observations for managing disaster risks and hazards.

These activities are in alignment with the stated aims of the sub-group which were agreed during the 8th Programme Board.

As well as the specific activities, we have been developing a “Policy Brief” which provides a high-level strategic overview of the role that Earth observations can play in Disaster Risk Reduction activities. This brief is aimed as senior decision makes and reiterates the need for accessible Earth observations as a key element of the lifecycle of disaster risk management.

2. Identifying the connections between the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals.

- Sendai Framework

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk reduction is one of the key engagement priority areas for GEO, and as such GEO has been actively involved at both strategic and operational levels. Strategic engagement has included Barb Ryan accepting an invitation to become a member of the Advisory Board on the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction. The invitation to participate was extended by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Robert Glasser.

The UN Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR) is a flagship report by the United Nations on the worldwide efforts to reduce disaster risk. It is a biennial publication by the UN Office

for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). Currently in the initial concept phase, GEO has provided comments on the GAR19 Draft Concept Note and recognises the opportunity to be 'at the table' when global reporting frameworks are being considered and discussed.

This strategic engagement with UNISDR has led to GEO being invited to provide input into the annual UNISDR Secretary General's report.

At an operation level, and in response to GEO's involvement with the Advisory Board, there has been a GAR sub-committee set up to look at the potential areas of focus for reporting. GEOGLAM has been asked to participate in the sub-group and has been invited to participate in the next workshop.

3. Share best practice and resources amongst GEO Work Programme activities

The GEO Work Programme has approximately 18 Initiatives and Community Activities which fall into the Disaster Resilience Societal Benefit Area. Over the last two months I have been working to understand the modalities of the Initiatives and Community Activities and to identify how GEO Secretariat can best support these activities. Top level involvement has included participating in the GEO-DARMA Steering Group, as well as attending the GEOGLOWS Annual Business Meeting.

- OGC Disaster Concept Study

The Open Geospatial Consortium published a Disasters Interoperability CDS (sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and the US Geological Survey (USGS)). The objectives of the study are to collate, document, and making freely available the knowledge and best practices required for geospatial information sharing in times of crisis. As part of this process GEO and CEOS have worked together to create a response to the Concept Development Study.

The Open Geospatial Consortium are now hosting workshops to further refine and develop the work. The first meeting was in North America, and GEO will be facilitating a European meeting in late June.

- CEOS WGDisasters

GEO are increasingly becoming involved in the CEOS WGDisasters. This is an ideal opportunity to showcase the strong links between the two different programmes, and to ensure alignment of activities and efforts.

There have also been efforts to raise the profile of the GEO Work Programme to a wider audience. This has included working closely with the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (who have been a GEO Participating Organisation for just over a year) to see how they can be effectively involved in GEO Work Programme. This has led them to send technical representatives to the 3rd GEO Data Providers Workshop, and to send strategic representatives to the GEO Symposium, with the aim of wider engagement with the Work Programme.

4. Provide value statements of the need to use Earth observations for managing disaster risks and hazards.

Work has begun on the creation of a Policy Brief for Earth observations and disaster risk management. This paper will be focused on policy rationales and the reasons why integration of Earth Observations are important, rather than having a technical focus.

5. Next steps

Ongoing activities of the Sendai Subgroup include:

- The identification of 'real-world' example of where GEO Members and Participating Organisations can actively use Earth observations to contribute to the Sendai Framework, and also the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters.

- Continuing to review the GEO 'disasters portfolio' to identify areas of synergy.
- Collect good practice examples from the GEO Work Programme that can be used as value statements and policy examples.

Programme Board are asked to consider the above activities in the context of GEO's strategic engagement objectives.

Terms of Reference for Programme Board “Sendai Subgroup”

1. Purpose

Earth observation data should be used during all phases of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Cycles. This subgroup will encourage GEO Members and Participating Organisations to champion and support the development of policy objectives that add value, drive efficiencies, and promote the uptake of Earth observations.

2. Scope

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is one of GEO’s strategic engagement priorities. It was agreed during the 8th GEO Programme Board that a *Sendai Subgroup* should be set up to review GEO’s capability to support The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction through activities of the GEO Work Programme (GWP).

It is commonly agreed that there are several reoccurring challenges during and after disaster events. These include:

- The lack of policy and/or operational procedures needed to facilitate the rapid roll-out and use of Earth observations or geospatial information;
- Ongoing challenges to identify data that is fit for purpose for all users at all stages of the Disaster Management Cycle; and,
- Absence of a persistent methodology needed to utilise Earth observations across the full Disaster Management Cycle.

The GEO community has the data, tools, and analytical capabilities to help identify and address some of these common issues.

3. Function

The *Sendai Subgroup* will have as its objective to inform the Programme Board how the GWP currently supports monitoring activities of the Sendai Framework for DRR, as well as identify gaps and potential areas for support.

4. Duties

The 8th GEO Programme Board agreed that the initial key activities of *Sendai Subgroup* should include:

- Reviewing and focusing on the GEO Work Programme and the current areas (GEO Flagships, Initiatives, Foundational Tasks, Community Activities) relevant to the subgroup. This could identify synergies, overlaps and gaps between the various GWP activities (including Regional activities), leading to potential recommendations to reinforce the contribution of the GWP to the implementation of the Sendai Framework;
- Identification of the contribution that the GEO disaster-related activities can make to the Sendai framework;
- Engaging with Flagships, Initiatives and Community Activities with potential to support the Sendai Framework in response to above; and
- Engaging with GEO Participating Organizations (POs), and UN Agencies, to support the Sendai Framework. Potential UN Agencies include: UNISDR (Global Assessment Report); UN-GGIM (Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters); UNDP; and UN Environment.

5. Membership

The following Programme Board Members have expressed an interest in participating in the *Sendai Subgroup*: Australia; China; Ghana; Norway; United Kingdom; CEOS; COSPAR; ESA; IAG; IUGG; MRI; OGC.

Any serving member of Programme Board is invited to join *Sendai Subgroup*; additional calls for participation may be held.

6. Term

The activities of the subgroup will be regularly monitored and reviewed by Programme Board. It will be active until terminated up on decision by Programme Board.

7. Meetings

The subgroup will normally meet once per month. This will usually be through a virtual meeting, such as a teleconference or web-conference. Physical meetings can be hosted alongside Programme Board sessions or other events where members will be present.

8. Leadership

GEO Secretariat's Policy Expert: Disaster Resilience will Chair the subgroup. Co-Chairs may be appointed to support the Chair, co-Chairs will be drawn from members of the subgroup.

9. Reporting

Sendai Subgroup will report to each Programme Board, and to Executive Committee/GEO Plenary on request. Progress will be monitored against the 'key activities and outcomes'.

10. Support and coordination

The GEO Secretariat will provide administrative support to *Sendai Subgroup* and will ensure facilitation of contacts with UN agencies and international organisations as needed.