

Report

32nd Executive Committee Meeting

Geneva, 11-12 November 2014

As approved at the 33rd Executive Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 11 November 2014

Meeting convened at 10:00

Chair: Kathryn Sullivan, United States

The Chair welcomed the Members of the GEO Executive Committee (see Annex) and thanked Switzerland for supporting the Executive Committee meeting and the GEO-XI Plenary. The Chair noted that an important function of the meeting was to be certain that there is appropriate discussion of the documents in both the Executive Committee and Plenary.

The South Africa Co-Chair welcomed the Executive Committee and thanked the Secretariat for organizing both meetings on short notice. He looked forward to Plenary and debating the substance of the issues coming before the body, but cautioned not to forget that there is still one year remaining in the current Implementation Plan.

The European Commission Co-Chair noted that GEO is in a crucial transition phase. He expressed thanks to the Secretariat and Switzerland for helping to move the meetings on such short notice.

1 GENERAL BUSINESS

1.1 Adoption of the Agenda (Document 1) (for approval)

Secretariat Director noted a management improvement for both Executive Committee and Plenary in having all documents accessible on-line through a “clickable” agenda.

Document 1 was Approved.

1.2 Draft Report of the 31st Executive Committee Meeting (Document 2) (for approval)

Italy noted that Item 6: Selection of the Director did not reflect that Italy had abstained.

Document 2 was amended to read as follows: “*This item was taken up in several closed sessions resulting in the decision to reappoint without competition the incumbent for another term. Italy abstained from this decision. See appendix for additional detail.*” Document 2 was Approved.

1.3 Review of Actions from Previous Meetings (Document 3) (for approval)

The Chair asked for indications of whether all actions had been completed, without reviewing each item.

The Secretariat Director noted that there were an unusually large number of Action Items from the 31st Session of the Executive Committee, noting that more attention needs to be given in the future to ensuring that the Action Items are appropriately tasked, particularly those needing Executive Committee input.

The Chair endorsed the concept and noted that the Executive Committee must take responsibility for actions it has agreed to undertake, either through engagement with the Secretariat or with fellow Committee Members.

The Secretariat Director noted additions to the list of nominees for the Ministerial Working Group.

Document 3 was Approved.

1.4 Geneva Ministerial and GEO-X Summary Statistics (Document 4) (*for information*)

Estonia noted that the Estonia Ambassador to the UN participated in the Geneva Ministerial. The document was amended accordingly.

The Executive Committee discussed how to ensure higher participation among Ministers, noting that it is often a function of the subjects or questions to which the Ministers are being asked to respond. There are a number of weighty issues to which GEO can contribute. The degree to which the agenda reflects this will determine whether Ministers will participate and offer advice. GEO needs to ensure that the level of discussion is appropriate for the audience. The Committee also noted that many organizations cover similar issues. Therefore, it is crucial that GEO identify 2-3 agenda items that distinguish it from other organizations.

Document 4 was Approved.

2 SECRETARIAT OPERATIONS REPORT (DOCUMENT 5) (*FOR APPROVAL*)

The Secretariat Director noted the guidance received during the 30th Session of the Executive Committee was to articulate the Secretariat's direct contributions to the identified activities. The current Secretariat Operations Report attempts to accomplish that, as did the Operations Report delivered at the 31st Session of the Executive Committee. She noted that the Secretariat is open to suggestions on how to make further improvements. The Director provided a brief review of the Report.

The Executive Committee expressed appreciation for the increased transparency of the report and the Secretariat broadening its engagement with a number of key stakeholders. A caution was raised about the perceived decline in participation among Members of the GEO community; it might be useful for future reports to indicate what is being done to revitalize core participation. Discussion occurred around the need for two-way dialogue between the Secretariat and Caucuses to ensure that: 1) full advantage is being taken of the assistance and resources available to the Secretariat through the Caucuses; and 2) GEO Members are reinforcing GEO activities and accomplishments as opportunities arise in other venues.

The Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI) was noted as a highly successful attempt to assemble the entire pathway from data to impact that is tangible, and is an excellent example to demonstrate the value of GEO to Ministers. This kind of bridging is one of GEO's distinct contributions. Regarding the transition of GFOI, the Committee felt this was an instructive moment to identify the questions that should be considered when GEO constructs a GFOI or a GEOGLAM, including, what are the characteristics of assembling the value chain and how can they be preserved in the transition, and what ingredients are most important and how can they be protected? There are probably 5-6 important characteristics of a GFOI, but what are they? These considerations are pivotal to GEO's strategy going forward. There is a need to record what works so it can be applied to other global issues. Perhaps someone from the Monitoring and Evaluation community could help to develop this critical discussion. The lessons that could be learned from Japan's experience in the Asia Water Cycle Initiative were also noted. The Committee voiced interest in creating a future opportunity for deep discussion about strategic factors relating to GFOI.

Further discussion centered on the need to identify GEO's new initiatives for the new Implementation Plan, especially given the limited resources available to GEO. In addition, the Committee exchanged views on whether the Secretariat Operations Report was designed to be a management document; consensus was that it should remain a reporting document.

Document 5 was Approved.

3 PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT: SURVEY RESULTS (DOCUMENT 6) (FOR DISCUSSION)

The Chair opened the discussion stating that Document 6 provides a fair representation of the survey results, noting that some issues are not a simple numerical tally.

The Executive Committee discussed the document, expressing thanks to the United States for undertaking the initiative. Committee discussion covered a number of topics. Some Members expressed the view that the current Rules of Procedure were adequate regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat and any changes should be proposed by the Implementation Plan Working Group (IPWG). Members also felt the survey pointed out the need for the Executive Committee to perform better – to be more professional and encourage more Members to engage more fully. The survey highlighted issues of trust and how the Committee functions as a body; raised issues about the proper role of the Secretariat in coordination, negotiation and strategic planning; whether the mix of skills in the Secretariat is correct; and whether the Secretariat is properly resourced, especially looking forward to GEO's next decade.

Members also discussed issues regarding how the Executive Committee relates to the other GEO governing bodies, including the Boards and Plenary, and whether the Executive Committee works by consensus or single members can instruct the Secretariat on specific matters. Other issues raised included whether issues of governance can truly be addressed before political targets are identified and agreed, and whether the Executive Committee should meet more frequently and/or virtually.

The Committee discussed how to continue exploring the issues raised in the survey. The United States, Australia, European Commission, Japan and South Africa agreed to examine the survey in more detail and prepare a document for the 33rd Session of the Executive Committee. It was agreed the survey results could be shared with the IPWG.

Action 32.1 The United States, Australia, European Commission, Japan and South Africa on behalf of the Executive Committee will undertake further efforts to explore its roles and responsibilities prior to the 33rd session of the Executive Committee.

4 REPORT OF STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS (DOCUMENT 7) (FOR INFORMATION)

Patricia Geddes, GEO Secretariat, presented the report on the status of audit recommendations. As the GEO Secretariat is under the Financial Framework of the WMO, the audit recommendations regarding the Financial Framework indirectly affect GEO and, therefore, implementation of remedial actions by WMO to respond to audit recommendations are closely followed by the GEO Secretariat. In addition, within the 2013 Audit, the Auditors had highlighted two recommendations in the domain of Human Resources management. The GEO Director expressly accepted and implemented the WMO response to these recommendations during the course of 2014.

5 REPORT OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP (DOCUMENT 8) (FOR APPROVAL)

Andrea Tilche, European Commission, presented the document on behalf of the Budget Working Group (BWG) noting the good teamwork and collaborative spirit of the group, and its recommendation that the Executive Committee approve the 2015 Budget proposal.

Discussion focused, in part, on the relative advantages of using in-kind resources in lieu of Special Services Agreements (SSAs) to address specific, short-term needs in the Secretariat. Concerns were raised that the Secretariat may not have the same ability to set work expectations and evaluate performance with in-kind resources. In addition, by imposing that the Secretariat makes requests for voluntary, in-kind resources before turning to short-term contractual arrangements does not provide the Secretariat Director with the ability to evaluate the most appropriate action for each case. The Executive Committee discussed the appropriateness of the CHF 30,000 threshold for the recourse of resources through SSAs without first invoking the request for in-kind resources or implementing a competitive process.

The BWG noted that its recommended process of soliciting in-kind resources still allowed the Director to exercise managerial discretion in deciding whether to use an SSA, and that the CHF 30,000 threshold was thoroughly discussed and deemed to be far more stringent than the current WMO rules. Clarification was provided that the table of anticipated mission travel was intended only to be indicative and could be modified during the course of a given year.

The Executive Committee approved the report of the Budget Working Group and the proposed budget for 2015 was endorsed for presentation to Plenary.

6 PROPOSAL FOR RESTRUCTURING DOCUMENT PRESENTATION (DOCUMENT 9) (FOR APPROVAL)

The Chair reminded the Committee that this is the Secretariat's proposal to help the Committee optimize time spent on important items for consideration.

The Secretariat Director indicated that the intent is to present the Executive Committee, at future meetings, with those items that require fuller discussion, so the Committee can spend less time on items where there is likely to be little discussion. Any Executive Committee member could request a "not to be discussed" document be moved to the "discuss" category. The Secretariat would perform the initial triage, note expectations on the draft meeting agenda and provide draft report language in advance. The draft report language would be reviewed during the Executive Committee meeting. This new procedure would require the Secretariat to circulate meeting documents a week earlier than is current practice.

The Committee expressed its support for the proposal. Document 9 was Approved.

7 PROPOSAL FOR A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS FOR THE GEO SECRETARIAT DIRECTOR (DOCUMENT 10) (FOR APPROVAL)

The Chair asked the European Commission to present the document. The intent was to create an instrument to include a 360 degree appraisal of the Secretariat Director's performance that fits the needs of GEO, involving stakeholders who are involved in GEO. The evaluation process should be fair and transparent, yet there are portions that require confidentiality.

Discussion followed, including whether the proposed document is the best method for performance evaluation or whether it is a part of a broader appraisal process. 360 degree instruments are generally considered useful tools for coaching and development purposes. An objective performance assessment or assessment of achievements is also required. Clarity is needed between qualitative and quantitative assessments. Metrics need to be identified. Further clarity is needed regarding the assessment of the

Secretariat and the Secretariat Director. The Committee agreed that a performance assessment should be conducted annually, and the 360 degree appraisal could be conducted less often, perhaps every 18 months.

The Committee agreed the development of both the 360 degree appraisal and a separate performance assessment tool required further work. The European Commission and Australia will work to refine the 360 degree instrument, consulting with the Secretariat Director. The United States, on behalf of the Co-Chairs, will lead the effort to develop metrics of the Secretariat Director's performance (core competencies), looking to WMO's experience as a possible guide. The Secretariat Director will be consulted during the development of both tools. The next draft of the 360 degree appraisal will be circulated to the Committee within two weeks. A draft of the performance assessment will be circulated before the Christmas holiday.

Action 32.2: The European Commission and Australia, on behalf of the Executive Committee will reframe the 360 Degree Assessment before the end of the year. All Executive Committee Members are invited to provide feedback by 1 December. The Secretariat Director will also be invited to comment.

Action 32.3: The United States, on behalf of the Executive Committee, will develop annual performance metrics for appraisal of the Secretariat Director prior to year-end. All Executive Committee Members are invited to provide feedback by 1 December. The Secretariat Director will also be invited to comment.

8 DRAFT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESPONSE TO THE 5TH GEOSS EVALUATION (WEATHER, WATER, CLIMATE) (DOCUMENT 11) (FOR CONSULTATION)

Giovanni Rum, GEO Secretariat, presented the document recommendations, noting that most responses are looking forward towards full implementation in GEO's next decade.

Discussion followed and modifications were approved on Day Two of the meeting.

Recommendation 2: GEO could be more proactive in securing active Component Leads and Contributors.

The Executive Committee recognized the sensitivities of suggesting sub-par performance of volunteers, although the contributing partner should know if commitments are not being honored, especially regarding critical tasks. A mechanism should be developed to address this issue, which is being considered by the IPWG.

Modification: Add sentence -- The Executive Committee also recognizes the need to differentiate between more general voluntarily contributed components and those components forming part of the critical path to achievement of strategic targets. GEO should develop a mechanism to ensure contributions to critical components, once committed are then tracked and delivered, and notes that IPWG preliminary proposals are supportive of this approach.

Recommendation 3: GEO could make greater efforts to clarify roles and responsibilities between GEO and intergovernmental organizations.

The Executive Committee agreed that it should look at steps being considered by the IPWG that are fruitful and act on them now.

Modification: modify language following "concur with the recommendation..." and recognizes the need to continue to work to clarify the role that GEOSS should play as a major component of global initiatives, such as GFCS and IPCC, and of national activities. The Executive Committee also, considers that, in its report to GEO-XI, the IPWG has identified the steps to properly address the recommendation and will make sure that it will be taken into account when shaping GEO 2025.

Recommendation 4: Capacity-building could include more hands-on training and follow-up rather than seminars and conferences.

The Executive Committee agreed on the need to strengthen engagement at a national level to ensure capacity-building activities involve the right agencies and the right people, and to assess whether capacity is being incorporated into national activities and processes.

Modification: Modify 2nd sentence -- The Executive Committee requests, when defining task activities, to strengthen national involvement and to introduce proper provisions that would allow a suitable “impact assessment”, including uptake of the developed capacity into national activities and processes.

Recommendation 5: a) GEO could encourage improvements to infrastructure and observations in the gaps identified. Efforts could include outreach to nations that have not previously been engaged with GEOSS or maintained sufficient involvement. b) Members and organizations from Africa, Central/Northern Asia and Latin America could nominate more participants to activities related to the Weather, Water, Climate SBAs.

The Executive Committee agreed on the importance of increasing hydrological observations worldwide. A concerted effort by GEO on access and measurements in order to better forecast water conditions, given the influence of water on the food and energy sectors, among others, might provide a high-power focal point for GEO in the years ahead that could help engage members of the GEO community

Modification: Modify Response -- The Executive Committee concurs with the recommendations and underlines the strategic importance of increasing hydrological observations worldwide also in support of the water-food-energy nexus. The Executive Committee considers these recommendations as key guidelines for the IPWG work.

Recommendation 7: GEO could focus on analytics and analysis of user experience, competence and background.

The Committee agreed that it is important to evaluate user experience around the GEOSS Portal.

Modification: Modify Response -- The Executive Committee fully concurs with the recommendation. An action is given to the Portal development Team to revisit users’ experiences, to review practices in use by other Organizations (starting from GEO Participating Organizations) and to implement the provisions necessary to perform the suggested analysis on a recurring basis.

Recommendation 11: GEO could continue to monitor the TIGGE archive situation and promote an archive strategy for this data.

Modification: Add language following “data archives...”-- report back and provide recommendations.

Recommendation 12: (Key Finding 15a) A post-2015 GEOSS could be organized around societal sectors, such as agriculture, energy, health and transportation. This action could better focus GEOSS towards the user community.

The Committee noted that the finding is about objectives – we can reorganize our work, but that does not automatically translate to increased involvement. GEO needs to think about the tools and means to actually include end-users at the front end of conversations. IPWG is thinking about these issues; GEO needs to identify tools and methods to make that engagement happen in GEO 2.

Modification: Substitute 2nd Sentence -- The Executive Committee notes that rearrangement should be accompanied by the definition of tools and actions to actually engage users.

With those changes, Document 8 was accepted for presentation to GEO-XI Plenary. The Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (M&E WG) will present the Executive Committee’s response.

9 DRAFT GEO ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

9.1 Draft GEO Engagement Strategy (Document 12) (*for consultation*)

Bob Samors, GEO Secretariat, presented the Draft Engagement Strategy, which was revised based on discussion of the Draft GEO Engagement Strategy Roadmap at the 31st Session of the Executive Committee. Document 12 included definitions of GEO's various stakeholder communities, messages about the value of GEO to each of those communities and the anticipated value to GEO of engagement with each community. The document also indicated GEO's communications priorities and expectations of the results from resource mobilization efforts with various stakeholders.

The Committee acknowledged that the document represented further progress in developing an engagement strategy and expressed concerns in several areas including: the need for more specific information about priorities, objectives and implementation timelines, milestones and metrics; and the specific language in the proposed messages to stakeholders. Discussion also focused on the underlying need to clarify the GEO "product" that is being presented to stakeholders – developing infrastructure, products and tools, etc. Regarding resource mobilization, more attention must be given to those aspects of GEO that would compel the commercial sector to make cash contributions to the GEO Trust Fund or specific GEO activities.

The Committee considered the question of how to reach consensus on some of the questions raised by the document. The Committee also discussed how to gain input and feedback from Plenary on certain elements of the document and agreed that a brief presentation to Plenary on the proposed differentiation of stakeholders, and the mutual value to GEO and specific partners of engagement, would be valuable.

On Day Two, the Committee resumed discussion of engagement issues, focusing on a proposed presentation, "Framework for Engagement," prepared by the Secretariat, in consultation with Australia and the United States. The presentation would provide an update on the Executive Committee's views on an outreach and engagement approach that followed the guidance of Plenary and the Geneva Ministerial and Declaration, and provide a description of, and rationale for, the proposed differentiation of GEO's stakeholder communities. The presentation was discussed and agreed to with slight modifications. The European Commission agreed to make the presentation to Plenary.

9.2 Workshop on Engaging the Private Sector in GEOSS – a European Perspective

Gilles Ollier, European Commission, presented a summary report on the *Workshop on Engaging the Private Sector in GEOSS – a European Perspective*, which was organized by the European Commission and held in Brussels in September. In the context of the presentation, the private sector refers to the business sector only. The summary noted the following: 1) multi-sectoral companies represented the greatest proportion of participants; 2) GEO needs to define what it means by 'services'; 3) the participants supported establishment of a GEO-European private sector forum that would convene periodically; and 4) GEO needs to consider whether its interface with the private sector should occur globally, or caucus by caucus.

The Executive Committee thanked the Commission for a clear and comprehensive report, noting that it would help to crystallize some of the key points requiring decisions by the GEO community. Members noted some of the experiences of country governments regarding public-private partnerships; some have been more positive and productive than others, but the private sector generally has found ways to work with governments. The key is not to draw hard distinctions between public and private as technology, policies, services, etc. all change over time. The workshop reinforced the need to address the fundamental question of what it is that GEOSS is trying to produce or provide, especially considering a major interest of the private sector is to develop data-based applications. GEOSS needs to engage much further down the value chain to provide real added-value, keeping in mind that the foundational basis for GEO's second decade (Vision for 2025, Ministerial Declaration, IPWG) does not include GEO providing services. Issues that the Committee agreed

needed further examination included: Is there a process that allows GEO to turn data into information, or is assuring data quality as far as GEO can go? Is there a mechanism to secure private sector support to help assure the stability of data access? Should these conversations continue at the caucus level so GEO can better understand the differences in regional politics and practices?

9.3 Options for Commercial Sector Engagement in GEO (Document 13) (*for discussion*)

The Committee agreed that the issues raised in the Document had been taken into consideration during the discussion of Agenda Items 9.1 and 9.2.

Wednesday, 12 November

8 DRAFT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESPONSE TO THE 5TH GEOSS EVALUATION (WEATHER, WATER, CLIMATE) (DOCUMENT 11) (*FOR CONSULTATION*) - CONTINUED

Modifications to the Document were discussed and incorporated (see earlier text in Agenda Item 8).

10 REVIEW OF PLENARY DOCUMENTS (LISTED IN ORDER OF PLENARY AGENDA)

The Executive Committee reviewed the GEO-XI Plenary Agenda. Discussion on specific Agenda Items is noted below. All other Agenda Items and Documents were approved for Plenary without discussion or modification.

10.1 Draft Agenda (Plenary Document 1 – for approval)

The Secretariat Director reviewed the Plenary logistics.

The Executive Committee agreed the Agenda for Day One (Thursday) was in good order. The Committee agreed that the Plenary Chair and the IPWG presentation should highlight specific references to progress on implementing GEOSS (e.g., update on GCI, noting that the Appathon and AIP presentations under Featured Initiatives focus on applications using GEOSS data).

Regarding the Agenda for Day Two (Friday), it was agreed the Chair would begin with a summary of the key points from the discussions and feedback to the IPWG from Day One. Item 8: Formal Statements generated discussion about limiting time for oral statements. The Secretariat will provide the Chair a list of Members and Participating Organizations (POs) that have indicated intent to deliver Statements. There will be a timer visible to the Chair and speakers to help stay on track.

10.2 Recognition of New Members (Plenary Document 2 – for information)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.3 Evaluation of New Participating Organizations (Plenary Document 3 - for decision)

This document will be presented to Plenary by the Secretariat Director.

The Committee discussed whether to impose a moratorium on accepting new POs. Concerns were raised about the appropriate ratio of Members to POs, considering GEO is fundamentally an intergovernmental organization, and the wide disparity of participation levels across the POs. It was noted that the IPWG is examining fundamental issues of GEO governance, including the appropriate qualifications and roles of POs. Therefore, now is not the time to revise the Rules of Procedure. At the instruction of the previous Session of the Executive Committee, the Secretariat has modified the PO application to focus more on an applicant's expected contribution to GEO, including its individual community coordination responsibilities.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Plenary that a moratorium on new PO applications be put in place following action on the current slate of PO applicants, until the new Implementation Plan for 2016-2025 is acted upon.

The Executive Committee reviewed each of the PO applications and recommended approval by Plenary of the slate of POs listed in Table 2 of Plenary Document 3.

10.4 Evaluation of New Observers (Plenary Document 4 - for decision)

The Executive Committee recommended approval by Plenary of the slate of Observers listed in Table 1 of Plenary Document 4.

The Committee agreed that there would be no moratorium for Observers.

10.5 Draft Report of GEO-X (Plenary Document 5 – for approval)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.6 GEO Strategic Plan 2016-2025: Implementation Plan (Plenary Document 6 - for consultation)

This document will be put forward to Plenary for consultation.

Document 6 was presented by IPWG Co-Chairs Danielle Lacasse, Canada, and Toshio Koike, Japan. Stuart Minchin, Australia, and Yana Gevorgyan, United States, were also recognized as IPWG members present.

Summary of presentation: the IPWG has made a significant effort to broadly engage the GEO community, holding meetings on three continents; the transition to six project management mechanisms is designed to better align tasks and resources – getting the job done; the IPWG wanted to encourage both a top-down and bottom-up approach – the granularity of the implementation mechanisms allows for this; a strong Secretariat is necessary to underpin and help manage GEO activities; the IPWG felt that more analysis is needed in the area of Governance and wants Plenary's guidance before going further; the IPWG feels that a regionalized Secretariat would be closer to the communities; and the IPWG is proposing a series of touch points with the Executive Committee aligned with its meeting schedule, and would like feedback from the Committee on this.

The Executive Committee expressed its thanks and appreciation to the IPWG co-chairs and members, noting the significant amount of work that had been accomplished to date, and the manner in which the Working Group had taken up its mandate to develop a new action plan. The Committee applauded the Working Group for identifying issues that are still in the initial stages of thinking and where guidance from Plenary is required. The Committee noted that, given the resource implications of various elements of the draft, the document that will be reviewed by the Ministers must be presented as more than a yes/no decision; they need to be able to provide guidance on particular areas of focus.

Discussion focused on a range of issues, including: whether the Strategic Plan needed to be more explicit about building a data infrastructure, how it would be built and what are the milestones along the way; how to address the evolution of knowledge across domains (e.g., biodiversity and ecosystems); how to express and gain consensus on Governance options, especially regarding the role of POs; the need for the IPWG to prioritize its areas of focus over the next year; how to ensure the Ministers perceive themselves as playing an active role in determining the direction of GEO (i.e., include options and scenarios in the Plan presented for consideration); and issues surrounding GEO's legal status.

Australia and Russia recommended that governance topics should be discussed in detail, perhaps organized as a questionnaire to allow delegates to provide input. Some Members felt that it is not appropriate to allow POs a voice in the Executive Committee and/or Plenary. The main decision body is driven by governments.

The Committee recommended that a questionnaire on Governance issues, as proposed by the Russian Federation, be developed and circulated to Plenary. The IPWG will propose a two week deadline for comments.

10.7 Towards Data Management Principles (Plenary Document 7 - for consultation)

Extensive comments were received from 50 entities. Japan will make a statement during Plenary requesting more time be given to consider the implications for institutions of the proposed data management principles and the revision of data sharing principles.

The Executive Committee will recommend that Plenary extend the mandate and extend the Terms of Reference of the Task Force, with direction to bring its proposal to the 33rd Session of the Executive Committee.

10.8 Report on Data Sharing Principles Post-2015 and Mechanisms to Ensure Legal Interoperability of Shared Data (Plenary Document 8 – for consultation)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.9 Assessment of Progress – Targets and Tasks (Plenary Document 9 – for approval)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.10 Fifth Evaluation of GEOSS Implementation (Weather, Water, Climate) and Executive Committee Response (Plenary Document 10 – for approval)

This item was taken up with item 8.

10.11 Progress in the Implementation of Recommendations of GEOSS Evaluations (Plenary Document 11 – for approval)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.12 GEO 2012-2015 Work Plan Update (Plenary Document 12 – for approval)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.13 AfriGEOSS Implementation Plan (Plenary Document 13 - for approval)

The Executive Committee instructed that the Agenda indicate the Document be changed to “for consultation.”

10.14 2014 Report of the Executive Committee (Plenary Document 14 - for approval)

The Executive Committee reviewed the items in the Annex that were completed by the Co-Chairs. A few modifications were made which are reflected in the document to be presented to Plenary.

It was agreed that the United States will present the document to Plenary, highlighting the development of the Implementation Plan, priority issues and the direction of the Executive Committee for the coming year.

10.15 2013 Financial Statements and Report of the External Auditor (Plenary Document 15 – for approval)

The Executive Committee noted and this document was presented at the 31st session of the Executive Committee. It will be presented by WMO Finance Division.

10.16 Interim Report on Income and Expenditure (Plenary Document 16 – for information)

Patricia Geddes, GEO Secretariat, presented this report. She noted that the report also included a re-forecast of the expected expenditure taking into consideration a more accurate evaluation of the status of pledges and remittances to the Trust Fund. The re-forecasting process undertaken in March, June and September would constitute the milestones for the Budget Working Group in the future. As of 31 September the Trust Fund, including the GFOI initiative, was showing a deficit of CHF 1.2 million due to the late arrival of several of the largest pledges. The Secretariat is currently working with the donors to expedite the arrival of these pledges in the Trust Fund before year-end. The Executive Committee was reminded of the necessity to increase the reserve of the Working Capital Fund to improve a difficult cash flow situation due to the timing of pledges within the fiscal year.

10.17 Presentation of Proposed 2015 Budget (Plenary Document 17 – for approval)

This item was taken up with item 5.

10.18 Updates to Rules of Procedure (Plenary Document 18 - for approval)

It was recognized that the Rules of Procedure may need to change to reflect deliberations and decisions emerging from the IPWG process.

10.19 Membership of Implementation Boards (Plenary Document 19 – for approval)

The Executive Committee noted this document.

10.20 Ministerial Summit 2015 – Arrangements for Summit Preparation

The Executive Committee agreed to request Plenary to appoint a Ministerial Working Group (MWG) and discussed several skill sets that could be added to the MWG. Further nominations will, therefore, be requested. The Secretariat presented a draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group which were agreed to by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee agreed that it would be in GEO's best interest to hold the next Ministerial immediately prior to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) scheduled for 30 November – 11 December 2015 in Paris. The European Commission will engage with the Government of France on behalf of the Executive Committee.

Action 32.4: The Executive Committee requests the European Commission to use appropriate channels to negotiate with France regarding alignment of GEO-XII and the Ministerial with the Conference of Parties (CoP).

10.21 Any other business

Dates of 2015 Executive Committee meetings:

- 33rd Executive Committee 17-18 March;
- 34th Executive Committee 7-8 July;
- 35th Executive Committee, Plenary, Ministerial Week commencing 16 November.

Meeting adjourned at: 17h30

ANNEX

32nd GEO Executive Committee

List of Participants

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