

DRAFT AGENDA

Group on Earth Observations

Eighteenth Plenary Session – GEO-18

Accra, Ghana 2-3 November 2022

Wednesday, 2 November 2022

9:00 – 10:15 Session 1: Opening Session

1.1 Chair: Stephen Volz, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States

Welcome from Ghana and introduction to the Vice President: Dr Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana

Keynote address: Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President of Ghana

A voice from youth: Caryn Dasah, peacebuilder and social justice and gender equality advocate from Cameroon

GEO Lead Co-Chair:

- David Applegate, Director, U.S. Geological Survey, United States

GEO Co-Chairs:

- Guangjun Zhang, Vice Minister, Ministry of Science and Technology, China
- Joanna Drake, Deputy Director-General, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission
- Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa

GEO Secretariat Director, Yana Gevorgyan

1.2 Approval of Agenda

1.3 Approval of Draft Report of GEO-17

Session 1 Documents:

GEO-18-1.2 (Rev3): Draft Agenda (for decision)

[GEO-18-1.3: Draft Report of GEO-17](#) (for decision)

10:15 – 10.30 Group Photograph

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break

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11:00– 12:30 Session 2: Operational Services for Africa

2.1 Session Objectives: This session will demonstrate the value and uptake of Digital Earth Africa tools and services. In the space of three years, Digital Earth Africa has transitioned from an idea to a funded, operational programme that is informing better decisions across the continent. This session will explore Digital Earth Africa’s impact, links to the GEO Work Programme, and opportunities that currently exist with nine implementing partners and other leading initiatives across Africa, for example Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

Moderator:

- Atiewin Mbillah-Lawson

Speakers:

- Samuel Abu Jinapor, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Ghana
- Tidiane Ouattara, African Union Commission
- Thembi Xaba, Managing Director, Digital Earth Africa
- Samuel Kobina Annim, Government Statistician, Ghana
- Berenice Owen-Jones, High Commissioner to Ghana, Australia

2.2 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 2 Document for Information:

[GEO-18-2-Info-2.1: Operational Services for Africa](#)

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30 Session 3: Earth Observations for Nature-Based Solutions

3.1 Session Objectives: This panel discussion will showcase the opportunity for Earth observations (EO) to contribute to nature-based solutions, with a focus on how EO data can unlock the potential of wetlands for climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity conservation. The discussion will also look to EO for informing nature-based solutions to land degradation neutrality.

Although many multilateral environment agreements and societal applications depend on up-to-date, high quality land cover and ecosystems information, systems that can generate on-demand land cover and ecosystem extent products that can be customized for a wide range of users are not yet operationally available. However, recent advances in both science and technology now make the development of such systems possible. The panel will discuss what it will take to make this a reality.

Moderator:

- Madeeha Bajwa, Chief Work Programme Coordinator, GEO Secretariat

Speakers:

- Guy Loando Mboyo, Minister of Land Management, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Jillian Campbell, Head of Monitoring, Review and Reporting, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

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- Lisa-Maria Rebelo, Lead Scientist for Digital Earth Africa and Vice-Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention
- Barron Joseph Orr, Lead Scientist, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
- George Ortsin, Country Programme Coordinator, UNDP Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme
- Lawrence Friedl, Director of the Applied Sciences Program of Earth Science Division at NASA Headquarters, United States
- François Soulard, Research Manager, Census of Environment, Canada

3.2 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 3 Documents for Information:

[GEO-18-3-Info-3.1: Earth Observations for Nature Based Solutions](#)

15:30– 16:00 Coffee

16:00 – 17:30 **Session 4: Road to GEO Post-2025**

4.1 Session Objectives: GEO has embarked on the Road to GEO Post-2025. The next generation of GEO will be more agile, more proactive, and more aligned with the needs of its users, leading to increased impact.

Five months into the process, the post-2025 working group will present its latest findings and seek feedback from the GEO plenary, using interactive tools and discussions.

The working group will develop the basis for renewing the mandate of GEO at the GEO Ministerial Summit 2023.

Moderator:

- Katy Matthews, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States

Speakers:

- Melanie Hutchinson, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, United Kingdom
- Yuqi Bai, Tsinghua University, China
- Angelica Gutierrez, AmeriGEO
- Humbulani Mudau, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa
- Alejandro Román, Paraguay Space Agency, Paraguay
- Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director

4.2 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 4 Document:

[GEO-18-4.1: Interim Report of the Post-2025 Working Group](#) (for discussion)

Thursday, 3 November

09:00 – 10:30 Session 5: Future-proofing National Adaptation Plans

5.0 Review of Day One

- Erika Alex, Chief of Staff, GEO Secretariat

5.1 Future-proofing National Adaptation Plans

Session objective: Countries learn about ongoing technical support to develop and implement Earth observation-based monitoring systems to improve the effectiveness of early warning and early action in the context of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to climate change across key sectors. Experts and government representatives discuss and identify opportunities to unlock finance for developing countries to integrate Earth observations into NAPs. GEOGLAM launches the new GEO Supplement to the UNFCCC NAP Technical Guidelines, which will be followed by guidelines by GEOGLoWS and other GEO initiatives.

Moderator:

- Atiewin Mbillah-Lawson

5.2 Keynote address:

- Paul Desanker, Manager of the Adaptation Programme, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat

5.3 Presentations on integrating Earth observations into early warning systems and NAPs.

Speakers:

- Esther Makabe, Capacity Development Coordinator, GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring Initiative (GEOGLAM)
- Samuel Joseph Gama, Principal Mitigation Officer, Department of Disaster Management Affairs, Malawi

5.4 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 5 Documents for Information:

[GEO-18-5-Info-5.1: Future-proofing National Adaptation Plans](#)

[GEO-18-5-Info-5.3: GEO Supplement to the UNFCCC NAP Guidelines.](#)

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 Session 6: Collective Action on Oceans, Climate and Biodiversity

6.1 Session objective: This session aims to demonstrate how an integrated approach to oceans, climate and biodiversity can achieve impact. Experts identify cooperation opportunities to address the challenges of climate change, biodiversity shift in the ocean using Earth observations, and to engage with governments, toward better alignment to support the needs of the UN CBD, UNFCCC, UN Decade for Ocean Science and other relevant processes. GEO Blue

Thursday, 3 November

Planet presents steps taken towards coordination to deliver tools and operational services and greater connectivity with users and members.

Moderator:

- Atiewin Mbillah-Lawson

6.2

Keynote address:

- Nicole LeBoeuf, Assistant Administrator for NOAA's National Ocean Service, United States

6.3

Formal remarks:

- Tosi Mpanu Mpanu, Ambassador and Chair of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Technological and Scientific Advice, Democratic Republic of Congo

6.4

Presentation on the outcomes of GEO Blue Planet Symposium:

- Nikelene Mclean, Knauss Marine Policy Fellow, NOAA, United States

6.5

Panel discussion on cooperation.

Speakers:

- Isa Elegbede, Lecturer, Lagos State University, Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (MBON), Nigeria
- Toste Tanhua, Senior Scientist, Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and EuroSea project, Germany

6.6

Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 6 Document for Information:

[GEO-18-6-Info-6.1: Collective action on Oceans, Climate and Biodiversity](#)

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch

14:00 – 15:30

Session 7: The Way Ahead: Plenary Business and Decisions

7.1

Welcome to new Members and Participating Organizations

- Plenary Chair

7.2

Recommendations from the Expert Advisory Group on GEOSS

- Neil Sims, EAG Co-Chair
- Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director

7.3

GEO Work Programme 2023-2025

- Evangelos Gerasopoulos, GEO Programme Board Co-Chair

7.4

2021 Financial Statements and Audit Report

- Brian Cover, WMO Finance

Thursday, 3 November

- 7.5 2023 GEO Secretariat Trust Fund Budget and Pledges
- Lawrence Friedl, GEO Budget Working Group Co-Chair
- 7.6 Executive Committee Members for 2023
- Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director
- 7.7 Programme Board Members for 2023
- Wenbo Chu, Work Programme Officer, GEO Secretariat

Session 7 Documents:

[GEO-18-7.2: Final Report of the Expert Advisory Group on GEOSS](#) (for decision)

[GEO-18-7.3: 2023-2025 Work Programme](#) (for decision)

[GEO-18-7.4: 2021 Financial Statements and Audit Report](#) (for decision)

[GEO-18-7.5 \(Rev1\): 2023 GEO Secretariat Budget](#) (for decision)

Session 7 Document for Information

[GEO-18-7-Info-7.1: New Members, Participating Organizations and Associates](#)

[GEO-18-7-Info-7.3: Mapping the Engagement of the 2020-2022 GEO Work Programme](#)

15:30– 16:00 Coffee

16:00 – 17:30 Session 8: Closing Session: Recognizing Youth, PPPs and Excellence in GEO

- 8.1 Chair: Stephen Volz, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States
- Showcase highlights from the youth and industry tracks
- Mary Namukose, Women in Geographical Information System (GIS), Uganda
 - Patricia Cummins, Esri
- 8.2 Awards Ceremony
- Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director
 - Lawrence Friedl, EO4SDG Co-Chair
- 8.3 Announcement of GEO-19 and 2023 Ministerial Summit
- South Africa
- 8.4 Announcement of the members for the Ministerial Working Group
- Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director
- 8.5 Review of Plenary Outcomes
- Erika Alex, Chief of Staff, GEO Secretariat
- 8.6 Closing Remarks:

Thursday, 3 November

- Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana
- Yana Gevorgyan, Director, GEO Secretariat

GEO Lead Co-Chair:

- David Applegate, Director, U.S. Geological Survey, United States

GEO Co-Chairs:

- Guangjun Zhang, Vice Minister of Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology (China)
- Joanna Drake, Deputy Director-General, DG Research and Innovation (RTD), European Commission (European Commission)
- Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General, Department of Science and Technology (South Africa)

Session 8 Document for Information:

[GEO-18-8-Info-8.3: Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Working Group](#)(Min-WG) (for information)