



GROUP ON  
EARTH OBSERVATIONS

## GEO-VIII

16-17 November 2011

Establishment of a Post-2015 Working Group

Document 25

As accepted at GEO-VIII



## **Establishment of a Post-2015 Working Group**

The GEO Beijing Declaration adopted in 2010 confirmed the need “to meet before the end of 2013 to review the progress of implementation against the GEOSS Strategic Targets and the recommendations for the governance, role and future work of GEO beyond 2015 and to take the necessary decisions.” These critical decisions, which are expected to be finalized at a third GEO Ministerial Summit, will require a great deal of advance preparation and guidance by the GEO Plenary.

The Mid-term Evaluation of GEOSS Implementation recommended that GEO develop a long-term strategy to ensure the sustainability of GEOSS beyond 2015. This document was accepted by the GEO-VII Plenary in November 2010. It included a management response from the Executive Committee proposing that the Committee present a paper on the post-2015 issue to GEO-VIII. The Executive Committee therefore worked from March through September 2011 in order to propose a way forward for the Plenary’s consideration.

Based on this work, the Executive Committee recommends that the Plenary establish a Post-2015 Working Group to prepare a document for acceptance at the GEO-X Plenary meeting in 2013, together with inputs for a declaration to be adopted by ministers and other participants in the associated ministerial summit. This document should address such issues as the scope, institutional arrangements, internal governance and resources required for post-2015 GEO and GEOSS. The proposed terms of reference for this Working Group are annexed to this document.

This open-ended Working Group will initiate its activities in 2012. GEO Principals from both Members and Participating Organizations will be invited to nominate participants in the Working Group by February 2012.

The first meeting of the Working Group will be held in the March-April 2012 timeframe in Geneva, shortly after the meeting of the Executive Committee. The Working Group will select its chair(s) and agree on its working schedule at this first meeting. The Working Group will report regularly on its progress to the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Plenary and seek their guidance.

The Executive Committee is currently in the process of finalizing a discussion paper setting out various options and highlighting key decisions for the post-2015 period. The Executive Committee proposes that the completed paper be distributed to the Working Group and posted on the GEO website by March 2012. The aim of this paper is to provide the Working Group with a useful starting point for its initial discussions.

It is proposed that the GEO-VIII Plenary discusses the process for taking decisions on the post-2015 period as presented in this document. The more substantive debate about the post-2015 future of GEO and GEOSS will take place at GEO-IX and GEO-X following the recommendations put forward by the Post-2015 Working Group

## **Annex**

### **POST-2015 WORKING GROUP**

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **1 MANDATE**

The open-ended Post-2015 Working Group will assess options and scenarios for the next phase of GEOSS implementation as well as the institutional arrangements, internal governance and resourcing of GEO. It will produce recommendations that will be forwarded to the GEO-IX and to the GEO-X Plenary and to the 2013 Ministerial Summit for decisions.

##### **2 OUTPUTS**

The Working Group will produce an Interim Report for the GEO-IX Plenary and a Final Report for the GEO-X Plenary and 2013 Ministerial Summit. It will also generate inputs for a Summit Declaration.

##### **3 ACTIVITIES AND SCHEDULE**

The Post-2015 Working Group will:

- Hold first meeting in Geneva in March or April 2012;
- Report on progress to the following meeting of the Executive Committee, probably in July 2012, and submit an initial draft of the Interim Report to Plenary;
- Hold one or more additional meetings and/or teleconferences during 2012, as decided by the Working Group at its first meeting;
- Report on progress to the GEO-IX Plenary in late 2012 and submit the written Interim Report. This Interim Report should present options and scenarios for the post-2015 period; ideally it will already include views of the benefits and drawbacks of each option as well as recommendations on which options to continue exploring;
- Take into account the views expressed by Members and Participating Organisations at the GEO-IX Plenary when further refining the options and scenarios presented in the Interim Report;
- Hold meetings and continue its discussions in 2013 in a manner agreed by the Working Group. Report on progress and submit updated drafts of the Final Report to meetings of the Executive Committee;
- Present the Final Report to GEO-X and the 2013 Ministerial Summit with detailed recommendations for the post-2015 future of GEO and GEOSS.

The mandate of the Working Group will expire at the end of the 2013 Ministerial Summit unless the Plenary takes action to renew it.