



GROUP ON  
EARTH OBSERVATIONS

## GEO-VI

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Report of the Ministerial Summit Task Force

Document 11

for information



## Report of the 2010 Ministerial Summit Task Force

### 1 PREPARATION AND PLANNING

The 2010 Ministerial Summit Task Force was established by the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Committee in response to a request by the GEO-V Plenary. Following a call for nominations, the Task Force comprises representatives of Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, the European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine, the USA, the Committee on Earth Observations Satellites (CEOS), EUMETSAT, and the European Space Agency (ESA). The Task Force is supported by the GEO Secretariat.

The Task Force held its first teleconference on 17 September 2009 and its first meeting on 22-23 October. This meeting, which was held in Geneva, invited Mr Zhao Datong (China), Mr Gilles Ollier (EC) and Mr David Grimes (Canada) to serve as co-chairs of the Task Force.

The Task Force decided to organize its work according to the schedule in annex.

The Task Force agreed that the scope of its work will be to:

- Define the themes and content of summit products;
- Define the process and prepare the draft Summit Declaration.

The Task Force identified the following messages as being prominent guidance elements for the organisation of the 2010 Summit:

- Renewing and enhancing the commitment to the goals and directions of GEO;
- Highlighting the achievements of GEOSS implementation:
  - as related to the Cape Town Declaration, e.g. data sharing principles;
  - as they contribute to international goals;
  - recognizing the value added of NGOs;
  - GEO is reversing the fragmentation in Earth observation systems;
  - GEO is filling in gaps, e.g. a carbon verification system;
  - GEO is achieving its (14 updated) Targets;
  - GEO contributes to global assessments, e.g. biodiversity, climate;
  - the low cost of GEO related to its high economic benefits.
- Recognize the importance of sustainable Earth Observation Systems;
- Recognize the particular importance of sustainable in situ systems;
- Anticipate a 2013 Summit and the GEO agenda up to and beyond 2015;
- Ministers can add value to GEO through links to political processes.

## **2 PROMOTION OF SUMMIT**

The first promotion tool will be a letter to Ministers encouraging them to reserve the date of the Summit. This should be distributed in December to Ministers of Foreign Affairs with copies to Ministers who are linked to GEO principals. This letter should make reference to the overarching theme(s) of the Summit.

A second letter, accompanied by a GEO promotional brochure and a more complete version of the achievements document, will describe the key messages, outline the broad issues to be framed in the declaration, and highlight the importance of Ministerial participation (their value-added contribution), and should be sent by March/April. This letter and documentation will also be adapted and distributed to Principals together with the draft declaration for their comments. The Task Force is also considering promoting the GEO Ministerial by interacting with Ministerial staffers via a “Sherpa” process and organizing a promotional event(s) to raise awareness of the Ministerial, perhaps linked to a major international meeting.

## **3 OUTREACH TOOLS**

The Task Force recommends that the GEO Community overall is invited to contribute to outreach events and tools so that all current GEO activities can be demonstrated on the occasion of the 2010 Summit. At the Cape Town Ministerial Summit in 2007, the GEO community promoted its “early achievements” by presenting a “Report on Progress” highlighting “The First 100 Steps to GEOSS”, a popular full-colour book entitled “The Full Picture”, and a large Exhibition. These tools proved to be effective and can be reprised and adapted for the purposes of the 2010 Summit.

To advance the work on the Progress Report, the Secretariat will invite Task leads to prepare reports on achievements that could be elaborated and presented in written form. The Secretariat will recommend a format or structure for these reports to ensure consistency.

The Secretariat will also contact the GEO Community and the GEO tasks so that they can participate to the exhibition. This exhibition should be the opportunity on one hand for organizations and countries to exhibit and on the other hand for the GEO community to demonstrate GEO as a whole by showing the integrated outcome resulting from the GEO tasks.

Other possible outreach tools for promoting GEO’s achievements include videos, CDROMs, side events and testimonials from prominent persons.

To engage the participating Ministers more fully, the Task Force plans to explore the organization of a thematic Ministerial roundtable, a working lunch, a high-profile inauguration of the Exhibition, and press events.

## **4 SHOWCASES**

In addition to presenting the breadth and sweep of GEO’s achievements, the Task Force believes that highlighting a limited number of compelling themes or “showcases” would be an effective way of communicating a clear message to Ministers.

The Task Force proposes to solicit proposals from the GEO community and then to identify a limited number of showcases at its February meeting. These showcases might, for instance, include achievements that are regional in nature (e.g. Asia Water Cycle), one overarching achievement on capacity building, and achievements on high-profile issues (e.g. the global carbon monitoring system). Other criteria for identifying suitable showcases could include:

- Fits with chosen themes and focus of agenda;
- Builds on the guidance that Ministers provided in the Cape Town Declaration;

- Demonstrates how GEOSS contributes to major international goals and global assessments;
- Demonstrates how GEOSS fills in gaps, adds value, reduces costs, and/or integrates data;
- Should represent a benchmark for strong future potential for GEOSS;
- Should link to high profile (political) issues of the day – political relevance to policy making;
- Should have a focus on services to decision-makers aligned around socio-economic benefit areas;
- Should highlight the cross-cutting nature of GEOSS and GEO;
- Should demonstrate how it contributes to capacity building.

Sources of ideas for proposed showcases may include:

- The Committees will be invited to provide together up to a total of 10 proposals;
- The Monitoring & Evaluation process, the revised Targets, the SBAs and transverse areas;
- The UIC/CBC Call for Proposals, which generated 100-plus initiatives.

## **5 THE DECLARATION**

Work on drafting the Declaration will begin in February. The Task Force intends to engage with the GEO community and with Ministerial staffers as it prepares the outline of this first draft. This draft will respond to, and build on, the Cape Town Declaration, making particular note of the implementation of the Data Sharing Principles and the need to ensure the sustainability of GEOSS. It may be appropriate or useful for this draft to reaffirm GEO's potential and uniqueness, anticipate the agenda of the 2013 Ministerial, the conclusion of the 10-Year Implementation Plan in 2015, and the need to sustain GEO beyond 2015. It may also address the potential for GEOSS to advance key global issues (e.g. the Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change). Also worth considering would be to outlining the benefits for GEO participants to contributing to the development of GEOSS, in particular in view of solving regional and national issues.

The Task Force proposes that the Co-Chair from China, with the full support of the Task Force and the Secretariat, take the lead in preparing this first draft. Based on the guidance of the GEO-VI Plenary, the first draft of the Declaration should be reviewed by the Task Force at its February meeting. The draft Declaration will then be distributed to GEO Principals as early as possible for their inputs.

**ANNEX****TASK FORCE SCHEDULE****October - December 2009**

- Request GEO Principals to identify the correct Minister(s) for invitations in November;
- Invite Committees to provide their ideas for “showcases” (achievements) in November, with a 10 January 2010 deadline;
- Report to the GEO-VI Plenary meeting in November and incorporate its comments and feedback;
- Assemble contact list of Ministers and key staff contacts in December;
- China, supported by the Secretariat, to send out first announcement to governments in December.

**January - August 2010**

- Task Force to hold its second teleconference on 15 January;
- Task Force to hold its second meeting in early February;
- Second announcement, with one-page prospectus for Ministerial staffers, to be sent in March/April;
- Reminder to Principals with detailed information on themes and activities in August.