



Regional GEOSS and PB Subgroup Telecon

Summary

Thursday 3 May 2018, 13:00-15:00 CET

Monday 7 May 2018, 13:00-14:00 CET

PARTICIPANTS

- AfriGEOSS: Zipho Tyoda
- AmeriGEOSS: Angelica Gutierrez, Wade Price
- AOGEOSS: Toshio Koike
- EuroGEOSS: Michel Schouppe
- PB subgroup: Hiroyuki Muraoka (Japan), Imraan Saloojee (South Africa), Jonathan Ross (Australia), Bente Bye (Norway), Suchith Anand (GODAN), Siri-Jodha Khalsa (IEEE), Mark Reichardt (OGC)
- GEO Secretariat: Douglas Cripe, Akiko Noda, Wenbo Chu

ACTIONS

1. Each RG to send comments on the 5 Questions to GEO SEC by 31 May.
2. GEO SEC to circulate an email to the RGs to discuss the settings of the GEO Symposium session around mid-May.
3. Each RG to inform the GEO SEC of the presenter for the GEO Symposium session by 31 May.
4. Each RG to inform the GEO SEC of the presenter for the ExCOM meeting by 31 May.

SUMMARY

The two teleconferences, chaired by Saloojee and Cripe respectively, started with introduction on functions and duties of this Programme Board subgroup. The expected outcome of the subgroup was portrayed: a set of recommendations how the coordination among the Regional GEOSS (RGs) would be achieved, including the possibility of establishing a semi-formal structure within GEO WP where RGs can meet. Also the aim of the telecons were elaborated: to have a first outreach, to get inputs on necessity of coordination, and to get comments on the five questions shared earlier.

The following five aspects were discussed:

1. Communication around Regional GEOSS

It is critical to understand that the RGs have their own priorities mandated by the Caucuses.

The priorities discussed globally will not be useful if the benefits do not flow to national and regional level. Without intentional efforts to draw the linkage, a lot of things will be lost.

Consensus was reached that there should be communication in all directions: top-down, bottom up, RGs with thematic Initiatives, RGs with Secretariat, as well as RGs with PB and ExCOM. Particularly, it



is helpful to have regularly telecons (say every 3 months) among GEO SEC and RGs to exchange information.

2. Feedback on the five questions

a. Key achievements of each RG at the regional level, and how it contributes to the WP

- AmeriGEOSS: four priority areas are agriculture, biodiversity, disaster and water.
- AfriGEOSS: Direct focus of AfriGEOSS: agriculture, land cover, forest, water resource management
- EuroGEOSS: Launched in DC, Oct 2017. A concept paper developed, planning next 3 years. The coordination group involves both Member countries in Europe and POs. Do not highlight SBAs. Use 3 engage priorities and EU environment priorities. Aim to develop apps potential to the users and market. Establish Community of Practice in Europe, pushing further many initiatives funded, by H2020 programme, ESA and national projects. EuroGEOSS activities: inventorying of what's happening, clustering people and activities, upscaling low-hanging fruits, synergizing Copernicus and EuroGEOSS.
- AOGEOSS: The five Task groups (TGs), AWCI, APBON, GEO Carbon, Ocean and society and Asia-Rice have been established through the activities of GEOSS-AP in the last 10 years and are connected with Implementation mechanisms, GEO-GLOWS, GEO BON, GEO-C, BluePlanet and GEOGLAM. The other TGs in AOGEOSS are also connected with activities in WP.

And how it contributes to the WP

RG's activities are generally initiated by local and regional needs. RGs work to network and help implementation of the existing local and regional activities. The linkage between RG's activities and global thematic WP are not clear in many cases.

- AOGEOSS: With 10 years history (AP Symposium), AOGEOSS activities are already connected with GEO Initiatives. There have been some efforts to identify linkage with SDGs, Climate Change and Disaster in each task.
- AmeriGEOSS; Their four priority areas (agriculture, biodiversity, disaster and water) were not selected considering to neither climate change nor the SDGs. The Latin American countries work on the ILAC indicators instead of SDGs. If GEO priorities that don't fall within RG priorities are expected to be implemented, resources (both human power to champion the activities and fund) would need to be made available.
- EuroGEOSS takes up the three engagement priorities of GEO but will not directly align with any GEO Initiative – the method of implementation is to form a Community of Practices to advance market-oriented applications.

b. Identification of Gaps

There are several under implemented SBAs. It is a question if the RGs can take them up as additional priority. The Health Community of Practice runs the early-warning system based in north America. There is a desire to implement it globally or by each RG. AmeriGEOSS perspective: there is no community of health currently. Without a champion, it is difficult to take things forward no matter globally or regionally. AfriGEOSS perspective: Malaria is still the priority; transportation community



does not exist, infrastructure mapping is ongoing, sustainable urban development is potential. This could be further discussed at the GEO Symposium.

Specific gaps of each RG:

- AfriGEOSS: Gaps due to funding, limited the implementation of AfriGEOSS
- AOGEOSS: to connect to the regional political architecture, groups like APEC, AZIAN, and the Pacific Islands forum.
- AOGEOSS: Secretariat function by Japan, Australia, China for Daily communication still depend on GEO Secretariat, need to develop capacity for daily communication.

c. Discussion of contributions to SBAs See the attached Mapping exercise.

d. The added-value of working as an RG

- AfriGEOSS: enables dialogs among African member states. The project on land cover enables countries to collaborate.
- AmeriGEOSS: Implementation globally has difficulty to get to the ground level. RGs are closer to decision makers, not only at national levels but also local ones.
- AOGEOSS: Having RG gives another option of organizing EO relevant activities. There are challenges better to deal with at global level, and others better at regional level. RG is another option to bringing people to work on particular challenges. It is helpful to gain political support to projects. Governments might think a project at regional scale worth investing while contribution to a global effort is a bit more vague. One thing AOGEOSS needs to do is to connect to the regional political architecture, groups like APEC, AZIAN, and the Pacific Islands forum. When these political group agree on some priorities, it is good opportunity to respond at regional level. The pacific nations are under-represented in GEO. AOGEOSS is a good way to bring them into GEO family. They are more likely to start participation at regional scale instead of global effort. Global GEO event may have too many irrelevant activities for a small country.
- AOGEOSS: The importance of regional coordination has been recognized in the first 10-year of GEO. In the first 10-year implementation plan, regional coordination was actually proposed, but then not included in the final version. That's why the AP Symposium was created. While in the new strategic plan, the regional coordination mechanism is well defined. Regional activities enable the community to tackle the challenges across the thematic areas. Regional commonalities and differences. Regional contents (contexts).
- EuroGEOSS: making the link with users in Europe, because going from the global partnership to regional, national, and local requires European approach. Working at European level is not sufficient, also relying on national and subnational levels. This is why beyond the activity of making an inventory, beyond launching CoP to upscale EuroGEOSS applications, EuroGEOSS also reinforces the national management structures. The idea is to how those active countries organize GEO activities, and how these could be mainstreamed or at least shared with other GEO Members, so that they can advance their national structure and being active in global and EuroGEOSS.
- Around small island nations, AOGEOSS and AmeriGEOSS can talk to each other, share experience on how to include the Island nations in the respective regions and how to more engage them in GEO.



e. Interoperability under GEOSS

EuroGEOSS: No plan to build a data platform, rather to reuse GEOSS Platform, DIAS (operational this June), access to Copernicus data and services and other data in Europe. NEXT-GEOSS: a research project expected to deliver what will be the future European Data Hub, but not operational yet.

3. Definition of RGs

There was consensus that the current inclusion of RG's as initiatives in the WP was less than optimal, rather they should be more of a structural element of GEO. The RG is something different from more thematic Initiatives and Flagships. RGs encompass many things, not just a particular SBA theme. The PB looks at ways of presenting RGs in a different way, probably just taking them out from the Initiative category, putting into a separate category such as RG implementation. This is not to diminish anything, but actually enhance the visibility of RG in the WP. RGs are encouraged to provide thoughts to SEC. This is a topic to be discussed at the next PB meeting (scheduled June 14-15).

Ross: RG only based on caucus vs more flexible approach: flexible approach is fine if the countries in the regional have specific challenges on which to work together. So the PB should check there is a critical mass of countries and political support from a large number of countries of that region. Should not create RGs out of interest of individuals.

Koike: we don't need to define a standardized RG, but prototype RGs based on current practice.

4. RGs outreach opportunities

- RG Session at GEO Symposium: some revision made. GEO SEC will circulate an email to the RGs to discuss the settings of the session
- RG Presentation at July ExCOM: Brief presentation from each RG, 2-3 slides, focusing on key success, key issues and key challenges, not just update on activities. Possible to deliver presentations by WebEx.
- RG Session at Asia-Oceania Day (Kyoto Plenary Side Event): a panel discussion on RGs will be organized.