

Proposed Process and Focus for Review of Implementation Plans

This document is submitted to the Program Board for decision.

1 INTRODUCTION

The 2020-2022 GEO Work Programme is the second three-year Work Programme to be developed within the framework of the GEO Strategic Plan 2016-2025. This provides an opportunity to reflect on the experience gained through Programme Board reviews of Implementation Plans, both during the initial development of the 2017-2019 Work Programme as well as reviews of individual Implementation Plans submitted through the three-year period, and to make improvements to the process and criteria used in those reviews.

This document aims to provide a structure to assist Programme Board members to consider some of the key aspects relevant for deciding on how best to approach the review of proposed Implementation Plans for the 2020-2022 GEO Work Programme.

2 REVIEW PROCESS

2.1 Context

The first phase of development of the Work Programme (the “initiation phase”) consists of the preparation of new and revised Implementation Plans by the GEO community in response to a call issued by the Secretariat. This phase is expected to be completed by 15 February 2019, although it may be anticipated that some Plans may be received after this date.

The review of the Implementation Plans begins once the draft Plans are received. This second phase of Work Programme development (the “consolidation phase”) continues through to the distribution of the draft Work Programme to GEO Principals for approval at the GEO-XVI Plenary. This phase includes not only the review of the Plans by the Programme Board and the Secretariat, but also the dialogue with the proposers of the Plans to seek any revisions or adjustments required.

As was outlined in the call for Implementation Plans, there are three “tracks” for Implementation Plans, corresponding to the different Implementation Mechanisms and using somewhat different templates. The review process will differ according to these tracks.

- **Track 1 (GEO Flagships and Initiatives):** These Implementation Plans will be reviewed by both the Programme Board and the Secretariat. Programme Board will take a lead role in the review and interaction with the proposers of these Plans and Programme Board is responsible for their approval for inclusion in the Work Programme. This track is expected to involve the largest portion of Programme Board member time devoted to Work Programme development.
- **Track 2 (Community Activities):** The Secretariat is responsible for review of Implementation Plans from Community Activities and interaction with the proposers. Programme Board will be briefed on the status and outcomes of these reviews. The discussion of the process below assumes that Programme Board members will not be asked to review Community Activity Implementation Plans.

- **Track 3 (Regional Groups on Earth Observations):** This is a new category of activities created by the GEO-XV Plenary on the recommendation of Programme Board. Implementation Plans from Regional GEOs will be reviewed by both the Programme Board and the Secretariat with the aim of improving the Plans, though approval is automatic for activities meeting the requirements (sponsorship/oversight by the relevant GEO Caucus).

In addition to the three tracks of Implementation Plans originating in the GEO Community, there will also be Implementation Plans for Foundational Tasks. These will be prepared by the Secretariat and reviewed by the Programme Board. These will be dealt with in greater detail in document PB-12-05.

The number of Implementation Plans that will need to be reviewed by Programme Board may be estimated based on the current Work Programme. Currently, there are four GEO Flagships, 26 Initiatives (excluding Regional Initiatives), and four Regional Initiatives. It is expected that most existing Flagships and Initiatives will submit new Implementation Plans. Some additional Implementation Plans are also expected under Track 1, including from some of the existing Community Activities. It is expected that all of the existing Regional GEOs will submit new Plans, with a maximum of one additional Plan possible based on the number of GEO Caucuses. The number of Plans that will need to be reviewed by the Programme Board is therefore estimated as between 30 and 50, though most likely fewer than 40.

2.2 Options for Structuring the Review

Considerable effort was put into the development of the review process for the 2017-2019 Work Programme and several features of this process appear to be important to retain:

- Each Implementation Plan should be reviewed by at least three Programme Board members.
- Reviewers should not include any Programme Board member who is a participant in the Work Programme activity being reviewed. Programme Board members who are participants in Work Programme activities can review Implementation Plans of other activities in which they are not participants.
- Comments on each Implementation Plan from all reviewers should be consolidated into a single set of comments to be provided back to the Implementation Plan proposers.
- Differences between the comments of individual reviewers should be resolved prior to the comments being sent to the proposers.
- Comments from reviewers should not be individually identified, that is, the comments should be presented collectively from the Programme Board.
- One person should act as the point of contact between the proposers of each Initiative/Flagship and the reviewers.

Within these areas of agreement, there still exists some scope for multiple ways to structure the review process. With respect to the **organization of the review teams**, the two principal options are:

1. Each review team could be tasked to review a set of several Implementation Plans, which may be grouped according to similarities between them. For example, one team might address Plans dealing with primarily with water issues, while another team might address Plans focused on biodiversity and ecosystems.
2. Review teams could be unique to each Implementation Plan. Programme Board members could be assigned to review Plans randomly, by preference of the reviewer, by best fit of expertise, or a combination of these.

The Secretariat recommends option 1, noting that there may be some Implementation Plan proposals that do not fit easily into any consistent grouping. This approach should improve the efficiency of

interactions between team members as it would allow for discussion of several Plans with the same team members. It may also allow for the teams to develop a stronger working relationship than having to deal with different team members on each Plan.

With respect to the **integration of Programme Board and Secretariat comments**, the two principal options are:

- A. Secretariat comments on the Implementation Plans could be consolidated with those from Programme Board members.
- B. Secretariat comments could be provided separately from those of the Programme Board review team, either as a separate step in the process or as a separate document sent to the proposers at the same time.

The Secretariat recommends option A. Discussion of the comments from the Secretariat together with those of Programme Board members is seen as mutually beneficial to both sides as well as providing greater clarity and consistency for proposers.

With respect to **participation on the review teams**, there are two principal options:

- I. Participation could be limited to only one representative per GEO Member or Participating Organization on the Programme Board. This would provide a potential pool of 32 reviewers.
- II. Participation could be open to all Principal and Alternate representatives of Programme Board members. This would provide a potential pool of 64 reviewers.

The Secretariat recommends option II. While it is unlikely that all Principal and Alternate representatives will be able to participate in the review process due to other commitments, doubling the pool of potential reviewers is likely to reduce the burden and time commitment required of Programme Board members and to ensure that each Implementation Plan is reviewed by at least three Programme Board members.

With respect to the **number of review teams**, while it might appear that the options are numerous, there are essentially two key options:

- (1) The number of Plans to be reviewed by each reviewer could be kept as small as possible within the constraints identified above, thereby minimizing the time required of each Programme Board member.
- (2) The number of teams could be kept small to provide teams with a greater scope of comparison between Plans and thereby provide better advice regarding strengthening the Plans and on potential consolidation.

The number of review teams required under the recommended options may be estimated within certain ranges. If we assume that the number of Plans for review will be between 30 and 50 (as noted earlier) and that the number of potential reviewers is (assuming inclusion of Alternates) between 30 and 40, then the number of review teams should be between 10 in option (1) and 5 in option (2).

Taking option (1), based on 10 teams, each review team would have either 3 or 4 members and each review team member would review between 3 and 5 plans. If the pool of reviewers was fewer than 30, then the number of teams could be reduced, although each reviewer would need to review more Plans. Conversely, if the pool of reviewers was greater than 40, the number of individuals on each review team should be increased rather than increasing the number of teams; this is to ensure that each reviewer reads at least 3 Plans.

For option (2), based on 5 teams, each review team would have between 6 and 8 members and each review team member would each review between 6 and 10 Plans. Having fewer reviewers would not be as significant for this option, as the number of members on each review team could easily be reduced. Having a larger pool of reviewers, on the other hand, would seem to be of little additional

benefit and thus increasing the number of teams would appear to be more advantageous in this circumstance.

The Secretariat recommends that the number of review teams be kept between 5 and 10, with a bias closer to 10. The Secretariat recommends that an initial set of 9 review teams be created, based on groupings of the existing Flagships and Initiatives. Additional applications could be distributed among these teams as relevant or one or two additional teams could be created. Setting up at least some of the teams in advance will simplify and speed up the review process as the proposals are received.

The following is a proposed set of review teams:

<u>Team</u>	<u>Thematic Focus</u>	<u>Existing Flagships and Initiatives Included</u>
1	Ecosystems / biodiversity	GEO BON, GEO ECO, GEO Wetlands, EO4EA, GFOI
2	Water	Aquawatch, Blue Planet, GEOGLOWS
3	Regional GEOs	AfriGEOSS, AmeriGEOSS, AOGEO, EuroGEOSS
4	Geographically-defined, multi-thematic	GEO CRADLE, GEO GNOME, GEOCRI, Climate Change Impact Observation on African Coastal Zones
5	Disaster risk (non-water)	GEO DARMA, GSNL, GWIS
6	Atmospheric / solar radiation	GEO CARBON, GOS4M, GOS4POPS, GEO VENER
7	Land / agriculture	GEOGLAM, GDIS, GEO LDN
8	Human settlements	HUMAN PLANET, GUOI
9	Cross-cutting	EO4SDG, GEOSS EVOLVE

The thematic areas of focus and the alignment of existing Flagships and Initiatives to particular teams is open to revision by Programme Board.

Once the teams are determined, *the Secretariat recommends that volunteers from among Programme Board members (Principals and Alternates) be sought for each of the teams.* It is also recommended that members of review teams not be participants in any of the activities to be reviewed by that team.

3 REVIEW CRITERIA

Based on previous experience with the review process, there are at least three types of recommendations provided by review teams:

1. Recommendations to Plenary to include activities in the GEO Work Programme and in which category (Flagship, Initiative, Community Activity).
2. Recommendations to proposers to consider consolidation of an activity with one or more other proposed activities.
3. Recommendations to proposers intended to improve or strengthen the Implementation Plans and thereby increase the likelihood of successful implementation.

The third type of recommendation is perhaps the clearest. Programme Board members have demonstrated their ability to provide insightful and useful comments based on their experience, including in their participation in other GEO Work Programme activities. Differences of interpretation in this regard should be able to be worked out either within the review teams or at the level of the full Programme Board.

The second type of recommendation may benefit from discussion within the Programme Board to clarify expectations in situations where there may be multiple Initiatives working on similar topics. It

has been observed that some Initiatives may claim a very broad scope in their Implementation Plan even though their actual ability to deliver information products and services is quite limited. The Secretariat information gathering process also noted that Initiatives defining a broad scope for their work are not necessarily more effective; indeed, a very broad scope may sometimes make it more difficult to realize concrete results. For these reasons, recommendations for merging Initiatives should take account of the specific circumstances of each Initiative and not be applied as a general rule wherever there are apparent overlaps.

The first type of recommendation has perhaps the greatest impact and visibility and is also the only one in which explicit criteria have been defined. The discussion that follows will focus on this aspect of the reviews.

3.1 Original Criteria

The original criteria for distinguishing between Flagships, Initiatives and Community Activities are set out in the *GEO Strategic Plan 2016-2025 Reference Document* in the section titled “Implementation Mechanisms”. The relevant text for each category is provided as Annex A to this document.

One of the findings of the Secretariat information gathering process (see document PB-12.03) was that the criteria do not appear to have been fully applied in accepting some activities as Flagships or Initiatives. This observation is confirmed by examination of the review template that was used in 2016, which is attached as Annex B. It should be noted that the template does not request specific justification for each of the criteria set out in Annex A. Specifically, it does not include as criteria: the identification of a user need, whether a pilot or prototype information service or product was developed or demonstrated, how the initiative would contribute to satisfying the user need, or the identification of user institutions and how their advice would be solicited. From the completed templates it appears that the reviewers assessed completeness largely on the basis of whether the Implementation Plan included a section concerning these topics without necessarily assessing whether the content provided met the criteria. This may have reflected issues with the criteria themselves, rather than with the review process.

The table below provides an analysis of each of the existing criteria (Annex A) and where additional clarity may be beneficial.

Criterion	Applies to	Areas for Improvement / Comments
Objective(s) shared by a group of interested partners	Community Activities, Initiatives, Flagships	Neither the 2017-2019 nor the 2020-2022 templates requested proponents to identify objectives. The reference to a group of interested partners is covered by the second criterion (below).
Multi-national stakeholder group or scope	Community Activities, Initiatives, Flagships	The term “stakeholder” is not defined and the template did not request information about stakeholders. Suggest that the proposal include contributors from more than one GEO Member or PO.
Relevance to GEO’s Strategic Objectives	Community Activities, Initiatives, Flagships	Suggest adding reference to GEO’s Mission.
User need or application perspective identified	Initiatives and Flagships	Discussion of user needs should also be included for CAs. The specific expectations should be tailored for each category.
Pilot or prototype information service or product developed or demonstrated	Initiatives and Flagships	As above. CAs should be expected to at least describe their intended product or service.

Criterion	Applies to	Areas for Improvement / Comments
Contribution to satisfying user need	Initiatives and Flagships	Unclear how this differs from the information product / service criterion.
User institutions identified with plans to solicit their advice	Initiatives and Flagships	Discussion of intended users should be introduced for CAs, though without necessarily the level of detail and specificity as for Initiatives and Flagships. Flagships should be expected to provide details on actual use and user feedback.
Sufficient resources for activities identified and committed	Initiatives and Flagships	Should be tailored to each category and also applied to CAs.
Clear relevance to GEO's Strategic Objectives demonstrated	Initiatives and Flagships	Redundant.
GEOSS Data Sharing and Data Management Principles implemented	Initiatives and Flagships	Suggest applying this criterion to all categories (including CAs).
Implementation Plan complete [names sections]	Initiatives and Flagships	This may be unnecessary, as the essential components are covered by the other criteria.
Policy mandate from international treaty, convention, programme, or strongly articulated policy obtained	Flagships	Additional detail would be helpful to specify that the Initiative / Flagship should be directly named (not just that it supports the policy). Suggest that it could also include use of the Initiative's products or services by multiple national governments in relation to such agreements.
Substantial activity in terms of resources and partners involved	Flagships	The term "substantial" is unclear and may differ between Initiatives. Suggest basing resource expectations on continuity of operations.
Information service or product pre- or near-operationally provided	Flagships	Would benefit from a definition of "operational" and "pre-operational" services that is applicable across domains.
User needs satisfied to a significant degree	Flagships	"Significant degree" is difficult to assess. Suggest that evidence of the scale of use be sought.
Specific user institutions fully engaged, including mechanisms to enable steering and feedback by these, e.g. an active role in a Steering Board	Flagships	Suggest separating the identification of user organizations engaged from the feedback.
Implementation Plan, including perspectives for operationalization	Flagships	The requirement for the Implementation Plan is redundant. "Perspectives for operationalization" should be clarified.

Based on this analysis, a revised set of criteria is provided as Annex D. This table may be used as a starting point for Programme Board discussion on the criteria to be used in the review process.

4 SUMMARY OF SECRETARIAT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretariat recommends that:

- A set of 9 review teams be established, these being based on thematic areas as described in section 2.2 above;
- Programme Board members not be members of a review team in which activities in which they are participants are being reviewed;
- All members of a review team review the same set of Implementation Plans each review team would review a distinct set of Plans;
- One Programme Board member be designated/elected/volunteers as the Lead for each review team;
- The review teams use the criteria outlined in Annex D as the basis for determining the appropriate category of Implementation Mechanism for each Work Programme Activity, but may also provide any other comments intended to improve the Implementation Plans and/or to increase the likelihood of successful implementation of the activity;
- Secretariat comments on each Implementation Plans be consolidated with those from the review team members prior to being sent to the proposers of the activity;
- The review team members (and a Secretariat representative) will discuss the individual comments (by teleconference) and prepare an agreed set of comments to send to the proposers of the Initiative or Flagship; and
- The comments and recommendations of the review teams be discussed at the 13th and 14th Programme Board meetings, in part to ensure consistency in the reviews across the teams.

ANNEX A -- CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING GEO COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, INITIATIVES AND FLAGSHIPS

Excerpted from the *GEO Strategic Plan 2016-2025: Implementing GEOSS – Reference Document*, pages 17-22.

Criteria for establishing GEO Community Activities (section 1.2)

- Objective(s) shared by a group of interested partners;
- Multi-national stakeholder group or scope; and
- Relevance to GEO's Strategic Objectives.

Criteria for establishing GEO Initiatives (section 2.2)

GEO Initiatives must meet all criteria used for Community Activities (see 1.2). In addition:

- User need or application perspective identified;
- Pilot or prototype information service or product developed or demonstrated;
- Contribution to satisfying user need;
- User institutions identified with plans to solicit their advice;
- Sufficient resources for activities identified and committed;
- Clear relevance to GEO's Strategic Objectives demonstrated;
- GEOSS Data Sharing and Data Management Principles implemented;
- Implementation Plan, detailing:
 - Objective(s), shared by partners;
 - The information service or product provided;
 - Schedule for implementation;
 - Perspective(s) for evolution;
 - Quantified, itemized resources, including from Members, Participating Organizations, private sector partners and the GEO Secretariat, enabling substantial progress towards objectives;
 - Partners, including target user groups;
 - Capacity Building activities
 - User representatives engaged, often in advisory roles;
 - Governance and management mechanisms; and
 - Monitoring and Evaluation procedures.

Criteria for establishing GEO Flagships (section 3.2)

GEO Flagships must meet all criteria used for GEO Initiatives (see 2.2). In addition:

- Policy mandate from international treaty, convention, programme, or strongly articulated policy obtained;
- Substantial activity in terms of resources and partners involved;
- Information service or product pre- or near-operationally provided;
- User needs satisfied to a significant degree;
- Specific user institutions fully engaged, including mechanisms to enable steering and feedback by these, e.g. an active role in a Steering Board; and
- Implementation Plan (see 2.2), including also perspective(s) for operationalization.

ANNEX B – FLAGSHIP AND INITIATIVE REVIEW PROCESS, TEMPLATE AND CRITERIA (FOR THE 2017-2019 GEO WORK PROGRAMME)

Review process for proposed initiatives and flagships

- 3 reviewers (from Programme Board) per proposal, 1 lead (PB main rep) and 2 reviewers (main and/or alternates).
- Reviews are coordinated by a Lead Reviewer, and combined into an Initial Consolidated Review. Lead reviewer should not be part of proposal and preferably be familiar with proposal domain.
- Transparency of process, clear communication paramount; review criteria should be applied judiciously.
- Single review process for Initiatives and Flagships.
- No requirement of one Flagship per SBA.
- Level of rigor should be designed to ensure highest quality Flagships.
- Communication with the proposing team should not wait for the deadline date. The process should be a rolling one.
- At a minimum, the existing criteria (in the Reference Document and in the proposal template) will be evaluated. (See Annex A)
- The goal is to include every proposal in some form, either as a full Initiative or Flagship, or as a CA.
- All reviews will use common template for capturing comments/constructive feedback
- Outcome of review should be (with justification for each decision):
 - Accepted as is.
 - Accepted after additional info has been provided, or small deficiencies pointed out in the first review have been addressed in the revised proposal.
 - Not accepted (alternative IM or merge suggested).

Flagship and Initiative Review Template

Flagship or Initiative Title:

Proposers:

Lead Reviewer:

Reviewer 1:

Reviewer 2:

Completeness of Proposal:

Does it include the requisite components: See Appendix. To be completed either by the Lead Reviewer or prior to assigning to Lead Reviewer): Yes __; No __; Comments:

Relevance:

Are the objectives of the Flagship or Initiative, and the deliverables, aligned with GEO's mission and Strategic Objectives? Is there a clear policy mandate identified? Does the effort add value over and above what is currently being done within the GEO community? Are users and the use case(s) identified and realistic?

Feasibility:

Are there measurable, practical deliverables and outcomes? Can the work and outcomes/deliverables as described in the Implementation Plan be accomplished in the stated timeframe?

Resources:

Are the in-kind resources, expert resources (expertise on the team), or other stated resources sufficient to achieve the stated goals? Are there additional organizations or individuals who could be contacted for participation?

Recommendation:

- Proposal Meets Requirements as written
- Proposal Would Benefit from Revision as noted in the Comments below
- Proposal Would Benefit from time as an Initiative (if proposed as a Flagship) or Community Activity (if proposed as an Initiative), as noted in the Comments below

Comments:

[Criteria from Annex A above included for reference in the original template.]

ANNEX C – LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR THE 2017-2019 GEO WORK PROGRAMME

Excerpted from GEO Executive Committee document 38.05 “2016 GEO Programme Board – Lessons Learned”. Only items related to the review of Implementation Plans are reproduced here. The categories under which the points are grouped are those from the original document.

Strengths

- The template used as part of the Work Programme review process worked well, including the designation of a lead reviewer; some minor adjustments might address some elements identified below.
- A good level of collaboration between the Secretariat and review panels is needed and important – this is a strength, but needs to be carefully planned, strengthened and monitored.
- The process of reviewing Initiative and Flagship proposals initially via the review panels, then discussing the proposals as a group and finally obtaining explicit consensus in the full PB meeting worked well, and uncovered the need for additional information in some cases.
- The contents of the Initiative and Flagship proposals were effective for clarifying the background, vision, strategy, structure and methodology by the proposing groups. (See notes under “Opportunities” too.).
- The design of the review process to encourage proposers to engage in creating a more coherent and improved Work Programme (comparative rather than competitive process) helped review the proposals in a balanced way as well as engage proposers in dialogue and improvements.
- Review panels need at least three members, from different domains, to have multiple views and balance.

Weaknesses

- In the start-up phase, a key element of work was the “categorization” according to the new categories of the Strategic Plan and this was a time-consuming process.
- In the start-up phase of the GEO Strategic Plan, some definitions and applications of the categories of the Implementation Mechanisms are still unclear.
- The review process was based on papers and implementation plans (we could not do more in one year), but the real implementation and the dialogue with the whole PB needs to be intensified.
- There were instances where Board review panels were not responsive internally, which needed Secretariat interventions to overcome.
- At the final stage of the review process, i.e., reporting by review panel(s) to the PB meeting, every report and its decision by the Board should be clearly identified, including what to communicate to the proposing groups.
- Document exchange during review process by email or ftp is cumbersome, but not many other solutions exist to address everyone’s minimum needs.
- A tiered approach to reviewing new vs. ongoing vs. mature proposals may be useful, especially regarding resources and deliverables.
- The distribution of proposals without any common reviewer may lead to significant unevenness of the reviews.

Opportunities

- How to account more specifically for policy relevance and use in decision making processes.
- In the proposals, show-cases or prototypes should be highlighted more. In particular, accessibility by the users (in a broad sense) should be one of the points to engage users and to deliver the Earth observation data, knowledge and information they require.
- There is still the need to address the degree of oversight of Flagships by the PB, as they are more independent.
- More work needs to be done to strengthen some of the proposals in the areas of user engagement, capacity building, deliverables and policy relevance.
- Greater engagement and attention to the Community Activities could help some develop into Initiatives.

Threats

- As GEO encourages WP components to become more policy relevant there may be a potential for proponents of the WP proposals to inadvertently overstate or mischaracterize the efforts, role, or contributions to ongoing policy processes, such as in regards to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). In some cases this could invoke a strong reaction by Member States of the MEAs and undermine support for GEO. For example, implying an authoritative role for GEO in UNFCCC processes for Monitoring, Review and Verification (MRV), or in MEA Parties review of effectiveness, as opposed to indicating a GEO effort may inform the Parties review, might seem trivial but could have major consequences for GEO.
- Policy relevance may also require active recruitment and engagement, or require repeated invitation to representatives of the policy processes. In order for GEO to effectively review the policy relevance sections of proposals to be certain they do not undermine GEO by overstating their authority and role, governance and user engagement will be critical, and must be open to participants of representatives of the MEAs and governments involved in the Conventions. At a minimum, PB representatives of the governments should reach out to focal points within their governments responsible for the ongoing policy processes. The PB may also explore ways to have the Secretariats of the processes review the initiatives.

ANNEX D -- PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR THE 2020-2022 GEO WORK PROGRAMME

	Community Activity	GEO Initiative	GEO Flagship
General criteria	Relevance to the GEO Mission and Strategic Objectives Implementation of GEOS Data Sharing Principles and Data Management Principles		
Purpose / user needs	Targeted user need(s) and potential products/services to be explored are described.	Proposed products/services and the expected user benefits and/or use cases are described.	Current users of products/services are described and quantified if possible. Plans for expanding the user base are described.
Policy mandate	n/a	Evidence of a policy mandate (see under GEO Flagship) or plans to obtain a policy mandate is beneficial but not required.	Evidence of a decision or request to the candidate Flagship from an international treaty, convention, programme, etc. to provide information products/services and/or use by multiple national agencies in relation to an international agreement.
Resources	Contributions (financial or in-kind) from more than one GEO Member or Participating Organization.	Itemized list of contributions by type, including estimated value, provided. Activity coordinator/secretariat position funded, or plans to obtain funding are described.	Medium-term funding (at least 3 years) sufficient to ensure continuity of products / services. Activity coordinator/secretariat position funded.
Contributors	Team likely has sufficient expertise and experience to demonstrate the concept.	Team has the range of expertise and experience necessary to develop the proposed products/services.	Team has the breadth of administrative, scientific and technical expertise and experience necessary to implement operational services.
Tasks & milestones	Expected tasks are reasonable in relation to objectives and resources.	Tasks are clearly defined and have expected completion dates. Critical milestones are identified, with dates. Identified resources appear sufficient to implement the identified tasks.	Evidence of successful and timely completion of previous tasks and milestones.
User engagement	Categories of expected users have been identified (not necessarily specific organizations).	Targeted user (specific organizations) identified. User engagement plan describes how the activity will engage users in service development.	List of organizations currently using the products or services and list of targeted additional user organizations provided. Results of previous user engagement efforts described.
Technical feasibility	Concept is plausible, appears to be technically feasible, and does not duplicate existing services.	Pilot or prototype information products/services have been demonstrated.	Key challenges in moving to pre-operational services identified and the strategy to address them described.
Governance	Lead(s) and Point of Contact are identified.	Initiative Lead(s) and Point of Contact are identified. A Steering Committee or other oversight body is in place or planned, with its roles and responsibilities described. The management structure is described, including identification of task or component leads.	Activity Lead(s) and Point of Contact are identified. Steering Committee or other oversight body is in place, and its roles and responsibilities described. The management structure is described, including identification of task or component leads.
Usage & user feedback	n/a	User feedback from demonstration pilots or prototypes is available and supports identified demand for products/services. Users are involved in the implementation and/or management of the Initiative.	Feedback from users is regularly obtained and documented.