

Climate Change Working Group Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Climate Change Working Group (CC-WG) is convened to develop and implement a comprehensive GEO climate change action strategy to advance the use of Earth observations in support of climate adaptation and mitigation, including as relevant and appropriate, actions related to the pillars of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In this way, the Working Group will support the translation of the Canberra Declaration into concrete actions within the GEO Work Programme.

Duties

- Review the implementation plans of all GEO Work Programme activities relevant to climate change to identify potential disconnect and synergy opportunities among them to be addressed;
- Assess from these GEO Work Programme activities where GEO is best placed to act and recommend actions to be taken by GEO/activity leads in relation to key issues, e.g., climate modelling/science, mitigation, adaptation, and other relevant areas of the UNFCCC/Paris Agreement;
- Facilitate communication between the leads and participants of these GEO Work Programme activities and between them and relevant partners, including through the organization of dedicated meetings and workshops;
- Stimulate the initiation of projects and case studies involving participants from multiple GEO Work Programme activities to enhance collaboration across GEO and to address identified disconnect, opportunities, or actions in relation to key issues;
- Assess how GEO can work with its member countries and partners to advance the collection and use of Earth observations, particularly in situ, that are needed to support countries' and international organizations' work on climate science and assessments, reduce uncertainty in climate modeling, and enhance societal response strategies;
- Assess how GEO can support countries in the submission of reports and other communications under the UNFCCC/Paris Agreement through the enhanced use of Earth observations, including, as applicable, nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national communications, adaptation communications, and biennial transparency reports (BTRs);
- Assess how GEO can support countries in their National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process and approaches to avert, minimize and address loss and damage, including formulating supplementary guidance on the use and potential of Earth observations for the monitoring and assessment of climate change impacts, vulnerability, risks and adaptation responses over multiple sectors and scales;
- Assess how GEO can support countries in the improvement of national greenhouse gas inventories over time through the enhanced use of Earth observations, consistent with the 2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories;
- Identify gaps in terms of Earth observations that are requisite to the work of the IPCC and others conducting climate assessments, and leverage GEO partnerships and resources to provide the additional Earth observations needed to support decision making. Support the IPCC in its Sixth Assessment Cycle, particularly by participating in the expert reviews in preparation of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report due to be published in 2021-2022;

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- Identify efficient forms of mutually beneficial collaboration between GEO and WMO in the areas of climate change, including the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and the Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW);
- Increase GEO's participation and visibility, as appropriate, in IPCC sessions, UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties (COPs), Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) sessions and other UNFCCC constituted bodies' meetings, as well as other relevant fora.

Membership

- Membership in the Working Group is by nomination from GEO Members, Participating Organizations, and Associates. As appropriate, the Programme Board may also invite other qualified individuals to participate as members in the Working Group.
- Participation is encouraged from organizations and bodies relevant to climate change, including:
 - GEO Work Programme activities;
 - UN and other international organizations;
 - National and regional stakeholders; and
 - Scientific organizations.
- In the interest of ensuring diversity and balance in the Working Group membership, the Programme Board may place limits on the number of members from individual GEO Members, Participating Organizations, or Associates or by specific categories. Participation by commercial entities is welcomed but will be limited to a maximum of two members.

Working Arrangements

- There will be at least two co-chairs of the Working Group, who will be selected by and from among the Working Group members.
- The Working Group will meet at such times and places as determined by its members and will work mainly through teleconferences and e-mail.
- The Working Group will provide periodic (at least annual) reports on its activities to the Programme Board as part of GEO Work Programme monitoring. It may also bring specific issues to the Programme Board as needed.
- The Working Group may establish subgroups to assist in fulfilling its duties.
- Administrative support to the Working Group will be provided by the GEO Secretariat.

Duration

These Terms of Reference will remain in effect for the period of the 2020-2022 GEO Work Programme. They may be revised with the approval of the Programme Board.