

## Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

### Rules and Procedures

#### DRAFT

(for approval at GEO-II)

*NOTE: The Secretariat has prepared Version 7 of this document (GEO 0205-7) based on a reconciliation of editorial comments and minor points of substance submitted by GEO Members and Participating Organizations on Version 6 (GEO 205-6). The document utilizes agreed language wherever possible. Significant comments from GEO Members requiring further evaluation, as well as amendments proposed by the Secretariat, are shown in bold brackets. Comments conflicting with the text of the negotiated 10-Year Implementation Plan have not been included.*

*A full exposition of proposed text changes against original text can be found as revisions to Version 6 (GEO 0205-6R), and all general and specific comments as received are consolidated in a PDF file (GEO 0205-6C).*

#### 1. Definitions

- 1.1 *GEO* - The intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations, established by the Resolution of the Third Earth Observation Summit in February of 2005, consisting of a Plenary, an Executive Committee, a Secretariat, and committees and working groups as appropriate.
- 1.2 *GEOSS* - The Global Earth Observation System of Systems.
- 1.3 *Implementation Plan* - The GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan endorsed by the Third Earth Observation Summit in February of 2005.
- 1.4 *Plenary* - The GEO Plenary, the main body of GEO Principals representing GEO Members and Participating Organizations.
- 1.5 *Principal* - The designated representative of a GEO Member or Participating Organization.
- 1.6 *Principal Alternate* - The alternate representative of a GEO Member or Participating Organization.
- 1.7 *Executive Committee* - The GEO Executive Committee.
- 1.8 *Secretariat* - The GEO Secretariat.
- 1.9 *Director* - The Director of the GEO Secretariat
- 1.10 *Committee* - A committee of the Plenary, consisting of representatives of GEO Members and Participating Organizations.
- 1.11 *Working Group* - An ad hoc working group of the Plenary convened to address a specific topic for limited-time duration, consisting of representatives of GEO Members and Participating Organizations.
- 1.12 **[GEO Community of Practice – A user-led community of stakeholders, from providers to the final beneficiaries of Earth observation data and information, with a common interest in specific aspects of societal benefits to be realized by GEOSS implementation.] (Canada)**

- 1.13 ***[Experts – A definition for “experts” as they relate to the S&T Committee should be developed. Our suggestion would be that the definition must include the qualification that such experts do not represent a political or organizational entity](Canada)***
- 1.14 ***[Stakeholder – Governments, agencies, organizations or groups who may be affected by a development proposal, whether or not their stake in the outcome is explicit, and who can affect change or will be most affected by it.](sample definition – Canada)***
- 2. Plenary**
- 2.1. *Membership and Participation* – Membership in GEO is open to all member States of the United Nations and to the European Commission. GEO welcomes, as Participating Organizations, intergovernmental, international, and regional organizations with a mandate in Earth observation or related activities, subject to approval by GEO Members. GEO may invite other relevant entities to participate in its activities as observers. Membership and Participation is contingent upon formal endorsement of the Implementation Plan.
- 2.2. *Decisions.* Plenary decisions will be made by consensus of GEO Members present. **[GEO Members shall make every effort to reach agreement by consensus. If all efforts at consensus have been exhausted, and no agreement reached, such decisions shall, as a last resort, be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the GEO Members present.] (Canada)**
- 2.3. *GEO Co-Chairs.* Four GEO Members will co-chair meetings of the Plenary and the Executive Committee. The composition of and method of selection for the Co-Chairs is provided in Rule 3.3 and 3.4.
- 2.4. *Meetings.* The GEO Plenary will meet at least once annually to adopt (as a minimum) the Annual Work Plan and associated budget for the following year and to receive reports from the Executive Committee, Secretariat, committees, and working groups.
- 2.5. *Principal and Principal Alternate Designation.* All GEO Members and GEO Participating organizations should designate one GEO Principal and not more than two GEO Principal Alternates to serve as the representatives of that Member or Participating Organization in the Plenary, and to receive and submit all official communication to and from the Secretariat. When a GEO Member serves as a GEO Co-Chair, the designated GEO Co-Chair will serve as the GEO Principal for that GEO Member. These designations, including complete contact information, should be submitted in writing to the GEO Secretariat using the form provided by the Secretariat.
- 2.6. *Official Delegations.* The GEO Secretariat will issue a call for official delegation lists no later than 6 weeks prior to any Plenary meeting. The GEO Principal, the GEO Alternate, or their designated representative on file with the Secretariat should submit an official delegation list to the GEO Secretariat no later than 2 weeks prior to any Plenary meeting. Submission may also be forwarded by means of a Note Verbale to the Secretariat by the Member’s Permanent Mission in Geneva. All official delegates should register with the GEO Secretariat no later than 1 week before any Plenary meeting. A roster of registered official delegates will be made available to delegates arriving for the Plenary meeting. On-site registrants will be excluded from this official list but included in the final record of the meeting.

- 2.7 *Documents.* All new documents for final decision by Plenary will be numbered and released by the Secretariat to all Principals for comment in sufficient time to allow for a full six-week review period in advance of the Plenary meeting at which the document will be formally considered. Documents originating outside the Secretariat should be provided to the Secretariat at least 3 weeks prior to the Plenary meeting at which the document will be formally considered. No documents may be considered unless numbered and circulated by the Secretariat. Working papers may be circulated for informational purposes as necessary. Documents not meeting the above criteria may be considered for decision by the Plenary if the Plenary so decides.
- 2.8 *Reports.* The Secretariat will produce a draft summary of Plenary proceedings including decisions, actions, and timelines for completing actions, no later than 2 working weeks following Plenary meetings. The Secretariat will prepare an initial report no later than 4 working weeks following Plenary meetings.

### 3. Executive Committee

**GEO Executive Committee - Terms of Reference**  
*As Approved by the Ad Hoc GEO-6 Plenary, February 2005*

The task of the Executive Committee is to facilitate and implement the decisions of the GEO Plenary. The Executive Committee's chief function is, thus, to provide administrative and other support to the Plenary, which remains the GEO's primary decision-making body. To this end, acting by consensus, the Executive Committee will:

1. Ensure the efficient conduct of GEO business between meetings of Plenary;
2. Supervise the work of the Director of the Secretariat and ensure that it is consistent with the direction received from Plenary;
3. Examine the draft Annual Work Plan and Budget in preparation for its presentation to Plenary;
4. Report in writing at least annually to GEO;
5. Fix the date and location of the next Plenary for approval by each Plenary before the end of meeting, and, through the Director, convene the meeting, produce the necessary documents and ensure the production of a timely meeting report;
6. Supervise the development of more detailed rules of procedure for GEO Plenary and the Executive Committee in time for GEO-II, and maintain them under regular review; and
7. Undertake such other tasks as may be delegated to the Executive Committee by the Plenary.

The Committee will not take any decision involving a commitment beyond that which has been approved by the GEO in Plenary, unless the activity is fully in accord with the approved Work Plan and the additional costs are guaranteed by a Member or Participating Organisation.

The Committee will work mainly by electronic mail and telephone conferences, but meetings may be convened as necessary, possible at least once between Plenary meetings.

*Note: The agreed Chair and/or Co-Chairs /Vice-Chairs will be tasked with providing leadership to the Executive Committee with respect to the functions above. The Chair and/or Co-Chairs/Vice-Chairs will lead meetings of the Plenary and the Executive Committee.*

*NOTE: The above Terms of Reference for the GEO Executive Committee were approved at the Ad Hoc GEO-6 in February 2005. However, subsequent comments from Members, organizations, and discussions within the Executive Committee itself have indicated that these Terms of Reference require clarification. A proposed re-wording follows, which represents a reconciliation of editorial and minor points of substance from Member comments and is intended to supersede the above box text. Amendments originating from the Secretariat and Member comments requiring further discussion are shown in bold brackets. A full exposition of proposed text changes against original text can be found in the revised Version 6 (GEO 0205-6R).*

- 3.1 *Function.* The ~~[task role]~~ **(Secretariat)** of the Executive Committee is to facilitate the decisions of the GEO Plenary and to oversee and to make recommendations on the implementation of those decisions. ~~[The Executive Committee's chief function is, thus, to provide administrative and other support to the Plenary, which remains The Plenary remains]~~ **(Secretariat)** the GEO's primary decision-making body.
- 3.2 *Duties.* ~~[To this end]~~ **(Secretariat)** Acting by consensus, the Executive Committee will:
- a. Ensure the efficient conduct of GEO business between meetings of the plenary;
  - b. Supervise the work of the Director of the Secretariat and ensure that it is consistent with the direction received from Plenary;
  - c. Examine the draft Annual Work Plan and budget in preparation for its presentation to Plenary;
  - d. Report in writing at least annually to GEO;
  - e. Fix the date and location of the next Plenary for approval by each Plenary before the end of meeting, and, through the Director, convene the meeting, produce the necessary documents and ensure the production of a timely meeting report;
  - f. Supervise the development of more detailed rules and procedures for GEO and maintain them under regular review;
  - g. Provide recommendations to GEO regarding the need for and effectiveness of the committees and working groups, and recommend continuation or adjustments as needed; and
  - h. Undertake such other tasks as may be delegated to the Executive Committee by the Plenary.
- 3.3 *Composition.* The Executive Committee will consist of 12 GEO Members based on the following geographic distribution: Africa (2), Americas (3), Asia and Oceania (3), CIS (1), and Europe (3). Four Executive Committee Members will serve collectively as Co-Chairs of the Plenary and the Executive Committee, with two Co-Chairs representing developed countries and two Co-Chairs representing developing countries. One co-chair will serve as lead to guide the discussion for each meeting. The lead Co-Chair will rotate among the Co-Chairs as agreed by the Co-Chairs. Individuals serving on the Executive Committee do not serve in their individual capacity but as Member representatives.
- 3.4 *Selection.* Executive Committee Members, including those Members serving as Co-Chairs, will be nominated through regional caucuses. Based on the conclusions of the regional caucuses and further consultations as necessary, the Director of the Secretariat will present a slate of nominees, including those nominated to serve as Co-Chairs, to the Plenary for its approval. Upon approval, Executive Committee members will serve **[staggered terms]** **(Canada)** of two years and will be eligible to serve a second consecutive term.
- 3.5 *Decisions.* Executive Committee decisions will be made by consensus of the GEO Members present. The Executive Committee will not take any decision involving a commitment beyond that which has been approved by the GEO in Plenary, unless the activity is fully in accord with the approved Annual Work Plan and the additional costs are guaranteed by a Member or Participating Organization.
- 3.6 *Meetings.* The GEO Executive Committee will meet at least once annually and may hold additional meetings as agreed by the Executive Committee. The Committee will work mainly by electronic mail and telephone conference.
- 3.7 *Documents.* The GEO Secretariat will prepare all documents for the Executive Committee's consideration and will release them to all GEO Members and Participating Organizations for information at least 15 calendar days prior to any Executive Committee meeting. The GEO Co-Chairs will approve draft Executive Committee agendas.

- 3.8 *Reports.* The Secretariat will release a preliminary report of Executive Committee proceedings to the Members of the Executive Committee within one week and to the full GEO community no later than two weeks following the Executive Committee meeting.

#### 4. GEO Secretariat

**Ad Hoc Group on Earth Observations (GEO)**  
**Secretariat Purpose and Function**  
*As Adopted 14 February 2005*

**Purpose**

The Secretariat, led by the Director, will facilitate and support GEO activities. The Secretariat will consist of co-located, well-qualified, professional and administrative staff.

**Function**

The Secretariat will:

- a. Prepare and submit, for Plenary approval, the Annual Work Plan - including activities and budgets
- b. Oversee the execution of the Annual Work Plan and expenditure of the Budget;
- c. Provide annual reports on the performance of GEOSS including milestones of the Annual Workplan;
- d. Organize, prepare, and support meetings and other work of GEO and its subsidiary bodies;
- e. Seek consensus on and develop plans for projects and programmes to be implemented jointly in support of the Annual Workplan;
- f. Pursue activities to identify and secure funds in accordance with the direction of GEO;
- g. Oversee the implementation of the GEO communication strategy
- h. Organize the GEOSS user and other fora as required;
- i. Facilitate overall cooperation and liaise with GEO Members and Participating Organizations, including the U.N. system and other international and national agencies as well as other programmes and bodies as appropriate or as needed, to support the work of GEO;
- j. Recommend and report to the Plenary and Executive Committee on the execution of the annual Secretariat operating plan with performance indicators, to identify staffing, and other resources and activities to carry out and support the Annual Work Plan;
- k. Facilitate and coordinate the updating of the 10-Year Implementation Plan as directed by the Plenary;
- l. Conduct the day-to-day administrative activities of the Secretariat.
- m. Carry out additional duties as required by the GEO.

*NOTE: The above Purpose and Function for the GEO Secretariat were approved at the Ad Hoc GEO-6 in February 2005. However, subsequent comments from Members, organizations, and discussions within the Executive Committee itself have indicated that this Purpose and Function document requires clarification. A proposed re-wording follows, which represents a reconciliation of editorial and minor points of substance from Member comments and is intended to supersede the above box text. Amendments originating from the Secretariat or Member comments requiring further discussion are shown in bold brackets. A full exposition of proposed text changes against original text can be found in the revised Version 6 (GEO 0205-6R).*

- 4.1 *Function.* The Secretariat, led by the Director, will facilitate and support GEO activities. The Secretariat will consist of co-located, well-qualified, professional and administrative staff.

- 4.2 **[Reporting. The Secretariat will report through the Director to the Plenary and to the Executive Committee as necessary, and its work will be supervised by the Executive Committee between Plenary meetings.] (Proposed by Secretariat, modified by Japan and WMO)**

*Note: Canada suggests 4.2 is redundant with elements of Section 3 above and Section 4.3 below and should be deleted.*

4.3 *Duties.* The Secretariat will:

- a. Prepare and submit, for Plenary approval, the Annual Work Plan - including activities and budgets;
- b. ~~Execute Support the implementation by Members and Participating Organizations of] (Japan) the Annual Work Plan and [execute] (Japan) expenditure of the budget;~~
  - b. ALTERNATE 1 [Facilitate the execution of the Annual Work Plan and expenditure of the budget] (Canada)**
  - b. ALTERNATE 2 [Oversee the execution of the Annual Work Plan and expenditure of the budget ] (US)**
- c. Provide annual reports on the performance of GEOSS including milestones of the Annual Work Plan;
- d. **[Provide annual reports on Secretariat operations, including execution of annual budget expenditures.](Secretariat)**
- e. Organize, prepare, and support meetings and other work of the GEO Plenary, Executive Committee, and other GEO committees and working groups;
- f. ~~[Seek consensus on and develop plans for projects and programmes to be implemented jointly in support of the Annual Work Plan;](Secretariat proposes striking in response to Canada's suggestion that this clause may be redundant)~~
- g. Pursue activities to identify and secure funds for Secretariat operations and GEO activities in accordance with the direction of GEO;
- h. Oversee the implementation of the GEO communication strategy as outlined in the Annual Work Plan;
- i. Organize the GEOSS user and other fora as required in coordination with GEO committees as appropriate;
- j. Facilitate overall cooperation and liaise with GEO Members and Participating Organizations, and other programmes and bodies as appropriate or as needed to support the work of GEO, with particular emphasis on existing systems and Earth observation coordination mechanisms;
- k. ~~[Recommend and report on the execution of the annual Secretariat operating plan with performance indicators, to identify staffing, and other resources and activities to carry out and support the Annual Work Plan Identify staffing and other resources necessary to support the Annual Work Plan, develop indicators for Secretariat performance, and report to Plenary on Secretariat performance against indicators;] (Secretariat response to clarification requested by Japan)~~
- l. Facilitate and coordinate the updating of the 10-Year Implementation Plan as directed by the Plenary;
- m. Conduct the day-to-day administrative activities of the Secretariat;
- n. Carry out additional duties as required by the GEO.

## 5. GEO Committees and Working Groups

- 5.1 *Purpose and Function.* The GEO Plenary may establish committees and working groups to address aspects of GEOSS implementation and provide a mechanism for GEO Members and Participating Organizations to engage fully in the work of GEO. The committees and working groups will provide high-level review advice, support, recommendations, and support in the ongoing development and implementation of the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan. The committees or working groups will also actively promote the implementation of GEOSS activities as described in Annual Work Plans.

- 5.2 *Duration and Terms of Reference.* The Plenary may establish and develop terms of reference for committees and/or working groups. The maximum duration for Working Groups will be 3 years, with the possibility of extension by the Plenary. All committees and working groups are listed in Annex B and their terms of reference are appended to these Rules and Procedures.
- 5.3 *Membership.* All GEO Members and Participating Organizations are welcome to participate in any committee or working group through their GEO Principals or their designated representatives. Each committee or working group will include a member of the Executive Committee to serve as a link between that committee or working group and the Executive Committee. Additional technical experts may participate in committee or working group deliberations at the invitation of a GEO Member or Participating Organization.
- 5.4 *Leadership.* All GEO Members and Participating Organizations are welcome to volunteer to serve as ~~co-chairs~~ **the designated leadership chair(s)** (Canada) of any committee or working group. Committee and working group chairs will be nominated and approved by the GEO Plenary.
- 5.5 *Meetings.* Committees and working groups will meet at such times and places as determined by Members, and will work mainly through e-mail and teleconferences. Committees and working groups will work by consensus of Members.
- 5.6 *Reporting.* Committees and working groups will post a report on the GEO website of each meeting held, including a list of all participants and highlighting outcomes. In addition, Committee and working group chairs will report to the GEO Plenary and will deliver progress reports to the GEO Executive Committee as necessary.
- 5.7 *Funding.* Unless otherwise agreed, any costs arising from committee or working group activities will be borne by the Member or Participating Organization that incurs them, and will be subject to the availability of funds, personnel, and other resources.
- 5.8 *Review and Renewal.* The effectiveness and need for the committees and working groups will be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee, which will make recommendations to the Plenary concerning committee or working group renewal.
- 5.9 *Support and Coordination.* The Secretariat will provide full administrative support to all GEO committees and working groups. The activities of the committees and working groups will be closely coordinated with the Secretariat to maintain consistency with the approved GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan and to maximize the effectiveness of the GEO in pursuit of a GEOSS. All GEO committees or working groups will liaise with the Executive Committee and the GEO Secretariat.

*The Secretariat notes that Australia proposed a reference to a Budget Committee as a new article after 5.9, but should a Budget Committee be considered necessary, the reference is more appropriate in the list of committees to be established, given the structure of this document. No Terms of Reference have been proposed for such a committee.*

- [5.10 Participation of Experts. A transparent process will be employed for the process of advertising, selection and allocation of experts to tasks. This process will be made public at all stages and where possible consult with domain-specific established committees and bodies. The process will consider the need for a broad range of perspectives including scientific, technical, SBA specific, cross-cutting and geographic] (Australia)**

*The Secretariat notes that in general, experts will be invited or designated by individual GEO Members or Participating Organizations to join committees, working groups, and any other ad hoc group. The creation of such groups will be publicly known. As GEO Members and Participating Organizations will volunteer to take responsibility for implementation of specific tasks, they will determine which experts from within their agencies and organizations will be engaged in tasks. Any task implemented by the Secretariat and requiring expert input will involve consultation with appropriate GEO Committees. Given this, the Secretariat questions the need for the above clause, and in light of limited resources, cautions against a formal, public, and potentially burdensome process of calling for “expert” participation in GEO activities.*

## 6. GEO Trust Fund and Finances

- 6.1 *Trust Fund Establishment.* The *ad hoc* Group on Earth Observations at its sixth session (Brussels, Belgium 14-15 February 2005) assented to a Standing Arrangement between GEO and WMO, which arranges for the GEO Secretariat to be located at WMO. In order to provide for a mechanism for GEO to support the GEO Secretariat and other GEO activities as approved by the GEO Plenary, GEO also agreed to undertake steps to create a GEO-WMO Trust Fund to support the work of GEO. (See GEO-WMO Trust Fund Terms of Reference, Annex A).
- 6.2 *Finances.* The Annual Work Plan and associated budget produced by the Secretariat will detail all operating expenses for the coming year, and will contain provisions for monitoring and execution of the budget throughout the year. Indicative budgets shall also be provided for a further two years. The Secretariat will report quarterly to the Executive Committee **[through the Budget Committee] (Australia)** on the progress of budget execution, including income and expenditures. Priorities for the expenditure of GEO funds will include:
- a. Approved Secretariat staff salaries and benefits
  - b. Annual Work Plan development activities
  - c. Annual Work Plan implementation activities
  - d. Secretariat operating costs
  - e. Meeting support costs
  - f. Other costs, such as special projects
- 6.3 *Solvency and Audit.* The Secretariat shall maintain solvency at all times. No expenditure may be authorized in the absence of available funds. Notwithstanding the principle of a single external auditor of WMO, GEO may engage independent financial reviews of the GEO budget against expenditures.
- 6.4 *Revenue Continuity.* GEO Members and Participating Organizations will endeavor to provide assured multi-year revenue for the Secretariat to maintain approved staff levels and continuity of Secretariat operations, subject to the budget systems and cycles of GEO Members and Participating Organizations. Additional contributions may be earmarked for specific purposes and special projects.
- 6.5 *Surplus Funds.* Surplus funds remaining in the GEO Trust Fund at the end of the calendar year will immediately be made available for the following year unless otherwise restricted by the donor. In the event the GEO Trust Fund is dissolved, any remaining funds will be dispersed under the terms of the GEO Trust Fund Terms of Reference.

**7. Effective Date and Amendment**

- 7.1 *Effective Date.* These Rules and Procedures will take effect immediately upon adoption, superseding all Terms of Reference negotiated by the *ad hoc* GEO.
- 7.2 *Amendment.* These Rules and Procedures may be amended by the Plenary at any meeting. Proposals to amend these rules of procedure should be submitted to the Secretariat at least 8 weeks prior to the Plenary meeting at which the amendment will be considered.

ANNEX A

GEO-WMO Trust Fund for the GEO/GEOSS

Terms of Reference and Rules

**Introduction and Purpose of the Fund**

1. The Fifty-Sixth Session of the WMO Executive Council in its Resolution 9 (EC-LVI) authorized the WMO Secretary General to confirm to the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) strong support for the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS) concept; to work closely with his counterparts in the other Earth-observing United Nations agencies and programmes to ensure an effectively coordinated United Nations system role in the implementation of GEOSS; and to indicate WMO readiness to host the GEO Secretariat.
2. The *ad hoc* Group on Earth Observations at its sixth session (Brussels, Belgium 14-15 February 2005) finalized the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation plan. At the sixth session, GEO agreed to enter into a Standing Arrangement between GEO and WMO and to arrange for a GEO Secretariat to be ~~co-located at the WMO Secretariat~~ **located at WMO] (Secretariat)**. In order to provide for a mechanism for GEO to fund the GEO Secretariat and GEO activities, GEO also agreed to undertake steps to create a GEO-WMO Trust Fund to support the work of GEO/GEOSS. The Third Earth Observation Summit (Brussels, Belgium 16 February 2005) established the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and endorsed the GEOSS Ten-Year Implementation Plan, and instructed GEO to take those steps necessary to implement GEOSS in accordance with its implementation plan.
3. The primary purpose of the GEO-WMO Trust Fund will be to support the direct and indirect costs of GEO/GEOSS and its Secretariat as well as related GEO activities. The full cost of the GEO Secretariat contains direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are those directly attributable to the GEO Secretariat, such as salaries of GEO Secretariat staff, travel expenses by GEO Secretariat staff, cost of equipment used by GEO Secretariat staff. The direct costs of the GEO Secretariat shall be covered by GEO. Indirect costs are those incurred by WMO for the provision of administrative services to GEO. As a principle, WMO shall not charge GEO for the total indirect costs, but rather for the incremental costs only. The incremental costs of administrative services provided by WMO to GEO shall be identified in a Service Level Arrangement to be concluded between GEO and WMO.
4. The GEO-WMO Trust Fund will also be used to accomplish GEO/GEOSS objectives and goals through the preparation of necessary studies, reports and relevant materials, the use of consultants to assist the GEO Secretariat, and other activities relevant to the GEO/GEOSS as approved by the GEO Plenary.
5. The Trust Fund will be established from voluntary cash contributions from GEO Members, organizations involved in Earth observations, grants, donations, funds deposited for specific purposes, hereafter referred to as deposits, and other contributions. Contributions shall be normally made in Swiss Francs or any other convertible currency.

### **Administration of the Fund**

6. Financial arrangements for administration of the Fund are specified in: (1) the GEO-WMO Standing Arrangement; (2) the WMO Financial Rules and Regulations; (3) delegations of responsibility from the Secretary-General to the GEO Director.
7. The accounting of the expenditures of the Fund shall be as provided for in paragraph 6 above, including any other directly identifiable charges related to the administration of the Fund. No additional programme support cost charges will be incurred. The full cost of the GEO Secretariat contains direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are those directly attributable to the GEO Secretariat, such as salaries of GEO staff, travel expenses by GEO staff, cost of interpretation at GEO meetings, cost of equipment used by GEO staff. The direct costs of the GEO Secretariat will be covered by GEO. Indirect costs are those incurred by WMO for the provision of administrative services to GEO. As a principle, WMO will not charge GEO for the total indirect costs, but rather for the incremental costs only. This principle excludes any charges related to overhead of the fixed costs of WMO. The incremental costs of administrative services provided by WMO to GEO will be identified in a Service Level Arrangement to be concluded between GEO and WMO. The interest accrued from any investment of the principal of the Fund will constitute an income to the Fund.
8. The Fund shall be maintained on a continuous basis and amounts standing to the credit of the Fund at the end of any annual period shall remain in the Fund for use in the subsequent period.
9. Financial reports on the Fund will be made in Swiss Francs. The United Nations rate of exchange prevailing on the date of the transaction or report will apply for the conversion into Swiss Francs of contributions or income received and payments made or charges incurred in any other currency. The GEO Director shall submit a financial report, annually, to Trust Fund contributors, to the GEO Executive Committee, and report to GEO on the overall use of the Fund
10. External audit will be conducted as provided for in the WMO Financial Regulations.
11. At the closure of the Fund, any cash balance of the Fund will be returned to GEO Members.

### **Procedures for the utilization of the Fund**

12. The utilization of the Fund shall be based upon decisions of the GEO Director in consultation with the Plenary.
13. The GEO Director will not enter into any financial commitments unless he/she has received the funds required.

### **Legal responsibilities**

14. Under no circumstances will the Fund be made liable to pay and/or reimburse any taxes on emoluments or honorarium, or any customs and import duties, value added taxes or similar charges. If applicable, these will be payable by the beneficiaries of the support provided.

**ANNEX B**

**Group on Earth Observations  
(GEO)**

**List of Committees and Working Groups**  
*As of 15 December 2005*

- Architecture and Data Committee
- Capacity Building Committee
- Science and Technology Committee
- User Interface Committee
- Working Group on Tsunami **[and All-Hazard]** (US) Activities
- **[Budget Committee] (Australia)**

## APPENDIX 1

### Architecture and Data Committee Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The Architecture and Data Committee will support the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in all architecture and data management aspects of the design, coordination, and implementation of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) for comprehensive, coordinated, and sustained Earth observations.

#### Objectives

1. The Architecture and Data Committee will enable GEO, based upon user requirements and building on existing systems and initiatives, to define the components of GEOSS, and to converge or harmonize observation methods, and to promote the use of standards and references, intercalibration, and data assimilation.
2. The Architecture and Data Committee will enable GEO to define and update interoperability arrangements to which GEO Members and Participating Organizations agree to adhere, including technical specifications for collecting, processing, storing, and disseminating shared data, metadata and products.
3. The Architecture and Data Committee will enable GEO to facilitate data management, information management, and common services, and will help to promote data sharing principles in support of the GEO Plenary for the full and open sharing and exchange of data and information, recognizing relevant international instruments and national policies and legislation.

#### Approach and Functions

1. The Architecture and Data Committee's approach to providing advice and recommendation to GEO may include: providing a forum for dialogue and resolution of issues at varying levels; advocacy within and across existing systems; coordinating with, collaborating with, or referring specific tasks to, participating international organizations or national agencies; and, establishment of subordinate teams to accomplish specific tasks assigned to this Committee in the Annual Work Plan.
2. The Architecture and Data Committee will liaise closely and work in a complementary fashion with the existing operating authorities of GEOSS components, where needed and agreed to by the GEO Plenary, avoiding any duplication of the work of existing organizations and structures.

## APPENDIX 2

### Capacity Building Committee Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The Capacity Building Committee will support the GEO in strengthening the capability of all countries, in particular developing countries, to use Earth observation data and products in a sustainable manner and to contribute observations and systems to GEOSS. The GEO capacity building strategy will follow the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) concept of a global partnership between those whose capacity needs development and those who are able to assist in the process, recognizing that activities have intertwined social, environmental, and economic impacts.

#### Objectives

1. To facilitate Earth observation capacity building activities among GEO Members, in concert with GEO Participating Organizations.
2. To build the capacity of all GEO Members to access, retrieve, analyze, and interpret relevant data from global data systems.
3. To build the capacity of all GEO Members to integrate Earth observation data and information with data and information from other sources, improving understanding of problems in order to identify sustainable solutions.
4. Support the GEO in developing a coordinated GEOSS capacity building strategy based on the principles articulated in Section 7.4 of the GEOSS 10-Year Implementation Plan Reference Document (GEO 1000R), and recommend strategies for resource mobilization.

#### Approach and Functions

1. In collaboration with existing capacity building mechanisms of GEO Members and participating organizations, identify priority areas in which Earth observation capacity building would have significant impact and benefit.
2. Examine existing and proposed Earth observation capacity building activities by national governments, participating organizations, and other relevant institutions, and identify mechanisms for leveraging, developing and coordinating Earth observation capacity building initiatives.

## APPENDIX 4

### Science and Technology Committee Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The Science and Technology Committee will engage the scientific and technological communities in the development, implementation and use of a sustained GEOSS in order to ensure that GEO has access to sound scientific and technological advice.

#### Objectives

1. Enable GEO to make decisions on best available and sound scientific and technological advice, through the solicitation of input from a broad, trans-disciplinary scientific and technological community
2. Ensure scientific and technological integrity and soundness of GEO Annual Work Plans.
3. Monitor and review output and deliverables of GEO Annual Work Plans.
4. In collaboration with GEO Members and participating organizations, and through transparent processes, identify individual experts and groups to participate in GEO working groups.
5. Facilitate linkages and partnership with major relevant international research programmes as well as organizations willing to contribute to GEO activities.

#### Approach and Functions

1. The Science and Technology Committee will **[make recommendations to ensure the above objectives are fulfilled. act on request of the GEO Plenary. It will involve existing national, regional and international scientific and technological organisations in order to make best use of existing expertise and to avoid duplication of work. ]** (ICSU)
2. It may establish ad hoc expert groups as appropriate with clearly defined task and defined lifetime.
3. ~~**[The Science and Technology Committee will inform the Executive Committee on the intention to form expert groups.]**~~ (ICSU)
4. The Science and Technology Committee will provide best scientific and technological advice and recommendations available in order to support the GEO with fulfilling its tasks, thereby contributing to the realisation of GEOSS.

## APPENDIX 4

### User Interface Committee Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The User Interface Committee will engage users in the nine societal benefit areas in the development, implementation, and use of a sustained GEOSS that provides the data and information required by user groups on national, regional and global scales.

The User Interface Committee has a specific goal to address cross-cutting issues by coordinating user communities of practice, ensuring continuity and avoiding duplication.

#### Objectives

1. Enable GEO to address the needs and concerns of a broad range of user communities in developing and developed countries, across issues and trans-disciplinary needs, with a particular focus on fostering new or less organized communities.
2. Enable GEO, in the implementation of GEOSS, to engage a continuum of users, from producers to the final beneficiaries of the data and information
3. Facilitate linkages and partnerships between established communities of practice and new groups or organizations interested in collaborating.

#### Approach and Functions

The User Interface Committee will work with all end-user communities, to ensure that the best intelligence and information are available to support GEO, and to contribute to the realization of benefits through GEOSS implementation. Its work will be coordinated with the Secretariat, consistent with the decisions of the GEO Plenary, on those activities requiring direct efforts by GEO Members and Participating Organizations, at national, regional and global level, without duplicating the work of existing organizations and structures. These activities could be:

1. Make recommendations to GEO to improve the delivery of targets identified in the GEOSS Reference document.
2. Encourage the development of communities of practice.
3. Work with the communities of practice to identify existing inventories of major user requirements, their present status and gaps to be filled, including those carried out by existing mechanisms.
4. Recommend a mechanism to identify, document, and prioritize requirements of major stakeholders for current and future Earth observations, and review and update these requirements through consultation with stakeholders and in coordination with the GEO Science and Technology Committee.
5. **[Work with GEO participating organizations to build direct membership in GEO to all of their respective members.] (Australia)**
6. **[Identify obstacles to full participation in GEO by potential members, organizations, and communities, including such issues as accessibility of GEO documents in relevant languages] (Australia)**

## APPENDIX 5

### Working Group on Tsunami [and All-Hazard] (US) Activities Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The GEO Working Group on Tsunami [and All-Hazard] (US) Activities will support the coordinating activities of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and related national and regional initiatives to realize effective warning and mitigation systems for natural hazards (e.g. coastal), as an integral part of a multi-hazard approach supported by GEOSS.

#### Objectives

1. Facilitate the coordination of international programmes on disaster prevention and mitigation
2. Develop a multi-hazard multi-purpose approach to early warning and crisis management
3. Promote the interoperability and compatibility of warning and mitigation systems through the development of standards and protocols
4. Facilitate the development of high-level stakeholders' commitments to warning and mitigation systems
5. Support and help ensure durability of capacity building related to infrastructure and training & education

#### Approach and Functions

1. Create discussion fora in which all parties of interest are expected to participate, including non-member countries and organizations. Involve existing national, regional and international scientific and technological organizations in order to make best use of existing expertise.
2. Identify gaps (technical, financial & skill-related) and design strategies to fill in these gaps
3. Act as a catalyzer and accelerate processes without interfering or duplicating efforts, building on GEO's collective action and groups/countries/organizations' individual action.