

Foundational Tasks in the 2023-2025 GEO Work Programme

This document is submitted by the Secretariat to the Programme Board for decision.

1 INTRODUCTION

This document presents the Secretariat recommendations for the Foundational Tasks in the 2023-2025 GEO Work Programme (GWP).

2 BACKGROUND

The Foundational Tasks are one of the four “Implementation Mechanisms” that comprise the GWP, and which were created as part of the 2016-2025 GEO Strategic Plan. Their purpose is to:

[A]llow GEO to implement selected, often enabling, tasks to achieve GEO Strategic Objectives. These include coordination actions, gap analyses, the implementation of technical elements for accessing GEOSS, and other routine operations of the GEO Secretariat. Thus, they provide important support functions to Flagships, Initiatives, and Community Activities.

The structure of the Foundational Tasks was significantly revised in the 2020-2022 GWP. This revision saw the number of Foundational Tasks reduced from 10 to five, largely through the amalgamation of related activities within a single Foundational Task. The current Foundational Tasks, and their components, are described in Annex A.

Foundational Tasks are implemented by the Secretariat and members of the GEO community, the latter through various Working Groups, task teams and other bodies. It should be noted that the listed components give a sense of the topics being covered within each Foundational Task, they do not necessarily represent distinct divisions for the purposes of management or implementation.

Each Foundational Task is coordinated by an assigned Secretariat lead, although multiple Secretariat staff are involved in all of the Foundational Tasks.

3 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Since the set of Foundational Tasks described above was created in 2019, there have been several important developments:

- The Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, Data, and Capacity Development Working Groups were formed and have matured;
- The GEO Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) team presented their findings and recommendations, a number of which dealt with the Foundational Tasks, and the Executive Committee responded with a set of proposed actions which were approved by the GEO Plenary;

- The Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on GEOSS was established by the Executive Committee in response to the MTE; and
- A new Secretariat Director has taken up her position and has signaled several new directions, including an increased emphasis on integration, connection to policy, and resource mobilization for the GWP.

While each of these changes may imply a possible need for revision to the Foundational Task structure, some of these processes, notably the EAG, are unlikely to be completed in time to be reflected in the 2023-2025 GWP.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretariat recommends that:

- The five existing Foundational Tasks be retained in the 2023-2025 GWP; and
- The Foundational Task structure be reviewed again in 2023 following the completion of the EAG process and the staffing of new senior positions in the Secretariat.

Annex A: 2020-2022 Foundational Tasks

The titles in the list below correspond to the Foundational Tasks. The key components identified in the 2020-2022 GWP Summary Document are listed as bullet points below.

Engagement Priorities Coordination

- GEO engagement priorities coordination
- Commercial sector engagement
- Communications
- Resource mobilization

GEOSS Data and Information Resources

- Satellite observations
- In-situ observations
- Modeling
- Advancing GEO Data Sharing and Data Management Principles

GEOSS Infrastructure Development

- GEOSS Platform operations
- Support GEO community data and information needs
- GEO Knowledge Hub development
- GEONETCast operations
- GEOSS Platform documentation
- GEOSS infrastructure evolution
- Open-source solutions

GWP Support

- Programme Board support
- GWP development
- GWP monitoring and liaison
- GWP capacity development

Secretariat Operations

- Management of the GEO Trust Fund
- Management of Secretariat human resources
- Conference and meeting management
- Relations with GEO Members, Participating Organizations, and GEO Associates
- Coordination of GEO evaluations

For more information, please refer to pages 115 to 124 of the [2020-2022 GWP Summary Document](#).