

## Report of the Data Working Group

*This document is submitted by the Data Working Group to the Programme Board for discussion.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Data Working Group (DWG) redefined its working arrangements for 2022, reducing the number of meetings to 4 times a year (January, April, July, and October), with coordination meetings between the DWG Co-Chairs, Subgroup Co-Leads and the GEO Secretariat one week prior to each meeting. Subgroup meetings have continued at a regular pace with a monthly (or bimonthly) frequency.

In the last few months, the DWG, the GEOSS Platform Operations team and the GEO Secretariat has been conducting consultation calls with 10 GEO Work Programme (GWP) activities (GEO-TREES, CROP-PEST-MONITORING, GOS<sub>4</sub>M, GEOGLoWS, EO<sub>4</sub>Health, GEOGLAM, Blue Planet, AquaWatch, GEO VENER, GEO Mountains), based on the data analysis survey results - [link to the dashboard](#) - that was sent in late 2021. Another series of calls is currently being scheduled for September 2022 and will include 5 more GWP activities (GEO BON, GFOI, GOS<sub>4</sub>POPS, GSNL and GEO Wetlands).

The outcomes of these calls are detailed in each subgroup section below, especially on in situ and data sharing and data management principles. Based on these calls, and from a discussion at its last meeting in July, the DWG is now discussing the organization of a week-long event in 2023, following the structure of previous data providers workshops (2017-2019) and the open data and knowledge week that was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The DWG has also organized a session during the last GEO Virtual Symposium called “Advancing Open Data within the GWP through New Tools and Services” and is planning side events for the GEO Week in Accra, Ghana focusing on open data policies in Africa and next steps to improve its adoption.

### 2 IN SITU SUBGROUP

The In Situ Subgroup (IS-SG) has been actively involved in the engagement calls with the GWP activities to assess better the challenges they face in accessing and using in situ data to achieve their goals, in support of the in situ data strategy that was discussed at PB-21. One key consideration gathered from multiple activities is the difficulty in approaching national data custodian agencies and convincing them to share their in situ data, highlighting the need for a better national engagement mechanism.

An outcome of the calls with the activities, which is currently being compiled, is a list of (i) in situ data that is currently not available or with heavy restrictions on use, and is needed by the activity, and (ii) critical in situ data that is openly available and currently being used but at risk of not being sustainably collected or shared. This will help the subgroup to engage with more

data providers and work with them to make the data available and show the value of the data being used when shared, based on concrete examples.

The subgroup is seeking higher and more diverse participation in its meetings and activities, although the situation has improved since last year. Participation from Africa and the Asia-Oceania regions could still be improved.

### 3 DATA SHARING AND DATA MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES SUBGROUP

The Data Sharing and Data Management Principles Subgroup (DSDMP-SG) has been actively involved in the engagement calls with the GWP activities to assess better the awareness about the GEO principles and how they are put in practice. One key outcome from the calls that emerged was that activities needed more support and tools to implement these. With the aim of providing that support, the subgroup has taken the following actions:

- **Revision of the GEO Data Management Principles Implementation Guidelines:** The new guidelines can be used to assess how well the GEO principles are being followed in practice. For each of the principles, the guidelines provide an explanation of each principle, as well as advice on implementation, relevant standards, metrics for measuring adherence and resource implications. The revised guidelines have been endorsed at the last EXCOM meeting in July 2022.
- **Data management Principles self-assessment tool:** This tool was developed within the frame of the e-shape project and aims to help users work out whether their data management plans are consistent with the GEO Data Management Principles and the FAIR Principles. The questionnaire allows users to determine whether their project is compliant with each of the GEO Principles, and a matrix shows how the GEO and FAIR principles overlap and are complimentary. Once the questionnaire is completed, users can export the analysis to Word file as a ready-to-go data management plan.
- **Data Sharing and Data Management Principles Dialogue series:** Starting on 5 September, the DSDMP-SG will be running seven webinars every Monday from 16:00 to 17:30 CEST to raise awareness about the GEO principles and their benefits. Members of the EO community will discuss their experience implementing the principles, talk through how they tackled challenges and showcase the impact they realized.

### 4 LAW AND POLICY SUBGROUP

The Law and Policy Subgroup (LP-SG) is moving forward with their work on data licensing, including by revising the report on Data Sharing Principles Post-2015 and Mechanisms to Ensure Legal Interoperability of Shared Data that had been presented at the GEO-XI Plenary in 2014.

The subgroup has also been participating in some engagement calls to identify the GWP activities' needs regarding legal issues for the data they use, determining the need to follow up on more focused discussions between the subgroup and the legal team in each activity, as the current engagement calls involve people that are more involved in the technical aspects.

Finally, the subgroup is going to resume its activities in September with new formats for its meetings that will involve invited guest speakers and working business discussions. The subgroup is also eager to get more participants in its activities and is looking for an intern to support its activities.

## **5 DATA ETHICS SUBGROUP**

Since its establishment as a separate subgroup, the Data Ethics Subgroup (DE-SG) has been brainstorming to establish a new work plan and recruit new members to participate in SG activities.

Recent developments as well as discussions with the DWG Co-Chairs and the GEO Secretariat have led to the conclusion these efforts can continue more efficiently and effectively by migration to the Committee on Data of the International Science Council (ISC), (CODATA) Ethics Working Group, as many members are present in both teams.