
Report
64th Executive Committee Meeting
Geneva, Switzerland
6-7 November 2024

As Accepted at the 65th Executive Committee Meeting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chair: Mr Xiaohan Liao

1 SESSION 1: GENERAL BUSINESS

1.1 Welcome from Lead Co-Chair and Co-Chairs, Secretariat Director

- China as Lead Co-Chair, the Co-Chairs and the GEO Secretariat Director opened the 64th meeting of the Executive Committee and welcomed members, including Australia and Germany, as new GEO Principal and Principal Alternate respectively, Nigeria GEO Principal Alternate, as well as representatives of Permanent Missions in Geneva.

1.2 Adoption of Agenda

- The agenda was adopted with an addition to Session 7 – 7.2 Updates on GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force.

1.3 Adoption of the Draft Report of the 63rd Session and the Virtual Meeting in July

- The following documents were approved: Draft Report of the 63rd Executive Committee Meeting and Draft Report of July 2024 Virtual Meeting.

1.4 Review of Action Items from Previous Meetings

- The following document was approved: Executive Committee 64-3 Action items from previous meetings. Lead Co-Chair noted all previous action items were completed.

Action 64.1: GEO Secretariat to share the GEO Week Handbook again upon request of Members.

1.5 Secretariat Operations Report: 1 April 2024 through 30 September 2024

- GEO Secretariat Director presented highlights from the Secretariat Operations Report.

- The Executive Committee acknowledged and commended the report as a positive one and appreciated the Secretariat's efforts in member engagement and resource mobilization.
- The Secretariat provided clarification regarding the GEO Marketplace, which is a component of the GKH developing a module to enable knowledge providers to share their applications, even if some components are not fully open, in consultation with Space Climate Observatory (SCO) and other projects.
- The Secretariat provided clarification on the current practices of sharing information on GEO's work for wider reach and the opportunity to leverage the Executive Committee and other networks to amplify the messages in the SecOps report.

2 SESSION 2: POST 2025 WORK PROGRAMME

2.1 Report of the 30th Programme Board, including debrief on 2024 GEO Symposium and Open Data Open Knowledge (ODOK) Workshop

- The Programme Board Co-Chair provided a summary of the highlights of Programme Board's work since reporting to the Executive Committee in July.
- The Executive Committee commended the report and Programme Board efforts, and appreciated the clear guidance for the Post 2025 GWP Call for Proposals and the ongoing efforts in assisting smooth transition of the current work programme activities.
- The Executive Committee also recognized that the R2O pipeline is well-aligned with the Post-2025 Strategy in delivering actionable insights, and appreciated the upcoming AI4EO efforts that will help accelerate adoption of new technologies and identify new pathways for innovation.
- There was a request for information from the Executive Committee on the arrangements and focus of the proposal from EO4SDGs to have a position of a Work Programme Coordinator for Sustainable Development. The Programme Board Co-chair clarified that this is not a Programme Board mandate and should be considered as part of Executive Committee discussions on the GEO Secretariat Concept of Operations and budget.
- The GEO Secretariat provided a debrief on the 2024 Symposium and ODOK. The Executive Committee appreciated the outcomes of the 2024 Symposium and ODOK, as well as efforts of organizers including GEO Secretariat, Programme Board, Data and Knowledge Working Group and in particular, the Chinese local hosts. The Executive Committee recommended that future Symposia and ODOK workshops are better coordinated and non-duplicative.

2.1.1 *Extension of Programme Board member expiring terms to May 2025 Plenary*

- The Programme Board proposed the extension of Programme Board member terms to May 2025 for approval by the Executive Committee, and launching of the call for nomination of Programme Board members based on the revised Programme Board ToR endorsed by the Executive Committee (finally approved by the Plenary) in March 2025.

Decision: The Executive Committee approved the Programme Board's proposal to extend expiring terms to May 2025, and endorsed the approach to launch the call for nominations of the Programme Board members based on the revised TORs due to be endorsed at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

2.2 Update on GIDTT

- The GIDTT provided an update on activities and proposed to shift key deadlines within the TOR for the Executive Committee's decision.
- The Executive Committee emphasized the importance of making the necessary progress for specific elements of the GIDTT plan to be included in the Strategy Implementation Plan to be sure objectives are met.

Decision: The Executive Committee approved the amendments to the GIDTT TORs.

3 SESSION 3: GEO BUDGET AND RESOURCES REVIEW

3.1 Proposed 2025 Interim Budget

- The GEO Secretariat presented observations on the budget, highlighting the need for expected contributions, both financial and in-kind with fit-for-purpose secondments, to continue to maintain current capacity within the Secretariat.
- Executive Committee members appreciated the observations and acknowledged the need to meet expected contributions and explore all avenues for increasing resources.
- Japan, Germany, EU reaffirmed continued financial support to GEO Trust Fund and GWP activities, and others provided suggestions on allocation of resources notably towards thematic priorities and member engagement. China suggested that future activities should adequately address members' needs.

Decision: The Executive Committee approved the Interim GEO Secretariat 2025 Budget.

4 SESSION 4: POST 2025 STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 Update on GEO Post-2025 Strategy Implementation Plan

- The Post 2025 Strategy Implementation Plan Lead presented an update on the GEO Post 2025 Strategy Implementation Plan and outlined next steps.
- The Executive Committee appreciated the Theory of Change element in the revised SIP and provided comments and recommendations for revision, specifically regarding addressing the linkage between the GWP, the SIP, and GEO's infrastructure
- Executive Committee members expressed a need to establish a clear timeline for SIP advancement and finalization through the 2025 Plenary.
- Executive Committee members proposed the option to send written comments on the SIP to the Secretariat.
- Executive Committee members expressed interest in establishing a task force/supporting team to work with the SIP Lead in progressing the SIP.

- Japan, France, Germany, South Africa, China, US, European Commission and Paraguay volunteered to provide additional support to the SIP Lead.

Action 64.2: GEO Secretariat to present a timeline for the delivery of the SIP during the second day of Executive Committee 64.

Action 64.3: ExCom to provide written comments on the Draft SIP and the timeline by 15 November 2024.

4.2 Consultation on Plenary and Global Forum Scheduling

- The GEO Secretariat outlined the current status of GEO events and proposed examples for alternating the years in which GEO Symposia and the Global Fora can be hosted in order to optimize Secretariat resources.
- Executive Committee members appreciated the efforts of Italy, EU, and the Secretariat in supporting the organization of big events.
- Executive Committee members emphasized the importance of maintaining annual Plenary meetings.
- Executive Committee members recognized the benefits of convening the community at GEO Symposia and Global Forum and discussed the possibility of coming together and maximizing resources to support big events on an annual basis.

Action 64.4: The GEO Secretariat to create a shared document with key observations on paths forward to produce large scale events and share with the Executive Committee to provide input in advance of the next meeting of the Executive Committee and seek to align with the milestones of the SIP.

Action 64.5: The Secretariat will support the organization of informal meetings to discuss event scheduling and other topics of interest.

5 SESSION 5: CBD COP16

5.1 Debrief on CBD COP16

- The GEO Secretariat presented on the outcomes of GEO's participation at CBD COP-16 and GEO's strategic engagement efforts.
- Armenia, China, Australia, EU, US, Senegal, Nigeria recognised the value in GEO Secretariat's engagement at COP and similar level events and confirmed interest in continuing this effort.
- Members noted the importance to be selective and strategic when identifying opportunities and prospects for similar engagement efforts taking into account resource needs and expected return on investment.

6 SESSION 6: PACIFIC ISLANDS ADVISORY GROUP

6.1 Pacific Island Advisory Group Report

- PIAG Co-Chairs presented a summary of the PIAG report, including key achievements between 2020-2024, and the path forward.

- Recommended termination of PIAG's term in December 2024 and setting up an SPREP-facilitated Community of Practice through the DE Pacific programme managed by SPC.
- Executive Committee members commend PIAG's efforts to advance the use of EO among the Pacific Islands countries and territories.
- Executive Committee agreed to cease its term in December and noted until the Strategy Implementation Plan is finalised, the Executive Committee cannot commit to supporting regional and global partnerships in a specific area.

Decision: The report Executive Committee⁶⁴⁻¹¹ PIAG 2025 Report_161024 was adopted with the modification of using the term Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICT) and with the decision to cease PIAG's term in December 2024.

7 SESSION 7: GLOBAL FORUM 2025

7.1 Update on GEO Global Forum 2025

- The GEO Principal of Italy, Nicola Pirrone, presented an update on the planning for the GEO Global Forum 2025 in Rome, Italy, including details on the schedule, format, dates, and key upcoming dates.
- Executive Committee members commended the local organizing committee for their planning efforts.
- In response to Senegal and South Africa's request that invitation letters to ministers be sent on December 2nd in order to ensure response time in advance of December holidays, Mr Pirrone mentioned that invitational letters are being arranged by Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAECI) and the timeline of which was due to be discussed in an upcoming meeting.
- Italy clarified that an Exhibitor package will be provided in conjunction with the launch of the call for exhibitors on December 2nd.

7.2 Updates on GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force

- EC GEO Principal presented an update on the work of the GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force.
- Executive Committee members noted this effort is needed to secure ministerial presence and emphasised the importance of high-level engagement and mobilization of contributions and resources.
- Noting that preparation is necessary when approaching the political class, Executive Committee members also suggested that additional resources, such as communication on the value and achievements of GEO and targeted engagement, may be necessary to support and concretize the narrative.
- Italy noted ongoing efforts to map multilateral and bilateral cooperation to inform high-level engagements and communication.

8 SESSION 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Review of Requests to join GEO as Participating Organizations

- Executive Committee approved these requests to join GEO:
 - Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC);
 - West Africa ICT Action Network.

8.2 Update on the procedures for the GEO Secretariat Director's Performance Evaluation and the 360-degree Assessment process

- DEPT provided a brief update on the continued process for establishing procedures, including completion of TORs.

Action 64.6: Details on the process and timeline of the DEPT's progress will be shared with the Executive Committee

8.3 Any Other Business

8.3.1 *Updates on the Rules of Procedure Task team and related process*

- GEO Secretariat provided an update on the activation of the Rules of Procedure (RoP) Task Team based on Decision 4.1 at Executive Committee 63. The Secretariat outlined a proposed initial process to gather input from the community, a timeline for RoP changes to be presented to the Plenary, and a recommendation to hold the first meeting in early December.
- US and others expressed the need for informal meetings to gather feedback from the Executive Committee and proposed an ad hoc meeting for the Task Team after the closing of the session to discuss the proposed process and timeline.
- EU, South Africa, Australia, France, Nigeria, Japan, China and Paraguay confirmed or re-confirmed interest in joining the Task Team.
- In acknowledgement of GEO Secretariat's limited capacity, US noted that Task Teams can actively contribute to the joint activities, and others emphasised the importance of collaboration and partnership between the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

8.3.2 *Any Other Business*

- GEO Secretariat presented the draft timeline of the SIP.
- GEO Secretariat presented the proposed dates for the 2025 Meetings of the Executive Committee:
 - March 5th and 6th: Hybrid meeting with a focused discussion on the SIP;
 - May 6 in Rome (pre-2025 Plenary);
 - Face-to-face meeting: Fall dates to be determined;
 - Co-chairs volunteered to organise an inter-sessional Executive Committee meeting to debrief and build on the outcomes of the Executive Committee retreat.

Action 64.7: The Rules of Procedure Task team to meet ad-hoc after the closing of the 64th Meeting of the Executive Committee.

Action 64.8: The draft timeline of the SIP to be circulated to the Executive Committee for comments and review by 15th November 2024.

8.4 Review of Action Items

- GEO Secretariat presented actions, outcomes and decisions from the meeting.

8.5 Closing Remarks

- The Lead Co-Chair, Co-Chairs and the Secretariat Director provided closing remarks.

Draft Report
64th Executive Committee Meeting
6-7 November 2024
FULL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chair: Mr Xiaohan Liao

1 SESSION 1: GENERAL BUSINESS

1.1 Welcome from Lead Co-Chair, Co-Chairs and Secretariat Director

The Lead Co-Chair, Mr Xiaohan Liao, welcomed everyone to the 64th Executive Committee Meeting. He emphasized the importance of building on the outcomes of the Executive Committee's retreat for continued collaboration and recalibration. The Lead Co-Chair welcomed the Principal of Australia, the Principal Alternates of Germany and Nigeria, as well as the Permanent Missions in Geneva, as first-time attendees to the meeting.

Mr Gao Xiang (China) in his opening remarks thanked the GEO Secretariat for the preparations leading up to the 64th Executive Committee Meeting and the Executive Committee retreat. Mr Gao highlighted the success of the GEO Symposium and Open Data Open Knowledge (ODOK) Workshop in Hangzhou, China which laid the foundation for the development of the GEO Post-2025 Strategy Implementation Plan (SIP). He re-emphasized China's commitment to working with partners through a collaborative approach, with the aim to develop a compact operational model to advance the vision of Earth Intelligence for All, while strengthening capacity development initiatives. Mr Gao announced China will host the 7th AOGEO (Asia-Oceania) Workshop in February 2025 and noted scholarships offered to students from the AOGEO Member States, and reaffirmed China's commitment in co-developing a sustainable SIP that can bridge the gaps to bring benefits to developing countries.

Ms Joanna Drake (European Commission¹) highlighted the timeliness of the 64th Executive Committee Meeting in view of the development of the GEO Post-2025 SIP and the planning for the GEO Global Forum 2025 to be held in Italy in May 2025, and congratulated the success of the GEO Symposium and ODOK workshop in Hangzhou China. Ms Drake re-emphasized Europe's commitment to GEO's vision and mission, highlighted the role of Earth Intelligence in tackling environmental challenges, and noted EuroGEO's impactful contributions in areas like sustainable fishing and climate adaptation, and stressed GEO's unique role in delivering Earth Intelligence for All. She reaffirmed Europe's support to GEO through programmes like Copernicus, and direct support to GEO's Work Programme (GWP) activities like GEO Blue Planet and GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring (GEOGLAM). Ms Drake also underscored the importance of unlocking data technologies,

¹ The European Union as represented by the European Commission will be referred to as the European Commission or the Commission for this report.

aligning Europe's Green Deal targets with GEO's mission to address global crises, and maintaining free and open EO systems.

Ms Virginia Burkett (United States) on behalf of Mr Stephen Volz, welcomed participants to the 64th Executive Committee Meeting and thanked the GEO Secretariat for the arrangements and preparations. Noting that the Cape Town Ministerial Declaration and the adoption of the GEO Post-2025 Strategy marked the beginning of a transformative period for GEO, Ms Burkett noted the discussions over the course of the meeting would further the development of the GEO Post-2025 SIP and the transformation of the GWP. Ms Burkett appreciated the organization of the Executive Committee retreat and encouraged the committee to implement its takeaways in key discussions.

Mr Mmboneni Muofhe (South Africa) extended greetings to the participants of the 64th Executive Committee Meeting. He echoed the United States' comments and emphasized the need for continued review of progress to deliver better future efforts. Mr Muofhe highlighted the journey of developing the GEO Post-2025 Strategy, and in extension the GEO Post-2025 SIP and transformative GWP, reinforcing the goal of delivering Earth Intelligence for All. He noted South Africa's commitment to secure political support for broader African caucus initiatives, and emphasized the commitment of the National Earth Observations and Space Secretariat (NEOSS) and South Africa GEO (SAGEO) to strengthen national and regional activities, notably through the Community of Practice Integrated Workshop and Capacity Building hosted in Pretoria in June 2024 designed to equip participants with critical Earth observations (EO) skills to empower national uptake to leverage EO data and knowledge. Highlighting the role of space-science and driving collaboration across sectors, Mr Muofhe noted the launch of the precision agriculture tool which is designed to enable sustainable agricultural practices through data driven solutions. Mr Muofhe then acknowledged South Africa and AfriGEO's strong partnership with the GEO Secretariat which enabled increased participation of and collaboration with African member states. Lastly, he reaffirmed South Africa's support to GEO's vision and mission and emphasized the need for constructive engagement over the course of the meeting.

Ms Yana Gevorgyan (GEO Secretariat) welcomed everyone to the 64th Meeting of the Executive Committee. Reflecting on 2024, Ms Gevorgyan emphasized the multiple opportunities for GEO's work to be championed starting with the World Economic Forum's insight report which highlighted EO tools and services as a vital asset that can unlock opportunity for global value creation within six main industries. Ms Gevorgyan reiterated the need to bridge the opportunity gap between EO providers and its user base. She highlighted the role of EO in global initiatives and fora such as the UN CBD COP16 where the interdependencies between climate change, nature loss and reversing nature loss can be addressed through EO tools and services. Ms Gevorgyan emphasized the importance of EO in efficient urban planning, achieving net-zero targets, promoting Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and aligning all of these efforts with GEO's Post-2025 SIP. With her concluding remarks, Ms Gevorgyan emphasized GEO's responsibility to deliver evidence-based research and operational solutions that empower users to take effective action.

Outcomes:

- China as Lead Co-Chair, the Co-Chairs and the GEO Secretariat Director opened the 64th meeting of the Executive Committee and welcomed members, including Australia and Germany, as new GEO Principal and Principal Alternate respectively, Nigeria GEO Principal Alternate, as well as representatives of Permanent Missions in Geneva.

1.2 Adoption of Agenda

The Lead Co-Chair enquired if there were any comments or interventions to adjust the agenda.

The European Commission supported the adoption of the agenda with an addition to session 7 to provide updates on the GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force.

The Agenda for the 64th Meeting of the Executive Committee was adopted with an addition to Session 7 – 7.2 Updates on GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force.

Outcomes:

- The agenda was adopted with an addition to Session 7 – 7.2 Updates on GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force

1.3 Adoption of the Draft Report of the 63rd Session and the Virtual Meeting in July

The Lead Co-Chair enquired if there were any comments or interventions to adjust the Draft Report of the 63rd Executive Committee Meeting and Draft Report of July 2024 Virtual Meeting. The Draft Report of the 63rd Executive Committee Meeting and the Draft Report of the July 2024 Virtual Meeting were adopted as distributed.

Outcomes:

- The following documents were approved: Draft Report of the 63rd Executive Committee Meeting and Draft Report of July 2024 Virtual Meeting.

1.4 Review of Action Items from Previous Meetings

The Lead Co-Chair presented the Review of Action Items from Previous Meetings. The Lead Co-Chair noted that all previous actions were completed.

France requested clarification regarding the Rules of Procedure Task Force.

Senegal requested clarification on Action 63.1 to receive the GEO Week Handbook.

In response to France, the Secretariat Director noted that the Rules of Procedure Task Force will be discussed during Session 8.3 Any Other Business. In response to Senegal, the Director clarified that the documents were shared after the previous meeting of the Executive Committee and that the GEO Week Handbook will be shared with countries upon request.

Outcomes:

- The following document was approved: Executive Committee 64-3 Action items from previous meetings. Lead Co-Chair noted all previous action items were completed.

Action 64.1: GEO Secretariat to share the GEO Week Handbook again upon request of Members.

1.5 Secretariat Operations Report: 1 April 2024 through 30 September 2024

Ms Yana Gevorgyan (GEO Secretariat Director) presented highlights from the most recent Secretariat Operations Report. Highlighting the significant achievements, the Secretariat Director noted the co-development of the policy brief with the UNFCCC Technology Executive Committee (TEC) in support of the Early Warnings for All Initiative set to launch at the upcoming UNFCCC COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Director noted that the brief offers a roadmap to leverage technology, Earth observations, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance early warning systems in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UN Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

Ms Gevorgyan highlighted over the course of the year the GEO Secretariat engaged with the 4 Regional GEOs, supported and co-organized several sessions and engaged with 35 delegations, where a key priority was to consult on the Post-2025 SIP. She highlighted the close collaboration with China in preparations for the successful organization of the GEO Symposium and Open Data Open Knowledge Workshop in Hangzhou, China, and the launch of the call for proposals for the new GEO Work Programme.

Ms Gevorgyan highlighted the launch of the communications toolkit, the GEO Brand Book, a standardized, harmonized presentation on GEO, and two impact videos on GEO initiatives - GEO LDN and GEOGloWS that highlight the value of GEO, all of which were showcased at the Vitamin C booth at the Symposium in China.

Lastly, Ms Gevorgyan noted the completion of the proof-of-concept of the GEO Global Ecosystems Atlas – with seed funding from the UK government and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) – which was launched at the UN CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia, and highlighted additional funding of \$4 million for the implementation phase of the Atlas. She also highlighted the progress made by the Global Heat Resilience Service which advanced its partnerships with C40 Cities, World Health Organization (WHO) and Horizon Europe.

The Lead Co-Chair thanked the Secretariat Director for the brief overview, appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat and encouraged future reporting in a presentation format.

The European Commission appreciated the progress on the accelerators and noted the importance of accurate labelling of the accelerators within the next iteration of the Work Programme for accurate assessment of their maturity by the Programme Board. Welcomed the creation of the Resilient Cities and Human Settlements Working Group and appreciated the work of the GEO Secretariat, especially with direct engagement at the EuroGEO Workshop.

Senegal extended its thanks to the GEO Secretariat for the comprehensive report, and the remarkable work demonstrated in the report including the launch of the Global Heat Resilience Service and the Global Ecosystems Atlas. In particular, Senegal highlighted the

participation of the GEO Secretariat at the 8th AfriGEO Symposium and reiterated its commitment to building open data principles to further strengthen EO capabilities across Africa.

France thanked the GEO Secretariat on the work and progress to date and requested clarification on the GEO Marketplace.

The United States appreciated the Secretariat Operations Report, noting the exceptional work carried out by the Secretariat. Commended the efforts of the Member Services team in advancing coordination with Regional GEOs, the communications and resource mobilization efforts and welcomed the new additions to the Secretariat. The United States noted the impact of the participation, engagement, presentations and timely networking at AmeriGEO Week in Quito, Ecuador by Ms Sara Venturini and Ms Tushara Maturi. The United States requested the Secretariat to adapt its communication strategies to ensure timely, consistent, and targeted updates about its operations, achievements, and impacts, emphasizing the importance of sharing successes as they occur rather than limiting updates to the operations report. The US suggested that the Secretariat Operations Report be widely shared with the GEO community in order to mobilize advocacy and support across regions and within countries.

South Africa thanked the Secretariat for the report and expressed appreciation for the support received by the Member Services unit and the GEO Infrastructure Coordinator, which enabled the mapping of South Africa's EO landscape. Noted the GEO Knowledge Hub (GKH) offers critical resources for data sharing and resources.

Australia congratulated the Secretariat for the progress and the report, recognized the Global Ecosystems Atlas and acknowledged the Secretariat's involvement in the first Global Nature Positive Summit in Sydney, Australia.

China appreciated and congratulated the Secretariat's efforts.

Paraguay congratulated the Secretariat for a complete Secretariat Operations Report and acknowledged the good work being carried out.

Armenia congratulated the GEO Secretariat for the remarkable results and thanked its efforts in preparation for the 64th Meeting of the Executive Committee.

Japan expressed gratitude to the GEO Secretariat for co-organizing and contributing to the 16th AOGEO Symposium held in Tokyo in September 2024, and appreciated the cooperation from AOGEO member countries.

In response to the United States, the GEO Secretariat Director noted that as general practice, the documents from the Executive Committee meetings are shared with the GEO community and called on the Executive Committee to amplify the message of the Secretariat Operations Report.

The GEO Infrastructure Coordinator, in response to France, noted that the GEO Marketplace is a component of the GKH resulting from a discussion with Space Climate Observatory (SCO) in Cape Town to enable knowledge providers to share their applications, even if not fully open access. Noted the continued work of the GKH and the Data and Knowledge Working Group to collaborate with various knowledge providers to ensure all data is open.

The United States noted in response to the GEO Secretariat Director that a shortened report for social media and other communications can be a consideration for further amplifying the work of the Secretariat.

Outcomes:

- GEO Secretariat Director presented highlights from the Secretariat Operations Report.
- The Executive Committee acknowledged and commended the report as a positive one and appreciated the Secretariat's efforts in member engagement and resource mobilization.
- The Secretariat provided clarification regarding the GEO Marketplace, which is a component of the GKH developing a module to enable knowledge providers to share their applications, even if some components are not fully open, in consultation with Space Climate Observatory (SCO) and other projects.
- The Secretariat provided clarification on the current practices of sharing information on GEO's work for wider reach and the opportunity to leverage the Executive Committee and other networks to amplify the messages in the SecOps report.

2 SESSION 2: POST 2025 WORK PROGRAMME

2.1 Report of the 30th Programme Board, including debrief on 2024 GEO Symposium and ODOK

Dr Evangelos Gerasopoulos (Programme Board Co-Chair) presented a summary of the highlights of Programme Board's work on behalf of the Co-Chairs. He noted the busy period for the Programme Board since the July meeting of the Executive Committee, and highlighted the actionable outcomes from the GEO Symposium and ODOK Workshop in China during the course of the development of the Post-2025 SIP and the Post-2025 GWP. He thanked China GEO, the Local Organizing Committee and the GEO Secretariat for a successful GEO Symposium and ODOK Workshop.

The Programme Board Co-Chair then outlined the new approaches introduced in the Post-2025 GWP, including Focus Areas, Research to operations (R2O) pipeline and Convener, an evergreen programme cycle, and monitoring and evaluation. While noting the significance of the R2O pipeline in delivering Earth Intelligence services, the Programme Board Co-Chair highlighted the role of Conveners in identifying gaps and catalyzing cross-cutting collaborations. He reported that the Call for Proposals was launched on 16 September with the submission deadline now extended to 15 November. Given the evergreen programme cycle, he emphasized this is not the only chance to submit a proposal. The Programme Board will be able to review new proposals on a regular basis (frequency to be defined) after the 2025 GEO Global Forum.

The Programme Board Co-Chair noted the approval of the AI4EO (Artificial Intelligence for Earth Observations) sub-group which will support the key objectives of the Post-2025 Strategy by integrating cross cutting, edge technologies into EO for Earth Intelligence. He reported the sunset of the Earth Observations for Sustainable Development Goals (EO4SDG) initiative in 2025, and a Convener on SDG and a potential position for an SDG

coordinator in New York are being proposed. Lastly, the Programme Board co-chair noted the approval of the 2025 GEO Awards process, and that the Programme Board's Terms of Reference (TORs) are being reviewed, and requested the Executive Committee to extend the terms of the current Programme Board members to May 2025.

The Lead Co-Chair thanked the Programme Board Co-Chair for the presentation.

Japan thanked the Programme Board Co-Chair and the Programme Board for all the work and reaffirmed Japan's commitment to the Programme Board, various Working Groups and the Post-2025 GWP. Noted in terms of the SDG goals, it is important to demonstrate how EO and Earth Intelligence (EI) can contribute to achieving the targets and welcomed the approval of the AI4EO and requested clarification on the arrangements of the SDG coordinator position.

The European Commission congratulated the Programme Board on the progress made and acknowledged the remaining work to be done, noted the importance highlighting the work of the Programme Board and the GWP. Recalled the GWP should remain at the core of GEO, and giving sufficient emphasis to its work is important, e.g. the Sargassum Hub of GEO Blue Planet. The Commission reiterated its support to contribute to the revision of TORs of the Programme Board.

South Africa congratulated the Programme Board on the progress and extended a word of appreciation for the report in its detailed form, and commended Programme Board for laying out clear guidance for the Post-2025 GWP proposals with special emphasis on the criteria for the R2O pipeline. Acknowledged the good work by the EO4SDG initiative and noted the opportunity for accelerated adoption of new technologies and new pathways for innovation with the establishment of the AI4EO subgroup.

Senegal thanked the Programme Board Co-Chair for the presentation, appreciated the efforts in advancing the use of AI with EO, and enquired elaboration on how the New York based SDG coordinator will support developing countries in strengthening their National Coordination Mechanisms (NCM) and SDG capabilities.

Ms Justyna Nicinska (Programme Board Co-Chair) noted in response to Japan and Senegal that the Programme Board has deferred discussion on an SDG coordinator role to the Executive Committee, as it related to the GEO Secretariat's Concept of Operations and budget. Ms Nicinska noted that while support for an SDG convener is anticipated, any detailed plans remain under development and that the Programme Board, along with the Secretariat will revisit when appropriate.

Paraguay and Armenia extended their congratulations to the Programme Board.

Mr Gerasopoulos (Programme Board Co-Chair) thanked Japan for its involvement in the Programme Board, and in updating the Programme Board's TORs. Thanked the European Commission, South Africa and Senegal for words of support, and noted the Programme Board's commitment to collaborating closely with the Secretariat, Regional GEOs and the Executive Committee. The Programme Board Co-Chair reassured South Africa that the Programme Board is working to ensure a smooth and transparent process for Post-2025 GWP development.

The United States thanked the Programme Board for its efforts and echoed comments of congratulations from Paraguay and Armenia. Noted the importance of the Executive

Committee providing strong support to the Programme Board and the work of the Programme Board and appreciated the online submission platform and the proposal writing workshops in view of the call for proposals to the new GWP. The United States recommended the Programme Board be given authority when making recommendations to the Executive Committee for better coordination and integration of the GWP as part of its new TORs.

The Programme Board Co-Chair thanked the Executive Committee for its support and reassured synergies and integrations among GWP activities will be explored and implemented appropriately. Noted the work of the Programme Board would not be possible without the GEO Secretariat's support – logistically and thematically on substantial elements of the GWP.

Ms Wenbo Chu (GEO Secretariat) presented highlights from the GEO Symposium in China, marking the event a success for productivity, collaboration and inspiration. The Symposium hosted over 250 participants including 30 participants who attended on invitational travel support, representing 42 countries, 5 caucuses and 33 GWP Activities.

She noted the Symposium emphasized the city of Hanzhou's commitment to GEO's mission proposing the city as a comprehensive pilot for EI4All in urban digital governance.

Ms Chu noted the key topics of the Symposium included the development of the SIP and Post-2025 GWP, collaborations among GWP activities in co-producing integrated, innovative, and co-designed open products and services, engagement of youth and indigenous communities, Regional GEOs, EO value chain and the value of consistent communications. The Symposium underscored the importance of user engagement, co-design approaches, and cross-sector partnerships for future activities.

Ms Chu outlined the three primary challenges identified for transformative programmes: sustained funding, impact assessment, and effective communication in a competitive environment. Noted the storytelling workshop by National Geographic aimed to help bridge communication gaps by translating scientific concepts into narratives for public and donor engagement.

Ms Chu noted that a youth networking breakfast was organized by the Secretariat to promote youth representation and involvement in GEO governance, the GWP, and the GEO Global Forum, with a proposal for a youth Convener in progress.

Lastly, Ms Chu noted that good practices in symposium organization included strong local support, full application of GEO branding, travel assistance, and ample networking opportunities.

Ms Paola de Salvo (GEO Secretariat) then presented the key highlights from the Open Data Open Knowledge Workshop. She thanked the Local Organizing Committee for their organization and highlighted the diverse participation over the course of the two days. She noted the key outcomes including the importance of open data and open knowledge for advancing Earth Intelligence for All, with the GEO Knowledge Hub playing a central role.

Ms de Salvo noted the emphasis placed on making data knowledge-centric and impact-oriented, moving from raw imagery to actionable insights, which aligns with GEO's infrastructure discussions for GIDDT. Noted capacity-building efforts, such as hosting

webinars, are foundational for onboarding end users, sharing and reusing knowledge, and addressing data licensing—identified as critical—with follow-up webinars planned.

Additionally, Ms de Salvo noted GEO's affirmation as a central platform for fostering collaboration on accessibility, capacity-building, and open data and knowledge across sectors, including in-situ data, national GEOs, and youth engagement. Ms de Salvo highlighted all efforts align towards the overarching goal of ODOK 2025.

The Lead Co-Chair thanked Ms Chu and Ms de Salvo for their presentations.

The Secretariat Director called on Mr Samuel Amos to elaborate on the Youth Convener in progress and the Youth Networking Breakfast in Hangzhou, China.

Mr Amos provided a brief overview of the outcomes of the Youth Breakfast, and noted that the Secretariat is building on the key takeaways to revive the GEO Youth Community of Practice, and noted the Youth Convener proposal that is being developed by the Secretariat. Noted the first meeting of the Youth Community of Practice the previous day which helped identify gaps, needs and noted the results to be delivered at the GEO Global Forum in 2025.

Nigeria thanked the Secretariat for the updates, congratulated China for hosting the GEO Symposium and ODOK Workshop in collaboration with the Secretariat. Noted the Storytelling Workshop hosted by National Geographic resonated with Africa's storytelling practice and that the report from ODOK was insightful. Asked for the report from Symposium and ODOK to be shared widely.

The European Commission thanked the Secretariat for the updates, reaffirmed its support and highlighted some duplication in the thematic sessions of the Symposium and ODOK Workshop. The Commission noted that the principles of Open Data and Open Knowledge are at the heart of GEO's vision and mission and there should be increased efforts to synergize thematic sessions between the Symposium and ODOK Workshop to avoid duplication of efforts.

China thanked the Programme Board and appreciated the work of the Co-Chairs, thanked the Secretariat for its efforts. Thanked all delegates for their presence and valuable participation at Symposium and ODOK. Noted the careful organization and thoughtful arrangements of the event by the GEO Secretariat and Beihang University which led to remarkable dialogue and substantial outcomes. Seconding Senegal's comment, China noted that developing countries lack adequate preparation and coordination to implement the SIP and that China hopes the GEO community will encourage and support the evolution of its developing member states in the Post-2025 era through enhancing member participation in GWP proposal and review processes, inclusion of youth and underrepresented communities. The aggregated results of the suggestions made by all should carry weight, which, combined with the weight of the PB's outcomes, must collectively shape the result. Noted the availability of the GIDTT to facilitate discussions in alignment with the Post-2025 Strategy and recommended the GEO Secretariat to provide personnel support to achieve a concrete data and knowledge infrastructure.

The United States congratulated the Local Organizing Committee and the GEO Secretariat for the organization of the Symposium and ODOK, which deemed especially useful to foster discussions on EO issues and support the development of the SIP. The timeliness of

the Symposium and ODOK was noted and remote participation for future events was requested. The United States also seconded the Commission's comments to synergize thematic areas between the Symposium and ODOK Workshop in the future to prevent duplication of efforts and offered to follow up with recommendations.

Armenia and Paraguay expressed thanks to the GEO Secretariat and the GEO family for the exceptional work at GEO Symposium and ODOK.

Outcomes:

- The Programme Board Co-Chair provided a summary of the highlights of Programme Board's work since reporting to the Executive Committee in July.
- The Executive Committee commended the report and Programme Board efforts, and appreciated the clear guidance for the Post 2025 GWP Call for Proposals and the ongoing efforts in assisting smooth transition of the current work programme activities.
- The Executive Committee also recognized that the R2O pipeline is well-aligned with the Post-2025 Strategy in delivering actionable insights, and appreciated the upcoming AI4EO efforts that will help accelerate adoption of new technologies and identify new pathways for innovation.
- There was a request for information from the Executive Committee on the arrangements and focus of the proposal from EO4SDGs to have a position of a Work Programme Coordinator for Sustainable Development. The Programme Board Co-chair clarified that this is not a Programme Board mandate and should be considered as part of Executive Committee discussions on the GEO Secretariat Concept of Operations and budget.
- The GEO Secretariat provided a debrief on the 2024 Symposium and ODOK. The Executive Committee appreciated the outcomes of the 2024 Symposium and ODOK, as well as efforts of organizers including GEO Secretariat, Programme Board, Data and Knowledge Working Group and in particular, the Chinese local hosts. The Executive Committee recommended that future Symposia and ODOK workshops are better coordinated and non-duplicative.

2.1.1 Extension of Programme Board member expiring terms to May 2025 Plenary

The Programme Board Co-Chair noted that the terms of certain Programme Board Members are expiring in December 2024 but in view of the preparations for GEO Global Forum 2025 and the Post-2025 SIP, the Programme Board requested an extension of the current term.

The Executive Committee approved the Programme Board's proposal to extend expiring terms to May 2025 and endorsed the approach to launch the call for nominations to the Programme Board based on the revised TORs due to be endorsed at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Outcomes:

- The Programme Board proposed the extension of Programme Board member terms to May 2025 for approval by the Executive Committee, and launching of the call for nomination of Programme Board members based on the revised

Programme Board ToR endorsed by the Executive Committee (finally approved by the Plenary) in March 2025

Decision: The Executive Committee approved the Programme Board's proposal to extend expiring terms to May 2025, and endorsed the approach to launch the call for nominations of the Programme Board members based on the revised TORs due to be endorsed at the next meeting of the Executive Committee

2.2 Update on GIDTT

Ms Marie-Francoise Voidrot presented an update on the GEO Infrastructure Development Task Team (GIDTT). Ms Voidrot noted the GIDTT was established to work on a modernization plan in context of the evolving landscape, resources and challenges, the work of which began in 2023. She noted that Deliverable 1 was presented in April 2024 and that due to unforeseen circumstances, deliverable 2 could not be met. She then outlined the decisions required from the Executive Committee along with the new timeline and deliverables in view of GEO Global Forum 2025.

Japan appreciated the activities and the efforts of the GIDTT. Noted in context of the Post-2025 Strategy and the SIP, it is assumed that the GIDTT and GEO infrastructure will demonstrate a clear structure of data knowledge.

France noted the urgency in the delay of implementation and requested necessary steps be taken in line with the implementation of the SIP.

The European Commission acknowledged the revised timeline and noted that while not in opposition to the revisions, encouraged a shift of focus in the operations to support the Data and Knowledge Working Group on open data policies, open data sharing and licensing issues to ensure effective implementation of the Post-2025 SIP. The EC considered it important that countries of the global south are well represented in the GIDTT in order to voice their needs.

South Africa acknowledged the TORs and revised timeline and emphasized the critical need to accelerate the work of GIDTT, and the need to mobilize the right participants. Appreciated the timelines and deliverables that have been set to ensure objectives are met on schedule.

Korea appreciated the work of the GIDTT and highlighted the importance of clarifying the differences between GKH and the GEOSS platform prior to finalizing the GEO infrastructure and architecture, and that key takeaways from ODOK must be integrated into the GEO infrastructure.

Senegal indicated the GIDTT should ensure sufficient considerations of the limitations of the African infrastructure and requested specific support for African data sharing initiatives.

China supported extending GIDTT's duration, hoped for a developed scheme to be formulated as soon as possible, particularly to address the concerns of South Africa and Senegal, and noted the importance of working together to deliver on GIDTT's mandate.

Germany supported France and China's comments and noted while delay is agreed, context and planning of the GIDTT must be represented in the SIP in order to have tangible results.

The United States agreed with the extension of the timeline and the TORs of GIDTT and encouraged the Secretariat to take into consideration staffing costs and implications while doing so.

In response to Korea, Ms Voidrot outlined the differences between GEOSS and GKH and highlighted that the GKH is a component of the GEOSS system. She noted that a major change within the scope and operations would be the shift from a data-provider to a user-centric system. Ms Voidrot noted in response to Senegal and South Africa that GIDTT is a group that was designed with representatives from across the world and with the intention to include National GEOs and underrepresented groups to address issues related to licensing etc., which is an undertaking of large scale. Noted the current coordination is carried out by three individuals which is insufficient manpower. In response to France, Germany and China, Ms Voidrot noted the GIDTT will align its work with the Post-2025 SIP and the Post-2025 GWP.

Senegal reiterated its request on specific support for African data sharing initiatives and to leverage on existing platforms to allow for open EO access, to ensure no duplication of efforts.

In response to Senegal, Ms Voidrot noted the GIDTT's commitment to engaging all stakeholders, including National GEOs and leveraging existing infrastructures, and addressing issues based on continent and region.

Ms De Salvo highlighted some of the key discussions during ODOK that focused on enhancing the visibility of already existing efforts and providing services to end users. Noted GIDTT and GEO infrastructure is actively discussing providing scenario-related solutions with domain specific typology of service with already existing resources for user related needs.

The Executive Committee approved the amendments to the GIDTT's TORs and timeline.

Outcomes:

- The GIDTT provided an update on activities and proposed to shift key deadlines within the TOR for the Executive Committee's decision.
- The Executive Committee emphasized the importance of making the necessary progress for specific elements of the GIDTT plan to be included in the Strategy Implementation Plan to be sure objectives are met.

Decision: The Executive Committee approved the amendments to the GIDTT TORs.

3 SESSION 3: GEO BUDGET AND RESOURCES REVIEW

3.1 Proposed 2025 Interim Budget

The Secretariat Director presented the 2025 Interim Budget to the Executive Committee for approval. She noted that the 2025 budget is realizing the projections of the Budget Working Group (BWG) in 2023, that it covers current services provided. Ms Gevorgyan noted for services and operations at the Secretariat to continue, all contributions must arrive in a timely manner and the Swiss Franc must stabilize. She noted cuts to the travel budget and highlighted the Secretariat is at risk of losing Programme Officers in the Work

Programme and Member Services team. She noted the contractual finalizations of the GIDTT team and emphasized the need for the Executive Committee to look into funding Junior Officer positions and secondments fit for purpose to fulfil the unfunded duties.

Japan thanked the GEO Secretariat and the BWG for its work and reiterated Japan's continued financial support to the GEO Secretariat and GEO activities.

The European Commission appreciated the details and open presentation of the budget. Noted the Commission's contributions to the Trust Fund budget, to the financial support of the 2025 GEO Global Forum, and the considerations to increasing contributions in 2025, with additional funds under discussion for the Member Services unit and its operations. Reiterated the importance of Member engagement in Europe to the Commission and the need for continued close collaboration.

France noted that thematic positions remain vacant in the budget for 2025 and noted its support to finding a solution for the same, reiterating the importance of recruiting for thematic positions. Requested further clarification on the duration of the agreement with the universities for the GIDTT contracts.

The United States welcomed the new GEO Chief of Staff on board and noted the interim budget for 2025 was developed by the GEO Secretariat and that there will be another budget that will go to the Plenary for approval in May 2025. Expressed support for the Interim Budget and requested further details on where in the budget an SGD coordinator would fit – budgetary/extrabudgetary.

Germany confirmed that Germany's contributions to the Trust Fund will arrive as projected and noted its commitment to finding a solution to fund GEO LDN further.

China appreciated the GEO Secretariat and the BWG for its efforts. Noted China's commitment to working closely to promote future collaborations and contributions. Emphasized that while funding is crucial, it is not the ultimate goal – and that engagement with Member States is important, the workplan must consider diverse needs of GEO members and provide feasible solutions to address them, recognizing the shortage in the Member Services unit, China is willing to support the work of the GEO Secretariat through staff secondment and other forms.

South Africa thanked the GEO Secretariat for the presentation and acknowledged the expressed concern on the pledged contributions. Thanked the European Commission's intervention and support to the Secretariat. South Africa reiterated the impact of the Member Services unit, noting that its work has been extremely useful in engaging countries, which must be continued. Urged the Political Leadership Task Force to rally efforts to ensure the work of the Member Services unit can be continued.

Australia requested clarification regarding the budget allocation against the priorities of the Work Programme, and the foundational capabilities of the deliverables and how it would be managed in view of the implementation of the Post-2025 SIP.

The Secretariat Director noted that the interim budget outlines the basic coordination and operations. In response to Australia, the Director noted basic communication is a priority while the Post-2025 GWP is under progress. The Director noted the unfunded activities capture the requirements to deliver beyond basic coordination and communications operations.

In response to the United States, the Director noted that the Secretariat sees an opportunity within the new Concept of Operations while delivering the SIP. She noted it is key to differentiate the interim budget from the budget moving forward to implement the Post-2025 SIP. In the context of the Post-2025 GWP, the Director noted the need for valuing GEO's Activities, activating bilateral and other channels to lobby for resources.

The Lead Co-Chair noted no objections to the Interim Budget and requested the Secretariat to note and incorporate the suggestions from the Executive Committee. Highlighted the revised Concept of Operations will be shared with Plenary for approval in May 2025.

Mr Steven Parkinson (GEO Chief of Staff) noted the Interim report of incomes and expenditures was circulated to the Executive Committee for information.

Outcomes:

- The GEO Secretariat presented observations on the budget, highlighting the need for expected contributions, both financial and in-kind with fit-for-purpose secondments, to continue to maintain current capacity within the Secretariat.
- Executive Committee members appreciated the observations and acknowledged the need to meet expected contributions and explore all avenues for increasing resources.
- Japan, Germany, EU reaffirmed continued financial support to GEO Trust Fund and GWP activities, and others provided suggestions on allocation of resources notably towards thematic priorities and member engagement. China suggested that future activities should adequately address members' needs.

Decision: The Executive Committee approved the Interim GEO Secretariat 2025 Budget.

4 SESSION 4: POST 2025 STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 Update on GEO Post-2025 Strategy Implementation Plan

Mr Andy Murdock (GEO Secretariat) presented the updates on the development of the Post-2025 Strategy Implementation Plan and thanked everyone for their support and feedback on the draft thus far.

Mr Murdock noted the SIP Draft, while high-level, is designed to outline the proposed structure, approach and consultation process. He noted the accompanying questionnaire garnered over 300 responses and that the draft organizes the activities according to the GEO Post-2025 Strategy goals with targeted actions to achieve these specific goals, detailed in action tables. Mr Murdock noted the goals focus on delivering goal-centric outcomes and include considerations like timeframes, costs, KPIs and designated responsibilities.

Mr Murdock then outlined the primary aim of the SIP – to make the five goals outlined in the Post-2025 Strategy actionable and ensure practical impact. Looking ahead, Mr Murdock noted the consultations will continue to refine the action tables, integrate feedback and build a comprehensive SIP in time for Plenary in May 2025. He re-emphasized the need for ongoing dialogue to ensure the voices of the community and high-level feedback are incorporated into the SIP as it evolves.

The Lead Co-Chair noted the importance of the Executive Committee's input in the development of the SIP.

The European Commission thanked Mr Murdock for the updates on the development on the SIP and agreed that the SIP should put the strategic goals at the centre to achieve theory of change. The Commission noted the importance of including outcomes such as implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and open data and knowledge sharing from the Ministerial Declaration in Cape Town. The Commission commended the broader stakeholder engagement and emphasized the need for clarity on how the feedback will be incorporated into the SIP, how it links to the GWP and the alignment in the bottom-up and top-down goals and actions.

South Africa appreciated the use of the Theory of Change framework and noted the need for clear reflection on alignment with SGDs and MEAs. Noted the importance of addressing the issues related to infrastructure goals in line with the ongoing commitments of the GIDTT.

Germany acknowledged the development of the SIP and highlighted the importance of linking the Post-2025 GWP and GEO's path forward in the context of the SIP. Noted the need for building on the bottom-up approach of the GWP and enquired if written comments can be provided after the meeting in view of the time constraints to review the document in a brief period since its receipt.

France seconded Germany's comments and noted the draft of the SIP needs to be thoroughly reviewed due to the nature of the document. Highlighted that in the context of the SIP, the role of the GEO Secretariat should be user-oriented, and that the structure of the SIP should be user-oriented, more importance should be given to governance and representation of Member States, clarification on the articulation of the roles of the GWP, Programme Board, Executive Committee and the Plenary was requested. The need for inclusivity to be clarified within the governance and the Rules of Procedure was also mentioned as a key aspect.

Japan thanked Mr Murdock for the draft SIP and for attending the AOEGO Symposium in Tokyo. Noted that the formulation of the SIP should be in line with the principles of EI4All. Japan noted the significance of the provision and adoption of EI based solutions is important and highlighted the many items for clarification in line with the timeline to adopt the SIP. Suggested establishing a task team to work with the Post-2025 SIP Coordinator.

The United States thanked Mr Murdock for his work and the presentation, and noted setting a deadline to receive written comments from the Executive Committee on the draft SIP would be appreciated. The United States echoed the comments of all and emphasized the importance of aligning the Post-2025 GWP with the Post-2025 SIP and appreciated the action to address equitable representation on the Executive Committee, including the focus on youth and indigenous representation. The United States requested further clarification on how the National Coordination Mechanism will be carried out in the Post-2025 era, especially considering existing secretariats and emphasized treating regions in accordance with their capacities.

Senegal thanked Mr Murdock and reaffirmed the United States' comments on accounting for national and regional capacities within the SIP. Senegal noted the SIP as an opportunity to enhance access to high resolution satellite data as capacities vary from region to region.

Paraguay endorsed the United States' comments.

China noted that any amendment to the Rules of Procedure must follow the established process by the Members and Participating Organizations (POs), along with a rationale, noted the presented changes do not fall under editorial revisions and such changes need go to Plenary for approval, requested the Secretariat to provide appropriate guidance and rationale for consideration by the Executive Committee to facilitate more effective discussions. China considered the response rate of 446 to the SIP questionnaire to be low and expressed concern on whether the current version of the SIP fully engages all members and accommodates the diverse demands of different countries. Seconded Japan's comment to establish a task team to advance the work of the SIP. Noting the importance of incorporating underrepresented voices, China suggested addressing this cross-regional concern in a constructive manner in coordination with Member States and POs, and advised using the UN terminology to refer to the underrepresented groups as 'specialized groups'. Seconded the United States' comment regarding Regional GEOs, and noted the relationship between the regional secretariat and the regional GEO and the GEO Secretariat in Geneva remains unclear and requires further discussions.

Nigeria thanked the Secretariat on a job well done. Echoed the concerns from China and Senegal on the assumption that all regions have similar capacity, highlighting it as a variable that needs to be evaluated critically.

Mr Murdock reassured the Executive Committee that their comments will be implemented in the SIP and requested some time to consolidate feedback. He acknowledged the importance of linking the GWP Activities together, recognizing the WP is the central driver of EO activities. He stressed the user-centric outlook of the SIP and noted that the proposed innovation fund is not seen as competing, but as a complementary activity. Mr Murdock reassured the Executive Committee that there is special emphasis on SDGs and MEAs in the SIP.

The Lead Co-Chair noted Japan and China's recommendation for a task team to accelerate the work on the SIP and enquired if a task team would be beneficial.

The European Commission, reiterating Japan's comments, emphasized the usefulness of a timeline with clear deliverables. Noted that duplication of efforts must be avoided, and existing working groups and teams should be utilized rather than the creation of a new task team in the interest of time.

Japan noted the proposal of a task team was to prioritize and assess feedback that can be incorporated into the development of the SIP, particularly for intensive and concentrated discussions.

Paraguay supported Japan's comments.

China also seconded Japan's comments and noted the need for a concrete SIP. Suggested gathering input from the Post-2025 Working Group to solicit further insight.

Germany stated support in the way of a task team and highlighted the importance of discussing issues in line with a short time frame. Noted the opportunity for the Executive Committee and Programme Board to work together as governance bodies to streamline processes.

The Secretariat Director requested the Post-2025 SIP Lead to draft a timeline to calibrate actions with respect to the SIP and to establish a forum to allow for discussions, leveraging where possible existing bodies such as the Political Task Force.

Ms Nicinska (Programme Board Co-Chair) appreciated the work done by Mr Murdock to date in coordination with the Programme Board. Noted the opportunities to engage, calibrate, cross-communicate and continue collaboration.

Japan amended their proposal for a task team to instead act as a supporting team for Mr Murdock.

France suggested setting up a shared, collaborative document for the Executive Committee to provide input on the SIP.

South Africa supported the proposal from Japan to set up a support team for the SIP to build on additional guidance.

China thanked the Secretariat for mobilizing efforts to further the work on the SIP. China reaffirmed the need for a timeline to fulfil the delivery of the SIP. Noted the importance of maintaining representation and including the voices of underrepresented groups, besides the ongoing GEO Working Groups when defining the SIP.

The United States agreed with, and echoed most comments and noted the Rules of Procedure Task Team will be able to contribute to the governance sections, and the EDI subgroup and underrepresented communities within the Climate Working Group can contribute to particular sections of the SIP. Noted the importance of having a near ready SIP by the next meeting of the Executive Committee which can be advocated for on behalf of the GEO Secretariat. Shared the concerns about the scheduling and emphasized the need for strategic engagement.

The Lead Co-Chair noted the need for high-level engagement to ensure the quality of the SIP. He acknowledged the need for additional support, but not to the extent of a task force. Reiterated the importance of the Executive Committee's support and advise and requested frequent consultations and engagement. The LCC encouraged the Executive Committee to provide written input on the SIP by 15th November 2024 and noted the Secretariat will provide a detailed timeline on the deliverables. Suggested the compilation clearly list each country's suggestions, indicate whether they were accepted or rejected, with reasoning for any rejections, ensuring transparency in the SIP revision process.

Japan, France, Germany, South Africa, China, United States, European Commission and Paraguay volunteered to provide additional support to the SIP Lead.

Outcomes:

- The Post 2025 Strategy Implementation Plan Lead presented an update on the GEO Post 2025 Strategy Implementation Plan and outlined next steps.
- The Executive Committee appreciated the Theory of Change element in the revised SIP and provided comments and recommendations for revision,

specifically regarding addressing the linkage between the GWP, the SIP, and GEO's infrastructure

- Executive Committee members expressed a need to establish a clear timeline for SIP advancement and finalization through the 2025 Plenary.
- Executive Committee members proposed the option to send written comments on the SIP to the Secretariat.
- Executive Committee members expressed interest in establishing a task force/supporting team to work with the SIP Lead in progressing the SIP.
- Japan, France, Germany, South Africa, China, US, European Commission and Paraguay volunteered to provide additional support to the SIP Lead.

Action 64.2: GEO Secretariat to present a timeline for the delivery of the SIP during the second day of Executive Committee 64

Action 64.3: ExCom to provide written comments on the Draft SIP and the timeline by **15 November 2024**.

4.2 Consultation on Plenary and Global Forum Scheduling

The Secretariat Director presented options for discussion addressing the scheduling of the GEO Global Forum (GGF), GEO Symposium and ODOK meetings, and Plenary meetings, outlining current practices and associated challenges. She noted GEO's primary gatherings have traditionally included the GEO Plenary, GEO Week (with side and community events), the GEO Symposium, ODOK, and regional GEO events, which have all received positive feedback. The Secretariat Director noted that as the scope of GEO Week and the Symposium has grown, so has the preparation workload, requiring months of planning, straining resources, and complicating the recruitment of host countries. Financial constraints have also impacted support for travel for underrepresented groups, a valued initiative that may not be sustainable twice a year given current budget limits.

Several alternative options were presented to address these challenges while maintaining GEO's critical activities as a convening mechanism: (1) alternating between the GGF and Symposium annually; (2) convening the Plenary every two years, with the option for virtual Plenaries in off-years to address decision items; or (3) incorporating decision-making elements of the Plenary into the GEO Symposium to meet Plenary objectives without additional events, or (4) alternative options welcomed from Executive Committee members.

The Lead Co-Chair noted that the options presented were based on realistic issues and limited resources and opened the floor for discussion.

Japan applauded the efforts of the GEO Secretariat in organizing these meetings. Noted the importance of having Member countries take the initiative in GEO, Japan emphasized the significance of annual Plenary in-person, which is a key decision-making body of GEO, including the approval of the annual budget, and highlighted the role of GEO Symposium and ODOK in convening researchers for open dialogue, which is equally important for the GEO community. Noted that while various efforts have been made to mobilize GEO's mission in the global community, it is essential to continue these efforts to realise the Post-2025 vision.

The European Commission noted that various options need to be discussed. The Commission was in agreement of the reasonableness to change the practice from holding a GEO Week and Symposium every year, but emphasized greatly, the need for an annual Plenary.

France noted and acknowledged the current constraints but highlighted the importance of holding an annual Plenary, which convenes member states each year.

South Africa noted the importance of the Plenary, and that a decision on the scheduling is something that should go to Plenary for approval.

The United States acknowledged the concerns and proposal, noting that Members, POs and Associates see great value in having regular gatherings – and the convening power of GEO must be exercised. Highlighted the risk of disengagement from countries especially where GEO is not well supported, if annual gatherings are omitted. The United States expressed support for an annual Plenary and suggested that the format of the GEO Symposia/GEO Fora be revisited given the resource constraints.

China noted the significant effort required to organize large-scale meetings and Plenary sessions, echoing the European Commission and United States on their importance and value. Emphasizing the benefits of face-to-face and informal discussions, China highlighted how these interactions foster collaboration—a central aspect of GEO. While certain issues require further discussion and reassessment, China affirmed the essential value of bringing the GEO community together for collective dialogue.

Nigeria recognized the efforts of the Secretariat in ensuring activities are maintained within the budget. Noted the importance of the annual Plenary and its continuation, expressed support for the Symposium and Global Forum to be alternated.

Australia emphasized the importance of in-person gatherings to support strategic planning and resource allocation, underscoring that an annual Plenary is essential for effective engagement on strategy implementation. Australia expressed strong support for examining the scope and format of events like the Symposium and ODOK, especially in the context of the SIP, to ensure they effectively advance the Post-2025 Strategy. Additionally, Australia encouraged exploring engagements beyond GEO to maximize resource efficiency and enhance collaborative impact.

Japan noted the importance of communications within and outside the GEO community, and noted the scheduling of GEO's events should be discussed further. Expressed support to holding an annual Plenary, ideally in person.

Korea acknowledged the challenges mentioned as reasonable and extended support to option 2 outlined by the Secretariat Director.

The Lead Co-Chair noted the importance of the Plenary as a foundational GEO event , noting practical challenges within the Secretariat. Citing examples within the UN system, LCC suggested considering a temporary Plenary host for the coming years.

The Secretariat Director expressed support for an annual Plenary and recommended a discussion within the Rules of Procedure Task Force (RoP TF) to outline options for scheduling the GGF and Symposium. She proposed that RoP TF consider a rotational hosting model within caucuses.

The United States acknowledged the value of long-term hosting solutions and suggested that discussions continue in a dedicated forum, beyond a shared document.

The European Commission, building on the United States' comments, stressed the need to approach the scheduling issue holistically, especially as the SIP shifts to a milestone-based framework. The Commission highlighted the consensus within the Executive Committee on fostering informal discussions to encourage dialogue, with these informal exchanges potentially improving collaboration and planning. Suggested collaboration with the Secretariat, on organizing informal interactions with the Executive Committee to support SIP development and enhance dialogue on key topics.

Outcomes:

- The GEO Secretariat outlined the current status of GEO events and proposed examples for alternating the years in which GEO Symposia and the Global Fora can be hosted in order to optimize Secretariat resources.
- Executive Committee members appreciated the efforts of Italy, EU, and the Secretariat in supporting the organization of big events.
- Executive Committee members emphasized the importance of maintaining annual Plenary meetings.
- Executive Committee members recognized the benefits of convening the community at GEO Symposia and Global Forum and discussed the possibility of coming together and maximize resources to support big events on an annual basis.

Action 64.4: The GEO Secretariat to create a shared document with key observations on paths forward to produce large scale events and share with the Executive Committee to provide input in advance of the next meeting of Executive Committee and seek to align with the milestones of the SIP.

Action 64.5: The Secretariat will support organization of informal meetings to discuss event scheduling and other topics of interest.

5 SESSION 5: CBD COP16

5.1 Debrief on CBD COP16

The GEO Secretariat Director provided a debrief on GEO's presence at UN CBD COP16, which marked the first year of GEO's independent participation at a COP. The Director outlined the key achievements and firsts including but not limited to the launch of the Global Ecosystems Atlas proof-of-concept, pre-COP country engagement webinar, GEO pavilion in collaboration with GEO BON, and partners Esri, Alan Institute for AI (AI2) and Maxar. CBD COP16 also featured GEO's first press conference, a formal side event, and a major funding announcement which further underscored GEO's expanding influence in biodiversity policy.

Ms Gevorgyan outlined the engagement at the GEO pavilion, which hosted 52 sessions, with participation from 13 GEO Member States, sessions from 10 partner organizations, and 9 partner engagements for the Ecosystems Atlas. She noted the official side event attracted over 100 attendees including 3 ministers of state, 1 vice-minister, UNEP's Executive Director and various heads of international organizations. Media coverage

spanned 24 outlets in 12 countries and reached an audience of 150,000, which demonstrates significant visibility of GEO's initiatives.

The Director then outlined the implications of such a valuable presence, noting the various policy implications in the context of MEAs and real time global engagement. GEO's participation as an independent organization at the scale of an international forum reinforces its role as a key contributor to global biodiversity policy and as an authoritative convenor and curator of EO for policy support.

Other key outcomes included the strategic visibility of GEO's initiatives, reinforced collaboration with the CBD Secretariat on the Global Ecosystems Atlas, and valuable policy engagement that captured the attention of ministers and high-level stakeholders.

The Director sought the Executive Committee's assessment of the value of continuing such impactful engagement at future COPs and similar events, with a focus on sustaining momentum and enhancing best practices in policy engagement and global visibility.

Armenia expressed congratulations to the GEO Secretariat on an impactful presence and participation at CBD COP16. Noted the positive feedback from the Armenian delegation and highlighted Armenia as the host for CBD COP 17 in 2026. Underscored the opportunity for best practices to be reapplied to endorse GEO's initiatives and GEO, and noted the support from Armenia's Ministries of Environment, Foreign Affairs, Education, Science and Culture for GEO.

Australia commended the impressive achievements by the GEO Secretariat and GEO at CBD COP16. Noted GEO's role as a convenor and enabler highlights the significant value in promoting EO as a science-driven tool that supports evidence-based policy. Highlighted the merit in elevating GEO's community efforts within global fora to enhance impact. Australia noted while this engagement was a positive step, there is a need to clarify the intended outcomes of GEO's efforts to ensure alignment with clearly defined objectives to secure meaningful senior-level support for GEO's activities. Highlighted that by focusing on specific, outcome-driven goals, GEO and GEO Secretariat can better position itself to continue advancing its objectives and influence within the global policy landscape.

The European Commission welcomed the strong engagement of the GEO Secretariat at CBD COP16 and noted the timeliness of the intervention to bring about key measurable results in coordination with the CBD Secretariat. Noted the need to amplify communications on these matters further for better strategic engagement, while choosing engagements tactically.

The United States expressed appreciation for the funding announcement from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), describing it as a welcome surprise. Noted the US Geological Survey's involvement in the Global Ecosystem Atlas' Ad-Hoc Science and Technical Committee and underlined the encouragement from the positive outcomes. Highlighted the importance of gathering lessons learned from UNCCD COP16 through the GEO LDN initiative which will be essential in refining GEO's engagement strategies to maximize value provided.

Senegal commended the Secretariat on its successful participation in the CBD COP and noted the significance of 2024 as a year with all three major COPs. Emphasizing the need for coordinated national engagement, Senegal recommended that national GEO focal

points for each convention collaborate closely within the National Coordinating Mechanism (NCM) to ensure cohesive representation and advocacy. Senegal also highlighted its recent francophone forum on GEO LDN, an initiative aimed at fostering better collaboration in preparation for UNCCD COP16 Riyadh.

China extended gratitude to the Secretariat for its dedication to promoting EO, EI and GEO's incubators and initiatives, recognizing the high value these incubators bring despite the gradual pace of progress due to funding and development cycles. China celebrated the recent funding success and proposed exploring further resource mobilization for global mapping efforts, such as encouraging countries to contribute open maps, with the Secretariat acting as a central convenor to support these contributions.

Nigeria congratulated the Secretariat on its achievements and recommended continued participation in future COPs. Nigeria suggested presenting a distinct, impactful product addressing a global challenge would enhance GEO's visibility and impact. Noted that COPs are seen as ideal platforms for showcasing such solutions, helping position EO tools and EI solutions as vital for addressing global challenges.

The Secretariat Director noted in response to Australia the importance of engaging in high-impact international events, emphasizing the importance of assessing interest and securing resources before committing. Noted GEO's observer status within CBD allowed for establishing a distinct presence, which differs from its constrained role in the UNCCD as part of WMO's delegation. The Director outlined GEO Secretariat's engagement plans for UNCCD which include showcasing the Ecosystems Atlas and hosting a panel discussion on AI and advanced technology in the Blue Zone. Noted the efforts to engage new stakeholders like Saudi Arabia as potential sponsors to GEO initiatives and new members to GEO. The Director highlighted the need to identify strategic engagements in fora such as the G20 to advance GEO's policy influence.

The Director also addressed the importance of robust communication with GEO focal points, particularly in preparation for CBD COP16 which involved personalized outreach to ensure all representatives were informed and engaged. Noted this effort spurred greater cross-departmental communication in various countries, fostering collaboration across diverse portfolios. The Director praised the efforts carried out to develop a functional proof-of-concept of the Ecosystems Atlas within seven months, noting global contributions to the Atlas' mapping initiative would be structured by specific protocols. Highlighted the structured approach aims to ensure consistency and quality across data sets, building a comprehensive and cohesive global EO capability. The Director concluded her remarks by affirming that further guidance would be provided to GEO Members to clarify contributions for the community's collective efforts.

The Lead Co-Chair noted that presence at CBD COP16 is a pioneering practice and something that should be continued with additional considerations.

Outcomes:

- The GEO Secretariat presented the outcomes of GEO's participation at CBD COP-16 and GEO's strategic engagement efforts.
- Armenia, China, Australia, EU, US, Senegal, Nigeria recognised the value in GEO Secretariat's engagement at COPs and similar level events and confirmed interest in continuing this effort.

- Members noted the importance of being selective and strategic when identifying opportunities and prospects for similar engagement efforts taking into account resource needs and expected return on investment.

6 SESSION 6: PACIFIC ISLANDS ADVISORY GROUP

6.1 Pacific Island Advisory Group Report

Mr Jean Massenet (PIAG Co-Chair) provided an update on the work of the Pacific Islands Advisory Group (PIAG) since its establishment as a key step in enhancing coordination between GEO and the Asia-Pacific region, with significant achievements including the setup of EO projects and support for local development. The Co-Chair noted that since its inception at the 2022 New Caledonia Oceania Geospatial Symposium (OGS), PIAG scoped six projects, with two implemented in collaboration with IEEE GRSS in 2023, contributing to EO system development across Pacific islands. He noted Digital Earth (DE) Pacific now serves all 24 island nations with a governance structure involving eight countries, regional organizations, and training initiatives.

Ms Vani Koroisamanunu (PIAG Co-Chair) proposed a plan for PIAG moving forward, recommending the formation of a Community of Practice (CoP) facilitated by the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and a DE Pacific Steering Committee, managed by the Pacific Community (SPC) to drive EO efforts from 2025. The Executive Committee was asked to conclude PIAG's term in December 2024, aligning the transition to CoP and the DE Pacific Steering Committee with the Post-2025 Strategy Implementation Plan (SIP).

Australia endorsed the recommendations of the PIAG report without modifications and welcomed the leadership of SPC, SPREP and DE Pacific in the new era. Expressed support for the way forward under the new community of practice.

France congratulated PIAG for its work and expressed special thanks to the Co-Chairs.

The United States appreciated the report and presentation from the PIAG Co-Chairs. Noted the emphasis on island states during GEO Week and Ministerial Summit in Canberra, Australia in 2019 which led to the establishment of PIAG. Noted the value of the advisory group in providing essential guidance, particularly to island states, and endorsed the recommended path forward.

China commended PIAG's work, noted the close collaborations to provide accurate data and technical skills and concurred with the recommendations to cease term in December 2024. Welcomed the CoP's willingness to make contributions to GEO, and requested discussions be undertaken in view of the SIP. China considered the introduction of the term "Pacific region" may lead to confusion, and that the document needs to be revised in accordance with the ToRs. Endorsed the report with the modification of using the term Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICT). Noted that the SIP is still under discussion, and GEO should not be asked to commit to exploring a Pacific partnership for enhancing regional and global cooperation at this time.

The European Commission welcomed the practical and well documented approach to recalibrate the engagement of PIAG in GEO and endorsed the way forward.

Senegal highlighted the need for collaboration between the DE Pacific Steering Committee and the DE Africa Technical Advisory Committee. Noted Senegal's position on the DE Africa Technical Advisory committee enables Senegal to explore opportunities for strengthened partnerships between the two initiatives.

The Lead Co-Chair thanked the Executive Committee for their input and decision and appreciated the work of PIAG.

The PIAG Co-Chairs thanked the comments from Senegal and reaffirmed the intent to collaborate. Lastly, the PIAG Co-Chair noted the many opportunities within the Post-2025 GWP and the SIP for collaboration in the Pacific region and sought for a mechanism to further partnerships.

Outcomes:

- PIAG Co-Chairs presented a summary of the PIAG report, including key achievements between 2020-2024, and the path forward.
- Recommended termination of PIAG's term in December 2024 and setting up an SPREP-facilitated Community of Practice through the DE Pacific programme managed by SPC
- Executive Committee members commend PIAG's efforts to advance the use of EO among the Pacific Islands countries and territories.
- Executive Committee agreed to cease its term in December and noted until the Strategy Implementation Plan is finalised, the Executive Committee cannot commit to supporting regional and global partnerships in a specific area.

Decision: The report *Executive Committee 64-11 PIAG 2025 Report 161024* was adopted with the modification of using the term Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICT) and with the decision to cease PIAG's term in December 2024.

7 SESSION 7: GLOBAL FORUM 2025

7.1 Update on GEO Global Forum 2025

Mr Nicola Pirrone (Italy) presented the updates on the status and preparations leading up to the GEO Global Forum (GGF) 2025 in Rome, Italy. He outlined the major accomplishments, which include but are not limited to finalization of dates, high-level meeting with the GEO Secretariat, Italian Space Agency (ASI) and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAECI), finalization of the ministerial segment. Noted the agreement of a 4-day GGF, finalization of the visual identity, concept and narrative of the event. Noted the venue has been selected and relevant contracts are being finalized, and outlined the revised deadlines and milestones in the lead up to the GGF in May.

The Lead Co-Chair thanked Italy for the presentation and the documentation of the process.

The European Commission expressed gratitude to Italy for providing a comprehensive update and for their continued support and collaboration in organizing the GEO Global Forum. Special thanks were extended to the Commission's Representation Office in Rome, which offered its assistance in coordinating the event. The Commission reiterated its financial and in-kind support to Italy to ensure the success of the GGF while emphasizing

the Political Leadership Task Team's role to engage high-level participation from all regions.

Japan thanked Italy, the GEO Secretariat, and the European Commission, for all the efforts in preparation for the GEO Global Forum 2025.

Senegal requested an adjustment to the scheduled dates for GEO Principals and Ministers to be notified to better accommodate schedules and visa requirements.

South Africa expressed appreciation to the Local Organizing Committee and the European Commission for their updates and efforts, and echoed Senegal's request to adjust the Ministerial and high-level invitations to be sent sooner to ensure political representation.

China extended heartfelt thanks to the European Commission, Italy and the Secretariat for the preparations for GEO Global Forum 2025, reiterating their commitment to securing high-level representation.

The United States thanked Italy and the Commission for hosting GGF and appreciated the event schedule and sought clarification on details relating to the exhibition.

In response to the United States, Mr Pirrone noted the Local Organizing Committee will confirm the technical details for exhibitors and the related information will be distributed accordingly. In response to Senegal and South Africa, Mr Pirrone noted the invitation letters to Ministers will be managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Research of Italy.

Outcomes:

- The GEO Principal of Italy, Nicola Pirrone, presented an update on the planning for the GEO Global Forum 2025 in Rome, Italy, including details on the schedule, format, dates, and key upcoming dates.
- Executive Committee members commended the local organizing committee for their planning efforts.
- In response to Senegal and South Africa's request that invitation letters to ministers be sent on December 2nd in order to ensure response time in advance of December holidays, Mr Pirrone mentioned that invitational letters are being arranged by Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAECI) and the timeline of which was due to be discussed in an upcoming meeting.
- Italy clarified that an Exhibitor package will be provided in conjunction with the launch of the call for exhibitors on December 2nd.

7.2 Updates on the GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force

Ms Joanna Drake (European Commission) presented an update on the work of the GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force which was established in July 2024 to leverage political influence to catalyze high-level action.

Ms Drake noted the goal of the Task Force was to utilize the GEO Global Forum as a platform for discussion but also to engage political figures to showcase GEO's relevance and achievements over the last 20 years. She noted that the task force, though initially small in size, grew with two virtual meetings held thus far alongside the development of the Terms of Reference which are under discussion.

Ms Drake highlighted a key objective of the Task Force to secure political pledges for GEO's Post-2025 SIP, either in full or part, depending on regional interests. The task force emphasized the importance of recognizing both financial and in-kind contributions to GEO's activities. Ms Drake noted the focus on encouraging political support for GEO's mission and obtaining concrete suggestions from political leaders on how to aid the implementation of the SIP. Members were encouraged to leverage their political connections to facilitate political engagement, including high-level meetings through Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to ensure the Forum's success at the political level.

The Lead Co-Chair encouraged efforts to secure ministerial presence and high-level engagement and re-emphasized the need to mobilize contributions and resources.

Italy noted the ongoing meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy to ensure high-level participation and noted the efforts to map bilateral and multilateral cooperation to inform high-level engagement and effective communication.

South Africa reaffirmed its support towards the work of the Political Leadership Task Force to mobilize political level engagement from South Africa and the African caucus as a crucial way to pledge support.

China noted the importance of continued engagement and making progress to communicate the value of GEO at the political class.

The Lead Co-Chair emphasized the need for continued efforts to ensure high-level representation.

The European Commission greatly emphasized the need for prior preparation when approaching the political class, perhaps with additional resources to complement the targeted communications and engagement.

Outcomes:

- EC GEO Principal presented an update on the work of the GEO Global Forum Political Leadership Task Force.
- Executive Committee members noted this effort is needed to secure ministerial presence and emphasised the importance of high-level engagement and mobilization of contributions and resources.
- Noting that preparation is necessary when approaching the political class, Executive Committee members also suggested that additional resources, such as communication on the value and achievements of GEO and targeted engagement, may be necessary to support and concretize the narrative.
- Italy noted ongoing efforts to map multilateral and bilateral cooperations to inform high-level engagements and communication.

8 SESSION 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Review of Requests to join GEO as Participating Organizations

Ms Sara Venturini (GEO Secretariat) presented the slate of requests from organizations to join GEO as a Participating Organization.

Outcomes:

- The Executive Committee approved the following requests to join GEO:
 - Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC);
 - West Africa ICT Action Network.

8.2 Update on the procedures for the GEO Secretariat Director's Performance Evaluation and the 360-degree Assessment process

Mr Yuqi Bai presented an update on the procedures for the GEO Secretariat Director's Performance Evaluation and 360-degree Assessment process on behalf of the DEPT Team.

Mr Bai noted the task force had prepared the TORs which were then approved by the Executive Committee, noted the review of past practices to gain broader insights, consultation with WMO's HR and Legal departments on work planning and performance appraisal. Highlighted the DEPT is currently exploring ways for the Executive Committee to act as a first point of review and that the timeline and process will be shared with the Executive Committee members in due time.

The United States appreciated the update and progress of the DEPT and requested the timeline and process be shared with the Executive Committee for review in advance of the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

The European Commission thanked Mr Bai for the update and emphasized the importance of a clear procedure to assess the performance of the Secretariat Director on an ongoing basis.

Outcomes:

- DEPT provided a brief update on the continued process for establishing procedures, including completion of TORs.

Action 64.6: Details on the process and timeline of the DEPT's progress will be shared with the Executive Committee

8.3 Any Other Business

8.3.1 Updates on the Rules of Procedure Task team and related process

Mr Ernest Acheampong (GEO Secretariat) presented updates on the Rules of Procedure Task Force, outlining proposed steps to finalize the Task Force's TORs, gather input from the community, a timeline to activate the Task Force and develop a process, along with a timeline to present decision to Plenary, and requested the Executive Committee to confirm/re-confirm participation in the Task Force.

The European Commission appreciated the updates, welcomed the timeline and requested to be part of the task team.

The United States enquired regarding the delays to the development of the TORs and activation of the Task Force. Requested for the details and a revised timeline to be shared for discussion to foster a co-developed and co-produced process to be delivered to the Plenary.

Australia echoed the comments made and reaffirmed its readiness to support the Task Force, highlighting the importance of aligning the work of the task team with the

takeaways of the Executive Committee's retreat. Recommended leveraging informal meetings to foster dialogue and collaboration.

South Africa supported the comments from the United States and Australia and confirmed interest to participate in the Task Force.

France and Paraguay expressed commitment to join the Task Force.

Echoing earlier comments, China noted the proposed timeline as reasonable and emphasized the need for further discussion. China requested more informal discussions on the timeline and the recommended process prior to the finalization of the TORs.

Mr Acheampong (GEO Secretariat) noted in response that the proposed timeline and process are flexible and invited collaboration with the Task Force to shape its mandate, acknowledging the commitment to the team.

The Secretariat Director noted concerns regarding workload management, emphasizing that limited resources can lead to changes in timelines or challenges to meet deadlines on some projects. The Director recommended mapping out current priorities, responsibilities and availabilities against available resources, working groups, etc. to optimize support for GEO's efforts and requested the Executive Committee for a collaborative approach to manage workload expectations.

The United States supported the collaborative approach of a Task Force where the members of the Executive Committee support the creation of deliverables as well as their review. Indicated its willingness to join and contribute.

Australia agreed with collaborative efforts and highlighted the importance of workload sharing mechanisms to better support the Secretariat's activities.

Nigeria reinforced encouragement for the Secretariat, framing comments as support to enhance Secretariat capacity.

8.3.2 Any Other Business

Mr Andy Murdock (GEO Secretariat) presented the draft timeline for the development and delivery of the Post-2025 SIP. Noted the draft will be circulated for review and requested feedback by 15th November 2025.

The Secretariat Director presented the proposed dates for the 2025 meetings of the Executive Committee as follows:

- March 4, 5 or 6, Virtual Executive Committee Meeting
- May 6, pre-Plenary Executive Committee Meeting
- December 3-4, Executive Committee Meeting

South Africa requested clarification regarding the proposed December dates and requested the meeting be moved to an earlier month.

The European Commission proposed for the March 2025 meeting to be an in-person meeting as the discussions would merit in-person participation, and echoed South Africa's comments to move the December meeting to an earlier month.

China proposed late October as a time to meet instead of early December.

The United States proposed an in-person, or hybrid meeting for the March meeting. In addition, the United States proposed an inter-sessional meeting to discuss the outcomes of the Executive Committee retreat to advance key takeaways.

GEO Secretariat presented the updated proposed dates for the 2025 Meetings of the Executive Committee:

- March 5th and 6th: Hybrid meeting with a focused discussion on the SIP
- May 6 in Rome (pre-2025 Plenary)
- Face-to-face meeting: Fall dates to be determined
- Co-chairs volunteered to organise an inter-sessional Executive Committee meeting to debrief and build on the outcomes of the Executive Committee retreat.

Outcomes:

Updates on the Rules of Procedure Task team and related process

- GEO Secretariat provided an update on the activation of the Rules of Procedure (RoP) Task Team based on Decision 4.1 at Executive Committee 63. The Secretariat outlined a proposed initial process to gather input from the community, a timeline for RoP changes to be presented to Plenary, and a recommendation to hold the first meeting in early December.
- US and others expressed the need for informal meetings to gather feedback from the Executive Committee and proposed an ad hoc meeting for the Task Team after the closing of the session to discuss the proposed process and timeline.
- EU, South Africa, Australia, France, Nigeria, Japan, China and Paraguay confirmed or re-confirmed interest in joining the Task Team.
- In acknowledgement of GEO Secretariat's limited capacity, US noted that Task Teams can actively contribute to the joint activities, and others emphasised the importance of collaboration and partnership between the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

Any Other Business

- GEO Secretariat presented the draft timeline of the SIP.
- GEO Secretariat presented the proposed dates for the 2025 Meetings of the Executive Committee:
 - March 5th and 6th: Hybrid meeting with a focused discussion on the SIP
 - May 6 in Rome (pre-2025 Plenary)
 - Face-to-face meeting: Fall dates to be determined
 - Co-chairs volunteered to organise an inter-sessional Executive Committee meeting to debrief and build on the outcomes of the Executive Committee retreat.

Action 64.7: The Rules of Procedure Task team to meet ad-hoc after the closing of the 64th Meeting of the Executive Committee.

Action 64.8: The draft timeline of the SIP to be circulated to the Executive Committee for comments and review by **15th November 2024**.

8.4 Review of Action Items

The GEO Secretariat presented actions, outcomes and decisions from the 64th Meeting of the Executive Committee.

Outcomes:

- GEO Secretariat presented actions, outcomes and decisions from the meeting.

8.5 Closing Remarks

China expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts in achieving a first draft of the SIP. China committed to advancing the outcomes of the GEO Symposium and the call for action within the AOGEO region, enhancing engagement of developing countries in GEO, and prioritizing infrastructure development to support global EO capacities aimed at reaching the various environmental targets.

The European Commission thanked the Lead Co-Chair and the Executive Committee for productive discussions and reiterated the timeline to ensure a successful GEO Global Forum. The Commission encouraged the Executive Committee Members to advocate for high-level political engagement at the Global Forum, emphasizing the importance of a unified approach and effective narrative to secure meaningful political representation. Recommended more frequent, informal interactions among the Executive Committee to foster community and value alignment within the SIP.

South Africa thanked the Lead Co-Chair and the GEO Secretariat for their leadership and thorough preparations, including for the retreat, and highlighted the importance of reviewing the Rules of Procedure (RoP). South Africa acknowledged the Member Services (MS) team's role in supporting Capacity Development in Africa and expressed gratitude for the EU and Italy's GGF preparations, reaffirming support for the Forum and the mobilization of additional resources.

The United States praised the meeting as highly productive and commended the Executive Committee and the Secretariat for the preparations and documentation. The United States echoed the Commission's call for more frequent informal meetings among Executive Committee members and expressed anticipation for the upcoming intersessional discussions, hybrid Executive Committee meetings, and GEO Global Forum.

The Secretariat Director thanked the participants for their time, emphasizing that open dialogue and diverse viewpoints will be essential in preparing for the GEO Global Forum. Acknowledged the dedicated efforts of GEO Secretariat.

The Lead Co-Chair extended gratitude for the collective contributions and collaboration, summarizing the decisions made and appreciating recent achievements. Emphasized the importance of partnership innovation and decisive action to achieve the "Earth Intelligence for All" vision, aiming to build a more resilient and inclusive future.

Outcomes:

- The Lead Co-Chair, Co-Chairs and the Secretariat Director provided closing remarks.

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