

AGENDA

Group on Earth Observations
 Twenty-first Plenary Session – GEO-21
 Geneva, Switzerland 28 May 2026

Chair: European Union represented by the European Commission

Thursday, 28 May 2026	
09:00-10:15	Session 1: Opening Session
1.1 (8 mins)	Welcome and opening remarks from the European Union, GEO Lead Co-Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joanna Drake, Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission
1.2 (8 mins)	Opening remarks from China, GEO Co-Chair (video message) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jiachang Chen, Vice Minister, Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), China
1.3 (8 mins)	Opening remarks from South Africa, GEO Co-Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humbulani Mudau, Chief Executive Officer, South African National Space Agency (SANSA), South Africa
1.4 (8 mins)	Opening remarks from the United States, GEO Co-Chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taylor Jordan, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), United States
1.5 (8 mins)	Opening remarks from the GEO Secretariat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yana Gevorgyan, Director, GEO Secretariat
1.6 (5 mins)	Approval of Plenary agenda
1.7 (5 mins)	Approval of Draft Report of GEO-20 Plenary
1.8 (5 mins)	Presentation of new Members, Participating Organizations and Associates

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1.9 (8 mins)	<p>Intervention by Togo as new GEO Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoma Baka, Director General, National Civil Protection Agency, Ministry of Security and Civil Protection, Togo / Manuel Ntumba, Executive Vice President, Tod'Aérs Global Network, Togo
	<p>Session 1 Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEO-21-1.6(Rev3): Draft Agenda (for decision) GEO-21-1.7: Draft Report of GEO-20 Plenary (for decision) GEO-21-Info-1.8(Rev1): New Members, Participating Organizations and Associates (for information)
10:15-10:45	Group Photo + Coffee Break
10:45-12:00	<p>Session 2: Transformational Impact in Action: Programme Results Driving Earth Intelligence Investment</p> <p>This session will highlight the transformational impact achieved by GEO Work Programme Flagships through concrete, real-world results. Project leads will share user-driven stories that demonstrate how Earth Intelligence solutions are improving decision-making, strengthening resilience, and unlocking value for countries and communities. The panel will showcase how investments and public-private partnerships - both financial and in-kind - translate into measurable outcomes. Participants will be invited to reflect on lessons learned and the opportunities to scale successful approaches across the GEO ecosystem.</p>
2.1 (50 mins)	<p>Panel Session</p> <p>Moderator: Madeeha Bajwa, Chief Work Programme Coordinator, GEO Secretariat</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angelica Gutierrez, Programme Director, GEO Global Water Sustainability (GEOGLOWS) Antje Hecheltjen, Co-Chair, GEO Land Degradation Neutrality (GEO-LDN) Wenjiang Huang, Lead, Global Vegetation Pest and Disease Dynamic Remote Sensing and Monitoring and Forecasting (GEO-PDRS) Michele Melchiorri, Co-Chair, GEO Human Planet Initiative (HPI) Lisa-Maria Rebelo, Managing Director, Digital Earth Africa (DE Africa)
2.2 (25 mins)	Interventions from the floor

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12:00-13:15	Lunch
13:15-14:30	<p>Session 3: From Participation to Partnership: Advancing Member Engagement Across Regions</p> <p>This session will focus on concrete ways for GEO to shift from broad participation to deeper, action-driven partnerships across regions. Building on Member priorities and Regional GEO leadership, it will present new collaborative models, co-designed initiatives, and resource-mobilisation approaches that strengthen national and regional impact. Participants will explore practical opportunities for joint investments, engagement with the private sector, as well as coordinated global advocacy and regional action to accelerate GEO’s collective delivery.</p>
3.1 (50 mins)	<p>Panel Session</p> <p>Moderator: Sara Venturini, Chief of Member Services, GEO Secretariat</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew Adepoju, Director-General, National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA), Nigeria • Xiaohan Liao, Director General, Key Laboratory of Low-Altitude Geographic Information and Air Routes, Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), China • Melany Ramirez, Director of Geospatial Analysis and Climate Change, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN), Guatemala • Dirk Engelbart, Director, Division Meteorology and German Meteorological Service (DWD), Federal Ministry of Transport, Germany • Melanie Hutchinson, International Geospatial Lead, Government Digital Service, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), United Kingdom • Thibault Valentin, Policy Officer, Space Cooperation, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), European Commission
3.2 (25 mins)	Interventions from the floor
14:30-15:00	Coffee Break
15:00-17:30	Session 4: GEO Plenary Business (<i>closed session</i>)

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4.1 (30 mins)	<p>Presentation by the GEO Programme Board: update on the GEO Work Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evangelos Gerasopoulos, Vice-President of the National Observatory of Athens (NOA) and Director of the Institute for Environmental Research and Sustainable Development (IERSD/NOA), Greece • Amos Kabo-Bah, Associate Professor and Dean International Relations Office, University of Energy and Natural Resources, Ghana <p>Interventions from the floor</p>
4.2 (40 mins)	<p>Presentation by the Data and Knowledge Working Group: approval of the In-situ Data Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helen Glaves, Scientific Officer, European Plate Observing System, European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) <p>Demonstration by the GEO Infrastructure Development Task Team: GEO Infrastructure Implementation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bente Lilja Bye, Chief Executive Officer, BLB • Paola de Salvo, GEO Infrastructure Coordinator, GEO Secretariat <p>Interventions from the floor</p>
4.3 (50 mins)	<p>Presentation by the Rules of Procedure Task Force: approval of the revised GEO Rules of Procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yuqi Bai, Professor in Earth and Space Informatics, Department of Earth System Science, Tsinghua University, China • Franz Immler, Head of the Environmental Observation Sector, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission <p>Interventions from the floor</p>
4.4 (10 mins)	<p>Presentation by the GEO Budget Working Group: approval of the 2026 Secretariat Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jean Dusart, Policy Officer, Environmental Observations Sector, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission <p>Interventions from the floor</p>
4.5 (5 mins)	<p>Presentation of Executive Committee Members 2026: approval of new members</p> <p>Interventions from the floor</p>

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	<p>Session 4 Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEO-21-Info-4.1: Roadmap for the Establishment of the GEO Innovation Fund (for information) • GEO-21-Info-4.2.1: GEO Infrastructure Implementation Plan (for information) • GEO-21-4.2.2(Rev1): GEO In-situ Data Strategy (for decision) • GEO-21-4.3: Revised GEO Rules of Procedure (for decision) • GEO-21-Info-4.3: Revised GEO Rules of Procedure – version with tracked changes (for information) • GEO-21-4.4(Rev1): 2026 Interim GEO Secretariat Budget (for decision) • GEO-21-Info-4.4: GEO Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 (for information) • GEO-21-4.5(Rev1): Executive Committee Members 2026 (for decision)
17:30-18:00	Session 5: Closing Session
5.1 (15 mins)	Review of Plenary Decisions
5.2 (15 mins)	<p>Handover of GEO Lead Co-Chair from the European Union to the United States and brief closing remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franz Immler, Head of the Environmental Observation Sector, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission • Taylor Jordan, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), United States
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