

# DRAFT AGENDA

## Group on Earth Observations Seventeenth Plenary Session – GEO-17 GEO Week 2021 Anchor Sessions 23-26 November 2021

### Tuesday, 23 November 2021

#### 12:00 – 13:00 Session 1: Opening Session

- 1.1 **Welcome from Lead Co-Chair**
- Joanna Drake, European Commission Co-Chair.
- 1.2 **Opening Remarks (Prerecorded)**
- Co-Chairs: Guangjun Zhang (China), Mmboneni Muofhe (South Africa) and Stephen Volz (USA);
  - Yana Gevorgyan, GEO Secretariat Director.
- 1.3 **Opening Keynote Presentation**
- Joanna Drake, European Commission.
- 1.4 **Welcome new Participating Organizations and Associates**
- 1.5 **Approval of Agenda**
- 1.6 **Mid-term Evaluation Report and Executive Committee Response**
- Justyna Nicinska, Mid-term Evaluation Team;
  - Mmboneni Moufhe, Co-Chair South Africa.

#### Session 1 Documents:

GEO-17-1.3 (Rev6): Draft Agenda (for decision)

GEO-16-1.5: Draft Report of GEO-16 (for decision, circulation of document in advance of meeting)

GEO-17-1.7a: Mid Term Evaluation (for discussion)

GEO-17-1.7b (Rev2): Executive Committee Response to the 2021 GEO Mid-Term Evaluation Report (for decision)

#### Session 1 Documents for Information:

GEO-17-1.3-Inf-01: New Members, Participating Organizations and Associates

#### 13:00 – 13:50 Session 2: GEO Work Programme activities and contributions to global policy frameworks

- 2.1 This session aims to showcase activities in the GEO Work Programme that are closely linked to policy agendas, notably those that have reached a significant level of maturity, as well as identifying the ones that have high potential to reach such recognition. GEO's priority engagement areas include the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Recently the New Urban Agenda was recognized as a fourth GEO engagement priority and more generally GEO Work Programme

activities also address other major policy frameworks of international importance, such as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The success of GEO activities providing key services to these frameworks depends on significant support from Members (funding, dedicated teams, GEO Secretariat support), the existence of an active user community, as well as operational data and services. Growth and success in this area, as well as the potential to create impact depends on continued investments, including by GEO Members.

Panelists:

- Amir Givati, Chief Science Officer, EnviroManager, GEOGLoWS.
- Nicola Pirrone, Research Director, CNR, Italy, GOS4M;
- Sara Barsotti, Coordinator for Volcanic Hazards, Icelandic Meteorological Office, GSNL;
- Lisa Maria Rebelo, Principal Scientist in EO, International Water Management Institute, GEO Wetlands.

Moderator

- Anthony Rea, Director of Infrastructure, World Meteorological Organization.

**Session outcomes and recommendations**

Linked to GEO Mid-Term Evaluation Findings 5, 6, 7.

Call to GEO Principals to provide links to appropriate national government agencies to benefit from the achievements of these and other GEO Work Programme activities.

**Session 2 Documents for Information:**

GEO-17-2-Inf-01: GEO Highlights Report

**Wednesday, 24 November 2021**

**12:00 – 14:00**

**Session 3: Engaging the GEO Community**

The overarching theme of this session is to showcase GEO's efforts to promote the science-policy interface by engaging various stakeholders including policymakers and users in the GEO Community. The Regional GEOs will provide the regional and national perspectives, followed by the three thematic Working Groups in GEO that will illustrate ongoing efforts around Climate Action, Disaster Risk Reduction and Capacity Development. Finally, the proposal for the fourth GEO engagement priority on Resilient Cities and Human Settlements will be presented.

**3.1**

**Regional GEOs**

Representatives of Regional GEOs will share their needs, best practices, lessons learned and ideas for future collaboration, as well as their efforts to engage national level operational agencies such as statistical agencies, agriculture, forestry, and water.

Panelists:

- Phoebe Oduor, AfriGEO;

- Angelica Gutierrez, AmeriGEO;
- Toshio Koike, AOGEO;
- Thierry Ranchin, EuroGEO.

Moderator:

- Evangelos Gerasopoulos, Director, Greek GEO Office.

### 3.2

#### **GEO Working Groups**

This session will cover notable outcomes and key plans for GEO's work in the areas of climate action, disaster risk reduction, and capacity development. It will include the visualization of the ongoing cross-Working Group mapping of the GEO Work Programme, as well as the outcomes of the GEO Climate Policy and Finance workshop, and an overview of the EO risk toolkit by the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group.

Panelists:

- Allison Craddock, Capacity Development WG Co-chair, Director of the International GNSS Service Central Bureau, NASA;
- Lucia Perugini, Climate Change WG Co-chair, Senior Scientific Manager, CMCC;
- Kene Onukwube, Disaster Risk Reduction WG Co-chair.

Moderator:

- Evangelos Gerasopoulos, Director, Greek GEO Office.

### 3.3

#### **Fourth Engagement Priority - Resilient Cities and Human Settlements**

Following the presentation of the guest speaker from the City of Athens, the Urban Resilience Sub Group will introduce GEO's strategy for this fourth engagement priority for formal endorsement by Plenary.

Guest speaker:

- Eleni Myrivili, Chief Heat Officer, City of Athens.

Speaker:

- Evangelos Gerasopoulos, Urban Resilience Sub Group.

#### **Session outcomes and recommendations**

Linked to GEO Mid-Term Evaluation Finding 5, 6, 9, 11.

Regional GEOs to contact additional agencies. GEO Community and Work Programme leads to engage in the work of Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Capacity Development WGs.

Adoption of Fourth Engagement Priority. Following presentations to Programme Board and the Executive Committee, a proposal will be made to adopt Resilient Cities and Human Settlements as the 4<sup>th</sup> GEO engagement priority.

#### **Session 3 Documents:**

GEO-17-3.3: Resilient Cities and Human Settlements Engagement Priority (for decision)

#### **Session 3 Documents for Information:**

GEO-17-3-Inf-01: Climate Action

GEO-17-3-Inf-02 (Rev1): Disaster Risk Reduction

GEO-17-3-Inf-03 (Rev1): Capacity Development

**Thursday, 25 November 2021****12:00 – 14:00****Session 4: Bridging the Digital Divide with Data, Tools and Knowledge**

4.1

This session will build on GEO's longstanding efforts to promote full and open access to Earth observation data in accordance with GEOSS Data Sharing Principles, to empower GEO Members to use Earth observations for informed decision making. Four GEO activities will serve as use cases to demonstrate the importance of ensuring all enabling conditions for achieving this vision – accelerated by the adoption of a culture of open knowledge through implementation of Data Sharing Principles (including links to FAIR and CARE) and Data Management Principles, achieving legal interoperability among data licenses used by major providers of open data, development of analysis-ready data, and producing results in a reproducible format. These use cases will also demonstrate good practice regarding in situ data sharing (substantiating Data WG's in situ data strategy) and use of the GEO Knowledge Hub and cloud services as means of providing access to data, information, and knowledge across the world to bridge the digital divide and promote global equity.

Panelists:

- Jesus San Miguel, Senior Researcher, JRC, GWIS;
- Peter Moore, Director Natural Resources Fire and Carbon, PTI, GWIS;
- Mercury Fox, Executive Director, CODATA at UA;
- Omar Seidu, Social Statistician, Digital Earth Africa;
- Carolina Adler, Executive Director, MRI, GEO Mountains & James Thornton, Project Officer, MRI;
- Krishna Balakrishnan, India Data Cube.

Moderator:

- Alena Rybkina, Vice-President CODATA, Data Working Group Co-chair.

4.2

**Open Knowledge Statement**

Presentation of the GEO Statement on Open Knowledge.

- Marie-Françoise Voidrot, Europe Director of Innovation Programs, Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC)

**Session outcomes and recommendations**

GEO Mid-Term Evaluation Findings 8, 12.

Call to GEO Principals to build open knowledge into their national data programmes, including endorsement of GEO Open Knowledge Statement and support to the GEO Knowledge Hub.

**Session 4 Document:**

GEO-17-4.1: GEO Statement on Open Knowledge (for decision)

## Friday, 26 November 2021

12:00 – 14:00

### Session 5: Looking Ahead

- 5.1 **Finance and Budget**  
2020 Financial Statement and Audit Report (WMO)  
2022 GEO Trust Fund Budget  
GEO Pledge Campaign:  
Review of 2021 and launch of 2022
- 5.2 **GEO Awards and GEO Art Competition Results**
- EO4SDG Awards;
  - GEO Individual Excellence Awards;
  - GEO Art Competition winners.
- 5.3 **GEO Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement**
- 5.4 **GEO Work Programme 2023-2025**
- 5.5 **Programme Board Members 2022**
- 5.6 **Executive Committee Members 2022**
- 5.7 **Review of GEO Week 2021 and next steps**
- 5.8 **Announcement of GEO Week 2022**

#### Session 5 Documents

GEO-17-5.1a: 2020 Financial Statement and Audit Report (for decision)

GEO-17-5.1b (Rev4): 2022 GEO Trust Fund Budget (for decision)

GEO-17-5.3: GEO Equality, Diversity & Inclusion statement (for decision)

#### Session 5 Documents for Information

GEO 17-5-Inf-01: Report of the Programme Board

**Group on Earth Observations  
GEO Week 2021  
Anchor Sessions**

**Tuesday, 23 November 2021**

**14:00 – 15:50 Anchor Session One: Integrated implementation of GEO work programme activities**

GEO Members are faced with complex policy challenges, including the use of Earth observations to act on the GEO engagement priorities represented by the UN 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework. We must reach 2030 in a more sustained, adapted and secure world to the global environmental and societal challenges but more change is required to meet these goals and targets in such a short time. To add to this worrying situation, the pledge for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development was slowed down by the immediate need for a transformative recovery post-COVID. As such, we are now looking more closely at the connections between the SDGs, climate adaptation and DRR goals and targets. This is to take advantage of the synergistic relations, limit possible trade-offs and accelerate transformational change.

Panelists:

- Angelica Gutierrez, Lead Scientist, NOAA, GEOGLoWS;
- Thierry Ranchin, Director of Center of Observations, Impacts and Energy, Mines Paris Tech, E-shape;
- Ian Jarvis, Program Director, GEOGLAM;
- James Verdin, Food for Peace Chair of USAID, FEWS Net.

Moderator:

- Sean De Cleene, Member of Executive Committee, World Economic Forum (WEF)

**Session outcomes and recommendations**

Invite stakeholders to recognize the importance and value of interactions and synergies across the SDGs, including the usefulness for government agencies.

**Tuesday, 23 November 2021****16:00 – 17:50 Anchor Session Two: Climate Action**

The UN Climate Change Conference COP26 marks another significant step since the historic Paris Agreement which committed countries to strengthening actions to combat climate change and limit the global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius by the end of this century. However, analyses show that governments are not currently on track to meet such targets. More than ever, the spotlight is on how to mobilize the trillions needed to tackle the urgent climate crisis and enable transformative climate action towards a resilient, net-zero carbon world by 2050. Both the public and private sectors have a role to play in accelerating the ecological and economic transition. This session will investigate how Earth observations can be used to strengthen spending decisions by governments and international financial institutions on climate-friendly investments especially in critical nexus areas addressing the needs and potential of developing countries, as well as to manage climate risks and seize climate opportunities by companies and financial firms.

Panelists:

- Richard Spinrad, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, NOAA Administrator, USA;
- Bobby Shackelton, Head of Geospatial, Bloomberg LP;
- Ania Grobicki, Deputy Director for External Affairs, Green Climate Fund;
- Paul Desanker, Manager, Adaptation Division, UNFCCC Secretariat;
- Lorena Santamaria, Senior Programme Officer, Development Partnerships Office, World Meteorological Organization.

Moderator:

- Robert Bradburne, Deputy Chief Scientific Adviser, Defra, UK Government.

#### **Session outcomes and recommendations**

Call to GEO Principals to engage in a new workstream exploring the role of Earth observations in support of finance for climate action.

**Wednesday, 24 November 2021****10:00 – 11:50 Anchor Session Three: Climate and Ocean**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has explained that the ocean is inextricably linked to our climate and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has also initiated a dialogue on the ocean and climate change to consider how to strengthen mitigation and adaptation action in this context. Rising air temperatures due to increases in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations are causing ice sheets across Greenland and Antarctica, as well as glaciers on land, to melt. These influxes of additional freshwater, along with thermal expansion, are leading to rising sea levels. Other impacts of climate change on the oceans include rises in temperature and acidity, and decreases in oxygen, constituting risks to marine biodiversity, fisheries, and ecosystems, and their functions and services for humans. Further, the oceans are capable of acting as a natural reservoir of large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> through physical and biological mechanisms, thus serving a sink for carbon and mitigating the full effects of increased greenhouse gas emissions. Earth observations have a role to play in monitoring and reporting on these activities under global policy agreements. This session will investigate what/how GEO Work Programme activities are best positioned to provide input to country efforts to develop ocean/marine-conscious climate action, with particular focus on climate adaptation measures.

Panelists:

- Peter Thomson, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean;
- Julian Barbière, Head, Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section – Ocean Decade Focal Point, IOC UNESCO;
- Joanna Post, Programme Management Officer, UNFCCC Secretariat;
- Rosamond Bing, CEO, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Tonga;
- Laura T. David, Professor and Director, University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, GEO Blue Planet.

Moderator:

- Maree Wilson, Branch Head of National Earth and Marine Observations, Geoscience Australia.

**Session outcomes and recommendations**

Call to GEO Principals to engage governments and examine feasibility of GEO Work Programme activities to develop practical guidance (policy briefs and technical guidance) for NAPs on the ocean/marine element.

**.Wednesday, 24 November 2021**

**14:00 – 15:50 Anchor Session Four: Resilient Cities and Human Settlements**

A fourth engagement priority has been proposed relating to urban resilience, in the context of sustainable urbanisation. Many people around the world are moving to cities to seek employment, shelter and increasingly more, food or subsistence. Through EO4SDG and in collaboration with other urban activities from the GWP and with UN-Habitat, SDG11 (safe and resilient cities and communities) and the New Urban Agenda have been addressed through an EO toolkit. Several other GEO activities are developing tools to address urbanization issues (monitoring heat and health, nature-based solutions to greening cities, etc.). The first invited speaker leads cities and human settlements globally on sustainable urbanisation.

Panelists:

- Graham Alabaster, Chief, Geneva Office, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);
- Her Excellency Thuraya, Abu Dhabi, UAE;
- Shushanik Asmaryan, Head of GIS and Remote Sensing Department, CENS NAS RA, Armenia GEO;
- Cascade Thuholske, Postdoctoral Research Scientist, The Earth Institute, Columbia University, USA;
- Nazmul Huq, Head of Resilient Development Pathway, Local Government for Sustainability (ICLEI) World Secretariat.

Moderator:

- Thomas Kemper, Scientific Officer, JRC, European Commission.

**Session outcomes and recommendations**

Invite stakeholders to support the Urban Resilience Engagement Plan and work with cities and human settlements as appropriate.



**Thursday, 25 November 2021**

**14:00 – 15:50 Anchor Session Five: Nature Based Solutions**

Positive actions to protect, manage and restore ecosystems are some of the most effective and integrated ways to mitigate the environmental crisis and address major societal challenges, such as food security, climate change, water security, human health, disaster risk and long-term sustainable development in the post COVID-19 world. Today, these Nature-based Solutions (NbS) concern hundreds of millions of hectares in very different land and aquatic ecosystems around the world with an estimated US \$170 billion of global benefit just for the climate element, as indicated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Panelists:

- Elizabeth Mrema, Executive Secretary, UN Convention Biological Diversity (UNCBD);
- Maria Cecilia Londono, Senior Researcher, Humbolt Institute, GEOBON;
- Antje Hechelthjen, Technical and Policy Advisor, GIZ, GEO LDN;
- Timothy (Max) Wright, Senior Specialist Remote Sensing, Conservation International;
- Titus Letaapo, Founding Member of the GEO Indigenous Alliance, member of the Samburu tribe, Kenya.

Moderator:

- Daniel Juhn, Geographer and Vice President at the Moore Center for Science Division, Conservation International.

#### **Session outcomes and recommendations**

Invite stakeholders to support Nature Based Solutions activities in the GEO Work Programme.