

DRAFT AGENDA

Group on Earth Observations Eighteenth Plenary Session – GEO-18 Accra, Ghana 2-3 November 2022

Wednesday, 2 November 2022

9:00 – 10:15 Session 1: Opening Session

1.1 Welcome from the Lead GEO Co-Chair: Stephen Volz, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (United States)

Welcome from Ghana and introduction to the Vice President: (confirmed) Dr Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation

Keynote address: (confirmed) Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President of Ghana

A voice from youth (confirmed): Caryn Dasah, peacebuilder and social justice and gender equality advocate from Cameroon

GEO Co-Chairs:

Guangjun Zhang, Vice Minister of Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology (China)

Joanna Drake, Deputy Director-General, European Commission (European Commission)

Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General, Department of Science and Technology (South Africa)

Yana Gevorgyan, Director, GEO Secretariat

1.2 **Approval of Agenda**

1.3 **Approval of Draft Report of GEO-17**

Session 1 Documents:

GEO-18-1.2: Draft Agenda (for decision)

[GEO-18-1.3: Draft Report of GEO-17](#) (for decision)

10:15 – 10:30 Group Photograph

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break

Wednesday, 2 November 2022**11:00– 12:30 Session 2: Operational Services for Africa**

2.1 Session Objectives: This session will demonstrate the value and uptake of Digital Earth Africa tools and services. In the space of three years, Digital Earth Africa has transitioned from an idea to a funded, operational programme that is informing better decisions across the continent. This session will explore Digital Earth Africa's impact, links to the GEO Work Programme, and opportunities that currently exist with nine implementing partners and other leading initiatives across Africa, for example Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

Speakers:

Paula Ingabire, Minister of Information and Communications Technology and Innovation, Rwanda

Samuel Abu Jinapor, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Ghana

Tidiane Outarra, African Unionm Commission

Thembi Xaba, Managing Director, Digital Earth Africa

2.2 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 2 Document for Information:

[GEO-18-2-Info-2.1: Operational Services for Africa](#)

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch**14:00 – 15:30 Session 3: Earth Observations for Nature-Based Solutions**

3.1 Session Objectives: This panel discussion will showcase the opportunity for Earth observations (EO) to contribute to nature-based solutions, with a focus on how EO data can unlock the potential of wetlands for climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as biodiversity conservation. The discussion will also look to EO for informing nature-based solutions to land degradation neutrality.

Although many multilateral environment agreements and societal applications depend on up-to-date, high quality land cover and ecosystems information, systems that can generate on-demand land cover and ecosystem extent products that can be customized for a wide range of users are not yet operationally available. However, recent advances in both science and technology now make the development of such systems possible. The panel will discuss what it will take to make this a reality.

Speakers:

Guy Loando Mboyo, Minister of Land Management, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Jillian Campbell, Head of Monitoring, Review and Reporting, UN Convention on Biological Diversity

Meghan Halabisky, GEO Wetlands leadership team member and Senior Science Advisor, Digital Earth Africa

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Barron Joseph Orr, Lead Scientist, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

3.2 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 3 Documents for Information:

GEO-18-3-Info-3.1: Earth Observations for Nature Based Solutions

15:30– 16:00 Coffee

16:00 – 17:30 **Session 4: Road to GEO Post-2025**

4.1 Session Objectives: GEO has embarked on the Road to GEO Post-2025. The next generation of GEO will be more agile, more proactive, and more aligned with the needs of its users, leading to increased impact.

Five months into the process, the post-2025 working group will present its latest findings and seek feedback from the GEO plenary, using interactive tools and discussions.

The working group will develop the basis for renewing the mandate of GEO at the GEO Ministerial Summit 2023.

4.2 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 4 Document:

GEO18-4.1: Interim Report of the Post-2025 Working Group (for discussion)

Reception

19:00 *GEO and GEO Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Awards: announced during the Reception in Ghana to recognize contributions made to the work of GEO particularly by those people who go ‘above and beyond’ as a result of their passion for GEO’s Mission.*

Thursday, 3 November

09:00 – 10:30 Session 5: Future-proofing National Adaptation Plans

5.0 Review of Day One

Plenary Chair

5.1 Future-proofing National Adaptation Plans

Session objective: Countries learn about technical guidance to support them in the development and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to climate change across key sectors

5.2 Moderated panel discussion on needs and actions to develop NAPs in developing countries:

Paul Desanker, Manager of the Adaptation Programme, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat

Zaheer Fakir, Chief Policy Advisor, Government of South Africa

5.3 Update on technical guidance for NAPs:

- Presentation of GEOGLAM technical guidance on NAPs: integrating Earth observations into adaptation planning in agriculture;
- Presentation of Malawi use case – towards a GEOGLoWS technical guidance on NAPs for flood early warning systems;

Speakers:

Esther Makabe, GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring Initiative (GEOGLAM)

Samuel Joseph Gama, Principal Mitigation Officer, Department of Disaster Management Affairs, Malawi

5.4 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 5 Documents for Information:

GEO-18-5-Info-5.1: Future-proofing National Adaptation Plans

GEO-18-5-Info-5.3: GEO Technical Guidance on National Adaptation Plans: Integrating Earth Observations into Adaptation Planning

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 Session 6: Collective Action on Oceans, Climate and Biodiversity

6.1 Session Objective: Demonstrate how an integrated approach to oceans, climate and biodiversity can achieve impact. GEO Blue Planet will present steps taken towards coordination to deliver tools and operational services and greater connectivity with users and members.

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- 6.2 Keynote address: Nicole LeBoeuf, Assistant Administrator for NOAA's National Ocean Service, United States
- 6.3 Presentation on the outcomes of GEO Blue Planet Symposium. Speaker: Nikelene Mclean, Knauss Marine Policy Fellow, Satellite Oceanography and Climatology Division, Center for Satellite Applications and Research, National Environmental Satellite, and Data Information Service, NOAA
- 6.4 Opportunities and challenges for cooperation on Earth observations:
- Presentation on the links between fishing, climate change and biodiversity;
 - Presentation on the marine biodiversity community perspective;
 - Presentation on the climate community perspective.
- Panel discussion on cooperation to address the challenges of climate change, biodiversity shift in the ocean using Earth observations, and engagement with governments toward better alignment to support the needs of the UN CBD and UNFCCC.
- Speakers:
- Emily Smail, Executive Director of GEO Blue Planet / Head of U.S. office, GEO Blue Planet, United States
- Anton Ellenbroek, Fisheries Officer, iMarine, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (tbc)
- Isa Elegbede, Visiting Lecturer, Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (MBON)
- Toste Tanhua, Senior Scientist, Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and EuroSea project
- 6.5 Session outcomes and recommendations

Session 6 Document for Information:

GEO-18-6-Info-6.1: Collective action on Oceans, Climate and Biodiversity

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30 Session 7: The Way Ahead: Plenary Business and Decisions

- 7.1 **Welcome to new Members and Participating Organizations**
- 7.2 **Recommendations from the Expert Advisory Group on GEOSS**
- 7.3 **GEO Work Programme 2023-2025**
- 7.4 **2021 Financial Statements and Audit Report**
- 7.5 **2023 GEO Secretariat Trust Fund Budget and Pledges**

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7.6 **Executive Committee Members for 2023**

7.7 **Programme Board Members for 2023**

Session 7 Documents:

GEO-18-7.1: New Members and Participating Organizations (for information)

GEO-18-7.2: Expert Advisory Group Recommendations (for decision)

[GEO-18-7.3: 2023-2025 Work Programme](#) (for decision)

[GEO-18-7.4: 2021 Financial Statements and Audit Report](#) (for decision)

GEO-18-7.5: 2023 GEO Secretariat Budget (for decision)

Session 7 Document for Information

[GEO-18-7-Info: Mapping the Engagement of the 2020-2022 GEO Work Programme](#)

15:30– 16:00 Coffee

16:00 – 17:30 **Session 8: Closing Session: Spotlight on youth, industry and Ministerial**

8.1 **Showcase highlights from the youth and industry tracks**

Mary Namukose, Women in Geographical Information System (GIS), Uganda

Kamal Ramsingh, ZASpace Chairman

8.2 **Announcement of GEO-19 and 2023 Ministerial Summit**

8.3 **Announcement of the members for the Ministerial Working Group**

8.4 Closing Remarks:

Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana

Yana Gevorgyan, Director, GEO Secretariat.

GEO Lead Co-Chair:

Stephen Volz, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (United States)

GEO Co-Chairs:

Guangjun Zhang, Vice Minister of Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology (China)

Joanna Drake, Deputy Director-General, European Commission (European Commission)

Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director General, Department of Science and Technology (South Africa)

Session 8 Document for Information:

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[GEO-18-8-Info-8.3: Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Working Group](#)(Min-WG) (for information)