GEO Symposium Planning Subgroup

GEO 17th Programme Board

11 – 12 June 2020

GEO Symposium Subgroup Leads

Active Subgroup Members

- Subgroup Members
  - CEOS: Kerry Sawyer – co-lead
  - ESIP: Kathy Fontaine – co-lead
  - France: Thierry Ranchin
  - CEOS: Andreia Siquiera
  - EC: Jean Dusart
  - IUGG: Michael Sideris
  - SWF: Krystal Wilson
  - GEOSec: Wenbo, Craig, and Rik

- Met every other week until end of April, then weekly
  - All facilitators were invited to attend weekly meetings

Original Charge to the Subgroup

- Focus this year is capacity development for the Work Programme activities, and be geared towards the GEO community
- From Document PB 16.12 – Suggested objectives:
    1. Improved coordination and synergy among Work Programme activities in engaging UN organizations, international treaties and conventions, particularly for the GEO engagement priorities;
    2. Increased understanding of, and interest in, using the GEO Knowledge Hub as a means of sharing data, information and knowledge in an open science manner;
    3. Identified opportunities for the Work Programme activities to explore and use advanced technologies including cloud computing, machine learning and so on;
    4. Increased understanding of data ethics issues in the context of open Earth observations data and knowledge;
    5. Experience shared on novel ways of fundraising for Work Programme activities
    6. Continued identification of duplication and areas of collaboration among Work Programme activities;
    7. Continued identification of any key gaps including in situ observations, engagement of user groups and so on.

And then…….

Restrictions due to Pandemic

- Increasing restrictions on travel

- Increasing focus on discipline-specific support to COVID issues

- Subgroup had to recommend to PB whether to cancel or go virtual
  - Recommended to PB that we go virtual; agreed by PB (virtually)
  - Dates determined by other major events (virtual or, at the time, maybe still real)

Challenges with Virtual Meetings

- Time zones

- Technology

- Trust

Time Zones

- No matter what, someone will be in a bad time zone during a global telecon, miss something, or feel excluded
- To mitigate this, we decided to
  - Pre-record all presentations
  - Load the pre-recorded presentations prior to the Symposium
  - Open a chat channel (Sli.do in this case) when the recordings are loaded
  - Record the 'live' session and make that available
  - Keep chat 'open' for 48 hours post Symposium
  - Ask that all questions be answered *either* in person during the session *or* in writing within 7 days post- Symposium
- Why?
  - Those who cannot attend the sessions in real time can watch at a more convenient time, submitting their question and being assured of an answer.
  - As with in-person sessions with an end time (when Q&A stops), there is a time limit for submitting remote questions.

Technology

- Goal is to simulate, as much as possible, the experience of an in-person session
- To achieve this, we decided to
  - Schedule 90-minute sessions with pre-recorded presentations, then live Q&A
  - Have a channel open for real-time questions
  - Have at least two people per session to facilitate/moderate the sessions
    - One for managing the panel flow; one for monitoring the incoming questions
  - Use a telecon for the session participants
  - Stream the sessions for attendees
- Why?
  - Preregistration is over 1,000; voice Q&A would be impossible
  - Participant telecons can be done with no additional cost; webinars would be prohibitive
  - Streaming is easier on attendee bandwidth

Trust

- Even with wonderful technologies available, not everyone can use every software application
- To address this, we decided to use
  - Blue Jeans for the panelists
  - Multicasting technology to stream the sessions via YouTube and CDNVideo (inside China only)
  - Sli.do for submitting questions
- Why?
  - Webinar packages are not interactive enough
  - A separate Q&A package allows for moderating/upvoting questions
  - CDN is a known streaming technology (how we watch video on Amazon, etc.)
  - Some agencies and companies prohibit the use of Zoom, for example.

Creating an Agenda

1. Improved coordination and synergy among Work Programme activities in engaging UN organizations, international treaties and conventions, particularly for the GEO engagement priorities;

2. Increased understanding of, and interest in, using the GEO Knowledge Hub as a means of sharing data, information and knowledge in an open science manner;

3. Identified opportunities for the Work Programme activities to explore and use advanced technologies including cloud computing, machine learning and so on;

4. Increased understanding of data ethics issues in the context of open Earth observations data and knowledge;*

5. Experience shared on novel ways of fundraising for Work Programme activities

6. Continued identification of duplication and areas of collaboration among Work Programme activities;

7. Continued identification of any key gaps including in situ observations, engagement of user groups and so on.

*not ready for prime time; Working Group not yet established (opportunity) – chance to include this session

- Earth Observations for COVID-19 Response and Recovery (opportunity)

- Engaging UN Agencies and Intergovernmental Organizations (1)

- Contributing to Reproducible Knowledge (2)

- GEO Programme Board Co-Chairs: Ask Them Anything (opportunity)

- Leveraging Advanced Technologies – Focusing on Data Cubes (3)

- GEOSS Infrastructure Development Task Team (3)

- GEO Mid-term Evaluation Session (opportunity)

- Co-designing Capacity Development (7)

- Focus on Impact: Regional GEOs (6)

- Integrating Water and Coastal Data Sets (7)

- Monitoring Essential Variables (6, 7)

- Resource Mobilization and Sustainable Funding (5)

Agenda Walkthrough and Logistics

- Agenda
- Run-through on June 8 with the discussion facilitators and question moderators
  - They can practice with Sli.do throughout the week

- Presenters have been very understanding and accommodating regarding pre-recordings
- Facilitators/moderators have been very helpful in planning and scheduling

Recommendation

- Consider a GEO Webinar Series
  - There were topics that could not be accommodated during the Symposium
  - There are topics that need more time to fully address/expand upon
  - There seems to be interest in the community for such a program
  - Suggest a group/subgroup(?) to discuss the feasibility of a webinar series, and details including (not an exhaustive list)
    - The resources required to hold a virtual session
    - Frequency
    - Acceptance/selection of topics
    - Technology
    - Et cetera

Questions?

Thank You!