

1/ GOOS National Focal Points

Description

The Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) National Focal Point will be a focal point for communication between GOOS and the national organisations and individuals involved in your Member State's sustained ocean observing system infrastructure. The overarching objective of the GOOS National Focal Points will be to promote and support nationally and regionally coordinated strategies for the implementation of a sustained *global ocean observing system that delivers the essential information needed for our sustainable development, safety, wellbeing and prosperity*.

The GOOS National Focal Points (or their Delegates) will promote and support the work of GOOS at the national level through the implementation of a Global Ocean Observing System and publicising opportunities for engagement with GOOS activities within the national context. It is important for GOOS National Focal Points (or their Delegates) to foster connections at a national level between elements involved in ocean observing, government stakeholders and the beneficiaries of ocean information, towards achieving GOOS strategic goals. It will also be important to foster connections with national data, modelling, and ocean assessment activities, to support the delivery of ocean information to key national users. In addition, liaison with the focal points of GOOS's sponsors, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Science Council (ISC) would be useful.

It is the role of the GOOS National Focal Points to ensure that national needs and gaps related to sustained ocean observing systems are brought to the attention of GOOS Core Team¹; and to report to GOOS on national plans, implementation status, and response to GOOS international priorities.

Where a national ocean observing system exists, the National Focal Point will liaise with or be from this system. Where multiple national systems exist, GOOS suggests that the National Focal Points advocate for a national ocean observing committee or hub, if one does not already exist, to support the potentially broad range of activities and connections.

The GOOS National Focal Points (or their Delegates) will advocate for sustained national ocean observing system activities that contribute to the GOOS.

¹ The Core Team consists of 7 GOOS components: 3 GOOS Expert Panels (Ocean Observing Physics and Climate Panel (OOPC), Biogeochemistry (BGC) Panel, and the Biological and Ecosystems (BioEco) Panel, the GOOS Observation Coordination Group (OCG) and OceanOPS, GOOS Regional Alliances (GRAs), the Expert Team for Operational Ocean Forecasting Systems (ETOofs), all supported by the GOOS Office which has its HQ in Paris. The GOOS Steering Committee provides oversight. www.goosocean.org

Terms of Reference

The specific responsibilities of the GOOS National Focal Points (or their Delegates) are to:

1. Work at national levels towards implementation of the GOOS strategic goals², and support the alignment of national activities in broader international and regional ocean observing activities, assuring synergy and increasing efficiency
2. Develop a **national hub** for the coordination of integrated ocean observing across disciplines and sectors, possibly through establishing a GOOS national committee (see Annex 1). Connection with the following would be appropriate:
 - a. Representatives of national ocean observing programmes or systems, across open ocean, coastal, physical, biogeochemical, and biological realms
 - b. National representatives of GOOS ocean observing networks
 - c. National representatives of GOOS Regional Alliances (GRAs), where relevant
 - d. National representatives of GOOS sponsors: the IOC, the WMO, UNEP and the ISC, if designated at a national level
 - e. National ocean data, modelling, and ocean assessment activities, including national representatives of the International Oceanographic Data Exchange (IODE)
 - f. Government departments with an interest in ocean issues
 - g. Representatives from national marine industry/blue economy, with an interest in services derived from ocean observing and forecasting
3. Advocate for national investment in sustained ocean observing systems
4. Promote nationally and/or regionally coordinated strategies and implementation for a sustained ocean observing system delivering the needed information to users.
5. Promote the work of GOOS at the national level:
 - a. Strengthen and develop communications with national and regional stakeholders,
 - b. Promote GOOS plans and documents where relevant,
 - c. Publicise opportunities for engagement with the GOOS Core Team and actions
 - d. Promote national FAIR³ ocean data practices, in collaboration with IODE national representatives and national data structures
 - e. Encourage timely delivery of quality metadata, adhering to international best practices or standards, and in support of global ocean observing system implementation and tracking
 - f. Support capacity building for ocean observing
 - g. Maintain contact with relevant national committees such as for Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade), if designated at a national level

² www.goosocean.org/2030Strategy

³ FAIR Data Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable), published in Scientific Data in 2016 are a set of guiding principles proposed by a consortium of scientists and organisations to support the reusability of digital assets

6. Ensure that national needs, capability, and gaps related to sustained ocean observing systems are brought to the attention of GOOS, and work with GOOS towards developing a regular reporting to the IOC on the status and future plans of national ocean observing system activities that contribute to GOOS, leveraging any existing reporting.
7. Participate in GOOS organised National Focal Point meetings.

GOOS support to the National Focal Points

To support the GOOS National Focal Points in undertaking their work GOOS will:

- Promote and highlight the importance of the GOOS National Focal Point role through communications and advocacy
- Create a Forum for exchange with GOOS and other National Focal Points
- Promote relevant GOOS activities and capacity building programmes to the National Focal Points
- Provide visibility of national contributions to GOOS, and work towards developing regular reporting to the IOC on the status and plans for sustained national ocean observing systems
- Communicate regularly with National Focal Points and provide materials to support their work
- Report annually to the National Focal Points on status of the global ocean observing system
- Use feedback on national needs and gaps to develop a synthesis for GOOS action

The role of the GOOS National Focal Points has expanded, as has the recognition of the need for ocean observations across climate, weather and hazard warnings and ocean health. GOOS will endeavour to support the NFP in fulfilling their role, and the National Focal Point Forum meetings will be a locus to discuss the modalities of this support, as well as to exchange with other National Focal Points. However, it is also recommended that GOOS National Focal Points consider developing a national hub or a GOOS national committee (see Annex 1) to support this work.

Benefits of GOOS National Focal Point Role

The benefits of the National Focal Point role in supporting sustained ocean observing and delivering to national needs and the global ocean observing system are outlined below:

To Member States:

- A locus to strengthen the communication and planning for a national ocean observing system that is fit-for-purpose, integrated and sustained
- Increase opportunities for national activities to align nationally, regionally, and globally, lowering cost, increasing efficiency, and the overall effectiveness of the global system, benefiting all nations
- Provide visibility of the national ocean observing contribution in a global context, through reporting to GOOS or through news on major actions to bring awareness of work at national level
- An identified pathway to communicate with GOOS around national needs

To GOOS:

- Identified national advocates to demonstrate the economic and socioeconomic value of sustained ocean observations, and to support long term funding mechanisms at national levels
- Strengthen national and global ocean observing systems through learning and sharing with other GOOS National Focal Points
- Strengthen and streamline global ocean observing through alignment of priorities at national levels between GOOS, the IOC, the WMO, and other structures
- Communicate with GOOS around national needs, in support of a fit for purpose and responsive ocean observing system
- Increase ocean observing system efficiency and scope through regional cooperation around projects or shared resources, leading to cost saving and/or opportunities to build capability

Annex 1: Guidance for National Hub / Committee

Different configurations for ocean observing exist at a national level; this annex is provided to support discussion on the optimal approach for each nation to develop and sustain its national ocean observing coordination, in line with GOOS.

Where a national ocean observing system exists, the National Focal Point would likely liaise with or be from this system. Where multiple national systems exist, GOOS suggests that the National Focal Point would likely be the leader of the national ocean observing committee, or that they would advocate for the forming of such a national ocean observing committee. For many nations some level of coordination committee is recommended to capture and support the potentially broad range of activities and connections, see Annex 2.

Annex 2: National Focal Point list of potential connections

Connection with the following would be appropriate:

- a. Representatives of national ocean observing programmes or systems, across open ocean, coastal, physical, biogeochemical and biological realms
- b. National representatives of GOOS ocean observing networks, for example the National Focal Points of Data Buoy Cooperation Panel (DBCP), Argo, Global Sea Level Observing System (GLOSS), and Ship Observations Team (SOT).
- c. National representatives of GOOS Regional Alliances (GRAs), where relevant
- d. National representatives of GOOS sponsors the IOC, the WMO, UNEP and the ISC
- e. National ocean data, modelling, and ocean assessment activities, including national representatives of IODE
- f. National Committees for the Ocean Decade, if designated
- g. Other relevant national committees such as for the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS)
- h. Government departments, research institutes, and national forecasting services with an interest in ocean issues and the use of ocean information
- i. Representatives from national marine industry/blue economy, with an interest in services derived from ocean observing and forecasting, e.g., industry associations

Annex 3: Abbreviations

GCOS	Global Climate Observing System
GOOS	Global Ocean Observation System
GRA	GOOS Regional Alliance
IODE	International Oceanographic Data Exchange
ISC	International Science Council
Ocean Decade	United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development
OceanOPS	(formerly JCOMMOPS) is the IOC-WMO Operational Centre, and part of the Observations Coordination Group (OCG) under GOOS
OCG	Observations Coordination Group
OOPC	Ocean Observing Physics and Climate Panel
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation