

# **GOOS Regional Alliance Council**

**14 February 2023**

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# **BRIEF INTRODUCTION**

The chairperson of GRA Council Mr. Carl Gouldman, US IOOS, welcomed the participants to the meeting. He provided an update on the “Benefits of Ocean Observing Catalog (BOOC)” project. BOOC has now progressed to be a pilot built on GIS. There is also a Google form for partners to help identify use cases for the catalog. US IOOS will participate in the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) from 17-24 February in Vienna, Austria. It will be an opportunity to discuss whether to consolidate a GOOS Regional Alliance in the Arctic.

The chair reported that he will participate in the Twelfth GOOS Steering Committee from 24-28 April, 2023 in Halifax, Canada. The chair will ask GRAs for updates prior to the GOOS SC meeting.

# **OVERVIEW OF OCEAN DECADE GOOS PROGRAMMES**

Ms. Mairéad O’Donovan, GOOS office Consultant, provided an overview about the GOOS Ocean Decade Programmes. The GOOS Secretariat wants to look for opportunities to align and consolidate connections in different regions. The programmes: Ocean Observing Co-Design, Coast Predict, and Observing Together aim to address the ocean decade societal challenges, the GOOS 2030 Strategy and enhance capacity development.

Observing Together is focused on capacity development and integrating initiatives from different countries to link/connect them with GOOS. There are five observing together projects endorsed by the Ocean Decade:

1. Enhancement of oceanic knowledge by developing a Moroccan national observations network (MarocNatCom);
2. ii. Enhancement of the Ocean observing system within the republic of Mauritius (Mauritius Meteorological Services);
3. iii. Ocean literacy – fisheries weather field school, Sekolah Lapang Cuaca Nelayan (BMKG);
4. iv. Focus on user community engagement with observing networks (AtlantOS-Connect);
5. v. Sailing4Science – expand capacity through citizen science, with emphasis on remote under observed areas (Norway NTNU).

The Ocean Observing Co-Design is supporting the evaluation and design of the ocean observing system. It addresses gaps in the connection to end users, and aims to establish clearer priorities for investments to produce more accessible and impactful ocean information. This will be done through six exemplar projects on ocean carbon cycle, tropical cyclones, marine life, marine heatwaves, boundary currents and storm surge.

CoastPredict is also aiming to integrate ocean observing into coastal areas. The outstanding parent program of CoastPredict is OceanPredict (<http://oceanpredict19.org/>) which in the past twenty years has organized the large scale world ocean predictions standards and developed a group of Coastal Ocean and Shelf Sea Task Team that started the international coordination for coastal predictions. Key scientists from OceanPredict sit in the CoastPredict Steering Committee e.g. Ms Nadia Pinardi, Chair of “CoastPredict” and director of the UN Decade Collaborative Center on Coastal Resilience hosted by the University of Bologna.

There is potential for CoastPredict to be transformative by leveraging existing GOOS infrastructure and evolving a system that connects into the coastal ocean, working with different networks such as community science. The CoastPredict approach is to have a global coastal experiment by defining a number of test sites (minimum of 10), and then implement an observing and modeling system in each of the test sites that can potentially be replicated in other coastal areas.

In order to connect GOOS Ocean Decade Programmes and GRAs, project activities have to be aligned with local or regional needs. In addition, catalyse greater connectivity at global scales, while fostering long-term links across ocean observing, modelling, and forecasting services. Last but not least, there needs to be reporting about return on investments in ocean observing and forecasting systems.

**Discussion**

* The activities and products developed by ETOOFS are useful to support GOOS components, especially GRAs.
* How can national projects e.g. on Early Warning Systems (EWS), be linked to the Ocean Decade GOOS Programmes? Sea Level Station, Argo Networks, etc., can engage through the Ocean Observing Co-design exemplars or requested interest to connect with Observing Together endorsed projects. Connections need to be made from a regional level to be able to operate within a certain pilot study area.
* Ocean Decade Collaborative Centres (ODCCs), can be a mechanism to link with the GOOS Ocean Decade Programmes. Presently a Coastal Resilience ODCC is being formalized.
* How can heat waves (in the Mediterranean region, and globally) be a proposed scientific focus to the GOOS Ocean Decade Programmes? This can be accomplish through discussions with stakeholders from Ocean Decade endorsed projects, e.g. EuroSea project, and the exemplar project on heatwave pilot areas. MONGOOS is interested in making a connection with EuroSea and these pilot sites.
* Making connections with exemplars is key, e.g. Boundary currents exemplar is connecting strongly with the Observation Coordination Group (OCG) boundary currents work.

# **GOOS REGIONAL ALLIANCE POLICY UPDATE**

Mr Denis Chang Seng provided an update on the GOOS regional policy. He recalled GOOS Regional Alliances (GRAs) representatives’ participation for the first time in the GOOS Steering Committee (GOOS SC –X– Part 2) - GOOS Regional Structures Workshop meeting from 29 November to 2 December 2021. The workshop discussed regional approaches, vision, and policy for a thriving regional coordination ecosystem. From this workshop a report is being prepared to support the establishment of the new GOOS Regional Alliance Policy.

In addition, discussions have started on the constitution of a sub-task team which will include members of the Governance Task Team, GOOS Steering Committee, GRA leadership and regional projects. The following GRA representative nominations based on Governance and region were proposed without objections or other proposals to the GOOS Regional Policy Sub-TT during the GOOS Regional Council meeting on 6 July 2022:

1. NEAR-GOOS (Inter-Gov/ Thematic)
2. EUROGOOS (Gov/Non-Gov)
3. GOOS –Africa (IOC Sub-Comm)
4. IOC CARIBE (SIDS)
5. U.S.IOOS (Chair) (Nat Sys)
6. IMOS (Vice Chair) (Nat Sys)

A series of workshops will be organized to discuss with the sub-task team members to be constituted about the revised policy. An outline of the revised policy will be prepared and members can be assigned responsibilities to lead the revision.

Dr R. Venkatesan, who is a former Chair of the GRA Council has been contracted to work on matters related to GOOS National Focal Points. He may assist in the revision of the new GOOS Regional Policy. There is no agreed timeline yet to complete the policy.

# **GOOS REGIONAL ALLIANCE FORUM XI PLANNING**

Mr. Chang Seng provided a report on the organization of the GRA Forum XI. The GRA forum meets every two years. At the next GRA Forum, a decision will be made on extending or appointing a new GRA Council leadership. The maximum duration of the officer in role is 4 years. The meeting is expected to be in person and over the course of two days.

The meeting discussed hosting the Forum in September or October 2023. Two venue locations were proposed: Morocco or Egypt. The council agreed to follow up on this discussion and make a final decision.

**Discussion**

* MONGOOS is organizing their GRA meeting in October 2023 and it will be hosted by Morocco.
* EuroGOOS and EurOcean conferences will take place in the first and second week of October, respectively.
* In the future consider organizing the Forum before the IOC Governing Body meetings. GRA Forum outcomes can then be better reflected in the GOOS reporting to the IOC governing bodies for endorsement.
* The GRA council advised to compile and organise all GRA related input (e.g. actions, success stories, etc) for the Twelfth GOOS Steering Committee meeting from 25-28 April 2023 in Halifax, Canada – ahead of the IOC governing bodies meetings of 2023.
* GRAs agreed to define a date and location for the GRA Forum XI in advance to prevent overlaps with other key meetings.

# **GRA REVITILIZATION: PI-GOOS, CARIBE-GOOS AND GOOS-AFRICA**

Mr Denis Chang Seng provided a report on GRA revitalization efforts.

**PI-GOOS**

PI-GOOS consists of 21 Pacific islands and territories. It has been hosted by SPREP, but since the resignation of the responsible officer in 2019, PI-GOOS has not provided any reports. For this matter, the GOOS office issued a call for expressions of interest to host the PI –GOOS Secretariat, through an IOC Circular Letter ([CL2922](https://itic.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewDocumentRecord&docID=31636)).

The objective is to have a PI-GOOS institutional mandate with strong capabilities in ocean observations and be able to coordinate programmes, initiatives, projects, e.g. GOOS 2030 Strategy and GOOS Ocean Decade Programmes with Pacific Island States. The timeline to announce the new host of the PI-GOOS Secretariat is mid-2023.

**CARIBE-GOOS**

It was reported by stakeholders in the region that the CARIBE-GOOS has not seen any notable progress since 2021, noting the retirement of Cesar Toro as the Head of the IOCARIBE office in 2021. A new Head of the IOCARIBE office was appointed in January 2023, Ms Lorna Inniss. GOOS Office is conducting meetings with Ms Inniss concerning future plans, interest and activities.

**GOOS-AFRICA**

GOOS-AFRICA has recently drafted a new action plan in line with the GOOS 2030 Strategy. It has established a partnership with the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (GMES & AFRICA). GOOS AFRICA is fully involved in the African Decade of Oceans and Seas and the African Blue Economy Strategy in the broader context of the African Vision’ 2063. There has been increased focus from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) to support coordination and bring together the many dispersed centres of excellence in Africa. He noted that a new head of IOC Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States will be appointed in 2023.

**Discussion**

Ms Lorna Inniss, IOCARIBE Head, reported that IOCARIBE will appoint a coordinator and endorse a programme for the sustainability of IOCARIBE GOOS. IOCARIBE GOOS will be looking for partners to help move the programme forward.

# **UPDATE ON GOOS INFORMATION DOCUMENT: SOCIETAL BENEFITS OF GOOS REGIONAL ALLIANCES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

# Mr Denis Chang Seng and Mr Alejandro Rojas, GOOS Office, reported that the GOOS information document on “Societal Benefits of GOOS Regional Alliances, Challenges, and Opportunities'' needs a final review and update. The last time the document was updated with GRAs success stories was July 2022. GRAs were requested to provide the most recent information on success stories. It was noted that IMOS and US IOOS provided reports about return on investments and 2015 – 2020 Ocean Enterprise Study, respectively. The reports were for section 3 on Benefits of GOOS Regional Alliances (Economical, Societal, and Governmental) to raise government awareness on the importance of investing in Ocean Observing Systems. The objective is to have more GRAs contributions in the long term.

The next steps are to proofread the document, and improve formatting, graphics, and illustrations where possible.

# **CLOSE**

Mr Carl Gouldman, Chair of the GRA Council, closed the meeting at 11:30 am (Paris time).

**ANNEX I**

**Actions**

**Action 1** GOOS Regional Alliances to help identify use cases for the Benefits of Ocean Observations (BOOC) catalog.

**Action 2** GRAs to encourage national projects to engage in the Ocean Decade GOOS Programmes by requesting interest to connect with Observing Together endorsed projects or Ocean Observing Co-design exemplars.

**Action 3** The GOOS Regional Alliance policy sub-task team, to have a series of meetings to define the outline and section leads of the policy.

**Action 4** The GRA council to define the date and venue of the GOOS Regional Alliance Forum XI.

**Action 5** The GRA council/secretariat to compile and organise all GRA actions, success stories, and/or recommendations for the Twelfth GOOS Steering Committee meeting from 25-28 April 2023 in Halifax, Canada – ahead of the IOC governing bodies meetings of 2023.

**Action 6** GOOS Secretariat to announce the host of the PI-GOOS Secretariat.

**Action 7** GOOS Secretariat to finalize the “Societal Benefits of GOOS Regional Alliances, Challenges, and Opportunities’ document.

**Action 8** GOOS GRAs to arrange a meeting to discuss Ocean Co-Lab initiative, including: the remote sensing and modelling sides of the project, how to package the product and sell it to the funders, and how to analyze, interpret and use the data from freely available resources.

**Action 9** GRAs to have a meeting and discuss a way forward to complete the new GRA Capability Assessment across the Value Chain.

**Action 10** Use GRAs success stories for the production of one or two videos, to improve the visibility, communications and impact of GRAs.

# **ANNEX II**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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**GOOS Secretariat**

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