

STRENGTHENING AND STREAMLINING GOOS

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

Recalling IOC Resolutions XVI-8 establishing the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and XXIII-5 establishing Terms of Reference of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Global Ocean Observing System (I-GOOS) and the GOOS Scientific Steering Committee (GSSC),

Noting:

- (i) the progress in the implementation of the GOOS Climate module as reported to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at Cancun, December, 2010 (GOOS report No.184),
- (ii) the Framework for Ocean Observations¹ developed by the task team set up by the OceanObs'09 Conference (Venice, 21-25 September 2009)
- (iii) paragraph 36a of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002), which called for expanded observation of the global ocean and coastal seas, and the planned assessment of the progress to date and the remaining gaps in sustainable development and the implication for oceans at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (RIO+20).

Reaffirming that the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) is a priority for the IOC,

Considering:

- (i) that observations of the oceans are critical to the provision of maritime safety services, including in addressing the obligations of Member States under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), and to disaster risk reduction, in particular in coastal areas subject to marine natural hazards such as tsunamis and storm surges,
- (ii) the importance of systematic ocean observations to ensure that the target adopted by the Tenth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD, Nagoya, 2010) 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem benefits, can be conserved through an effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected network of protected areas,
- (iii) the importance of sustained oceanographic observations to global climate monitoring, research and prediction, to the planned improved future delivery of climate services under the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), to the provision of environmental services in general and to operational ocean prediction and related services,
- (iv) that sustained observations are critical to manage ocean biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as to global monitoring and assessment of ocean carbon, ocean acidification and the marine environment generally, including in particular the UN

¹ IOC/INF-1284

regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects (the “UN Regular Process”),

- (v) the need to increase the number of IOC Member States active in GOOS implementation, and to develop their capacity to participate in and benefit from GOOS,

Considering further:

- (i) the formation in 1999 of Joint IOC-WMO Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) as a joint mechanism for coordinating ocean observations between IOC and WMO and GOOS’ continuing participation in the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS),
- (ii) that UNEP, in particular its Regional Seas Programme, is a priority user for GOOS observations, products and services,
- (iii) that engagement of the oceanographic research community in development of GOOS can benefit from cooperation with the International Council for Science (ICSU),
- (iv) that the IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies and the GOOS Regional Alliances are important mechanisms for GOOS implementation,

Recognizing the need to broaden the scientific remit of GOOS and to simplify its governance,

Having Considered the summary report from I-GOOS-X (Paris, June 2011),

Decides to:

1. recommit to GOOS, building on existing achievements, by:
 - (i) focusing on GOOS as a holistic system encompassing global, regional and coastal observations and products;
 - (ii) integrating all available observational data;
 - (iii) aligning GOOS with a Framework for Ocean Observing² oriented to an essential ocean variable approach;
 - (iv) promoting GOOS’ essential role in providing observations and products to inform actions taken under global conventions such as UNFCCC, including its emphasis on adaptation, (including data for) consideration of natural hazards; CBD, and SOLAS, and regional conventions such as the UNEP Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans; as well as the UN Regular Process;
 - (v) reinforcing global participation through increased extrabudgetary support for capacity development, especially in Africa, Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries;

² IOC/INF-1284

2. streamline and strengthen the governance of GOOS by:
- (i) reconfirming IOC as lead sponsor responsible for GOOS; WMO, UNEP and ICSU as cosponsoring organizations, and cooperation with other committed organizations which contribute to and/or benefit from GOOS;
 - (ii) confirming that the IOC Governing Bodies, through appropriate arrangements, become the bodies directly responsible for governance of GOOS;
 - (iii) dissolving I-GOOS, the GOOS Scientific Steering Committee, and its subsidiary panels on 31 December 2011;
 - (iv) creating the GOOS Steering Committee with effect from 1st January 2012;
 - (v) reinforcing cooperation with the IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies, and with other relevant bodies including the GOOS Regional Alliances, as a means for coordination and implementation;
 - (vi) adopting the terms of reference for the GOOS Steering Committee appended to this resolution;

Decides Further that,

- (i) the GOOS Steering Committee will be comprised of up to 15 members. Five experts will be appointed by Member State "Electoral Groups" during the IOC Assembly, one from each group. These five experts will have, in addition to their technical expertise, the role of providing policy advice and guidance to the Steering Committee, consistent with that of the IOC Governing Bodies. The five members elected at the I-GOOS X (20 June 2011, Paris) will serve as the representatives for the Electoral Groups until the 27th Session of the Assembly;
- (ii) the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the IOC Officers, and the co-sponsors, will appoint up to 10 scientific and technical experts based on relevant expertise, giving due consideration to geographical and gender balance;
- (iii) the GOOS Steering Committee will regularly assess its own performance in relation to its terms of reference. The GOOS Steering Committee will report annually on its implementation and progress to the IOC Governing Bodies;

Urges Member States to commit to support the sustained operation of GOOS;

Notes that the financial implications on the Regular Programme budget of the strengthening and streamlining of GOOS will be cost neutral and will not exceed the envelope formerly allocated to I-GOOS and GSSC;

Requests the Executive Secretary to ensure the required support for the effective operation of the GOOS Steering Committee.

Terms of Reference for the GOOS Steering Committee (Group of Experts)

Acting under the guidance and governance of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Governing Bodies, and with the active participation and support of Member States, the GOOS Steering Committee will carry out intersessional activities to:

- (i) identify the essential ocean variables to observe, and develop and update as necessary the scientific, technical and implementation plans and targets for GOOS, for approval of the IOC Governing Bodies and partners;
- (ii) monitor, promote, and provide guidance on development and operation of GOOS in accordance with agreed implementation plans;
- (iii) regularly assess the performance of GOOS in providing users with fit-for-purpose data and information products;
- (iv) identify and encourage research and operational programmes to enhance and improve GOOS;
- (v) advise on developing the capacity of all Member States to participate in and benefit from GOOS.

The GOOS Steering Committee will appoint a Chair from amongst its own membership.

The GOOS Steering Committee will produce a biennial Workplan for consideration by the IOC Governing Bodies and adoption by the Assembly. The Workplan will also be shared with other cosponsors. This Workplan will clearly identify dedicated resources and commitments necessary for each Workplan element. In executing the elements of the plan endorsed and resourced by the IOC Governing Bodies, and/or extrabudgetary sources, the GOOS Steering Committee will be supported by a GOOS Project Office within the IOC Secretariat.

The GOOS Steering Committee will have the authority to create and dissolve time limited panels according to the IOC rules of procedure within limits of resources available.

The chairs of appropriate coordinating and implementing bodies, both within and outside IOC, will be invited to participate in an *ex-officio* capacity. Such bodies would include, for example, subsidiary panels, the GOOS Regional Council, IODE and JCOMM.

The GOOS Steering Committee members can serve up to two consecutive two-year terms.

The GOOS Steering Committee may invite observers to its meetings.

Within the limits of resources available, the GOOS Steering Committee shall preferably meet annually face to face immediately preceding IOC Governing Body meetings.