

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Annex I

Terms of Reference for the IOCARIBE-GOOS Working Group

1. PURPOSE:

The Working Group serves as the IOC Regional Sub-commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Region (IOCARIBE) Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) planning, implementation, and oversight body. The objective of IOCARIBE-GOOS is to deliver a sustained ocean observing system for the Caribbean and adjacent regions. The Working Group will review and recommend to the IOCARIBE Subcommission priorities and actions required for the full establishment of a coordinated, integrated, interoperable, and sustainable regional ocean and coastal observing system in the IOCARIBE region.

2. FUNCTIONS:

2.1. Identify:

- Regional sustained observing requirements for societal benefit areas.
- Transboundary observing networks and their link to Global GOOS and Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) networks.
- Real-time and archived data streams from in situ and relevant satellite observations and their link to regional and global networks, including through International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE).
- Information, products, and model output for the region that provide societal benefits, and their links to global GOOS and other international efforts.
- Gaps in the existing observing systems and develop mechanisms to fill these gaps, including project proposals.

2.2. Assess regional readiness and capacity in each of these areas and the overall performance of the system in providing users with fit-for-purpose data and information products.

2.3. Advise, Train, and Build Capacity:

- Provide strategic direction and oversight for ocean observation initiatives in alignment with IOCARIBE-GOOS regional priorities.
- Advise Member States on technical requirements needed for deploying, operating, and maintaining sustainable ocean and coastal observing and forecast systems.

- Support IOCARIBE's Capacity Development Working Group and regional partners in establishing relevant technical training programs and sustaining appropriate regional expertise.
- Foster regional collaboration and sharing of resources and expertise among member states, organizations, and stakeholders.
- Encourage and assist with compliance with GOOS design principles and agreed standards for the observing system.

2.4. Represent the GOOS Program within the region:

- Encourage the development of Regional and National Ocean Observing Systems.
- Promote the open and free dissemination of ocean data for scientific research, environmental management, and socio-economic development.
- Promote the visibility and recognition of the services provided by ocean observing systems with governmental agencies and private companies and ensure the integration and coordination of regional efforts with the global GOOS framework.

3. MEETINGS:

The Working Group proposes one annual meeting and will encourage in-person meetings biannually. Other meetings will be scheduled as required by the Co-Chairs. The IOCARIBE-GOOS Program Coordinator and working group officers shall ensure communication among the members between meetings.

4. COORDINATION:

The Sub-Commission will engage through the IOCARIBE Secretariat and Program Coordinator for IOCARIBE-GOOS. The duties of the Program Coordinator will include coordinating all activities leading to an integrated Ocean Observing system for the region, reporting to IOCARIBE, maintaining collaboration with other UNESCO-IOC and IOCARIBE programmes, developing proposals, and representing IOCARIBE-GOOS at relevant global and regional forums.

5. ELECTIONS:

Follow the Rules of Procedure applying to all IOC Bodies. Co-chairs will be elected from among the members of the working group for a period of two years, with the possibility of re-election for one additional term.

6. MEMBERSHIP:

In alignment with the recommendation from recent IOCARIBE Assemblies, Member States will nominate through a Circular Letter nomination process. A Circular Letter will be sent for nominations to the Working Group (WG). This WG will play an important role in guiding the development and reviewing the progress towards goals of the technical and operational components of IOCARIBE-GOOS. Expertise of the WG members should support this role and include capacity in ocean observing (including in situ and satellite), data management, operational services, risk management, governance, resource sourcing and management, technology development, capacity development, and/or outreach and communications.

Nominations can come from a variety of backgrounds, including governmental, non-governmental, regional intergovernmental, technical experts working on ocean issues, and Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOP).

Nominations will be evaluated by criteria that promote gender balance, geographic representation, and a broad spectrum of expertise within the field of ocean observation and its governance, in order to enhance the strength, breadth, and diversity of the WG.

A work plan will be developed by the Member States Working Group in accordance with recommendations from the IGM. The calendar of intersessional work may be determined by the Working Group during their meetings. The WG may invite experts in different fields when necessary to accomplish their goals.

7. MOVING TOWARD EQUITY AND REPRESENTATION:

IOCARIBE-GOOS emphasizes the need for diversity, inclusion, and equity in the Working Group and will prioritize equitable representation of stakeholders' needs. Therefore, the governance framework will prioritize the inclusion of historically underrepresented communities, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS)/Large Ocean States, Indigenous community representatives, and Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOP) voices represented in the Working Group.

8. DURATION OF WG MEMBERSHIP:

Two years.

9. REPORTS:

The IOCARIBE-GOOS Program Coordinator and the Secretariat will prepare an annual report, with contributions from all project coordinators, on the progress and achievements of IOCARIBE-GOOS, which will be circulated to the IOCARIBE-GOOS Working Group for review before being presented to the IOCARIBE Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) for consideration and approval. Financial reports will accompany the annual report and be presented to the Working Group for consideration.

The Program Coordinator, in collaboration with the Working Group, will present work plans and summary reports to the IOCARIBE Board for consideration intersessionally.

10. TASK TEAMS:

The Working Group may establish open-ended sub-groups or task teams as needed to undertake specific activities of the approved work plan or other tasks as may be agreed. Members of the Working Group are encouraged to join these Task Teams to accomplish more focused goals throughout the biennium.

11. DECISION MAKING:

The Working Group will initially present recommendations to the GOOS National Focal Points within IOCARIBE. To become a GOOS NFP, please refer to CL 2931. Then these

recommendations will go to the IOCARIBE biennial Intergovernmental Meeting for approval. Recommendations will either:

- a) be approved by the Member States at the annual Intergovernmental Session of the IOCARIBE meeting, or
- b) be approved intersessionally by the IOCARIBE Board at any time during the year.

12. FINANCIAL RESOURCES:

Membership will normally participate at the expense of their national or host institutions, except in those circumstances where extrabudgetary expenses are available.

13. AMENDMENTS:

The Working Group, on the advice of the Program Coordinator, may review the IOCARIBE-GOOS structure and Terms of Reference periodically to agree on amendments as appropriate, and to ensure effectiveness in alignment with its objectives.