

MEETING REPORT



The Global Ocean
Observing System

GOOS National Focal Point Forum 2024 Report

VIRTUAL MEETING
13:00 - 15:00 CEST (UTC+2)
24 OCTOBER 2024

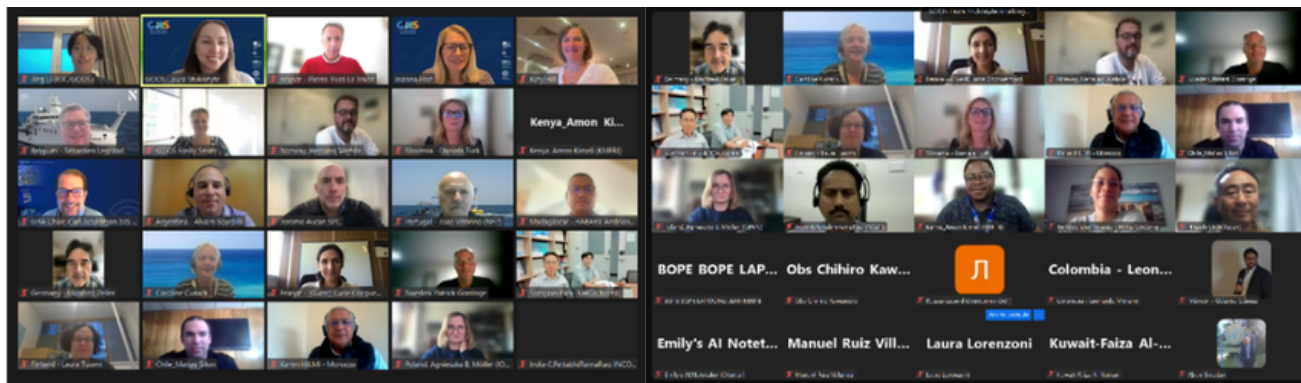


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Group photo



Executive Summary

The National Focal Point (NFP) Forum Fall 2024 was organized virtually on 24 October 2024. 42 participants from 32 countries, including 32 NFPs (or their representatives) attended the Forum. During the 2-hour meeting, the GOOS priorities, progress on communication and the new GOOS NFP survey were introduced by GOOS Office staff. NFP reports from France, Chile, Slovenia and Kenya were presented. Carl Gouldman and Alvaro Scardilli, chair and vice-chair of the GOOS Regional Alliance (GRA) Council, emphasized the importance of GRAs in enhancing coordination and support to the national ocean observing system. Jerome Aucan from GRA: PI GOOS discussed the challenges and opportunities in the Pacific region, focusing on improving data curation and leveraging cooperation with existing networks. Brief discussion on the way forward of NFP, including establishment of the GRA Advisory group was made. The NFP survey will be launched shortly after the Forum. The meeting agenda and documents are available on the website (<https://oceanexpert.org/event/4577>).

Report

1. Introduction

Joanna Post, Director of GOOS, welcomed and thanked NFPs across different time zones for attending the 2nd NFP online Forum. She introduced the GOOS Management Team, including the new colleague Jing Li, who will be the liaison person to support NFP and GRAs. She then introduced the meeting objective and the agenda.

The meeting aimed to review progress since the 2023 NFP Forum, discuss best practices for national ocean observing coordination, enhance connections between NFPs and GRAs, and define next steps to strengthen NFP roles and set a clear path forward.

1.1. GOOS Priorities

Joanna Post highlighted the importance of GOOS NFPs and National Coordinating Committees in strengthening national ocean observing capacity and fostering cross-national expertise sharing. She introduced the GOOS structure to help NFPs align national activities at all levels and enhance communication among Member States. In response to IOC Decision EC-57/4.1, GOOS is evolving its governance to focus on user communities, operational services, and digital architecture, with NFPs playing a key role in aligning national activities at regional and global levels.

1.2 Progress on Communications for NFPs

Laura Stukonyte, GOOS Communication Officer, introduced the communications toolkit featuring a messaging guide, flowchart, ocean data use cases, and an upcoming NFP slide deck to help NFPs in communicating about ocean observing and GOOS' role. She highlighted a private LinkedIn group for NFPs and GOOS interactions, currently with 22 members, encouraging more to join, enable notification and share information. Laura also invited contributions to use cases development and offered assistance with LinkedIn posts if needed.

1.3 NFP Survey

Jing Li introduced the 2024 NFP Survey, designed to assess the effectiveness of GOOS NFP mechanism and areas for improvement; identify national priorities and coordination needs, and determine how GOOS Office can provide further support. The survey comprises 27 questions across five areas: communications (1.1~1.5); support from GOOS Office (2.1~2.4); national coordination (3.1~3.6), national priorities (4.1~4.8) and future NFP actions (5.1~5.4). Feedback from NFPs on the design of the questionnaire is encouraged.

Discussions:

Pierre noted that the NFP survey is timely, as the G7 will hold a meeting (FSOI) next week to discuss the ocean observation needs. Ms Post suggested waiting to share the questionnaire with NFPs until after the FSOI meeting to ensure it covers all necessary areas. Meanwhile, Ms Post mentioned that GOOS is in the process to evolve itself and will invite Member States/NFPs to provide feedback on the GOOS evolving plan soon.

2. NFP Reports

2.1. Fr-OOS (Pierre-Yves Le Traon)

Pierre Yves Le Traon, NFP from France, updated on the French Ocean Observing System (Fr-OOS), emphasizing the need for long-term observation and harmonization of activities. Fr-OOS aims to organize interfaces between different building blocks, including marine research infrastructure, operational and monitoring networks, and data centers, and align into international and European ocean observation landscapes. It features a light governance structure, including Governing Board, Executive Secretariat, and an emerging Scientific Advisory Group. The first national ocean observing conference held in September 2023 focused on synergies with satellite observations and modelling and observation for climate, coastal, and deep-sea areas. An integrated ocean observing strategy for France will be developed.



2.2. Chile

Matias Sifon, NFP of Chile, shared the updates on the country's ocean observing programs, including the longest ocean observing network (sea level station network since 1947, covering Antarctic and Oceanic islands), a buoy network for tsunami and wave monitoring, and CIMAR research vessel monitoring programme since 1990s. Chile's ocean observation priorities focus on Antarctica, with key infrastructure being coastal platforms, buoys and AUVs. The priorities for ocean data are Sea Level, wind, water temperature (Tw), air temperature (Ta), bottom pressure (BP) and Relative humidity (RH). Chile is developing a big data web portal for future capacity. The country's national oceanographic committee (CONA), established over 50 years ago, coordinates marine scientific research. Chile's NFP plays a key role in implementing national research priorities, promoting national ocean observing network through OceanOPS, and supporting GRASP and AR III of WMO/GOOS. Chile is also working on regional virtual observatory for Latin America to enhance ocean observation in the region.

2.3. Slovenia

Daniela Turk, NFP of Slovenia, outlines the country's ocean observing efforts, including platforms for continuous time series through 3 buoys (1 ocean, 2 wave), 1 tide gauge and 2 HF radars, and extensive chemical and biological monitoring. Slovenia has a national monitoring program and is actively involved in GRAs of EuroGOOS and MonGOOS, and other GOOS related initiatives (e.g. GLOSS, DBCP, JCOMME and IODE), as well as the IOC and UN Ocean Decade. Slovenia is proposing establishment of a GOOS National Committee to collaborate with the National IOC Committee, National Commission for UNESCO and National UN Decade Committee. Slovenian's NFP, along with other organizations, is actively involved in various GOOS-related programs, and contributes to the development of implementation plans for physical oceanographic observation at stationary platforms, connections with data flow and analysis, modeling, forecasting to support the delivery of ocean products and services to key national users. Supports needed from GOOS include best practices, forum for collaboration, advocacy for the time involvement of NFPs and communication with funding agencies.

2.4 Kenya

Mr. Amon Kimeli, NFP of Kenya, presents the country's ocean observing programs, including two tide gauges, a research vessel (Mtafiti), and a multi-purpose research platform. Kenya has established a multi-agency Kenya National Hydrographic and Oceanographic Committee that meets annually. The NFP supports GOOS activities at both national and global levels, collaborating with National IOC Committees, IOC Africa, UN Decade Committees and WMO Representatives. NFP works together with IOC Africa to upgrade the ocean observation in Kenya and in western Indian Ocean. The NFP has raised GOOS visibility in Kenya by participating in partner programme activities, e.g. MSP, GEMS & Africa, IOC OTGA, UN Ocean Decade, and Seabed2030. Data products support Kenya's blue economy, improved forecast, marine mammal and fisheries research, critical habitats assessment, decision making and multi-sectoral/institutional collaboration. Key challenges include data storage, funding, and the operational and servicing of tide stations and instruments. Kenya plans to start a programme of deploying time series and ocean observation instruments (e.g., Argo floats and data buoys) and the bathymetry data loggers through a crowdsourcing initiative.

3. GRA and NFP connection

3.1 Coordination with GOOS Regional Alliances (GRA)

Carl Gouldman and Alvaro Scardilli, Chair and Vice Chair of GRA Council, discussed the role of GRAs in enhancing coordination between NFPs and GRAs. Carl briefly explained the implementation of GRAs, noting that their leads and representatives meet virtually 2-3 times per year to focus on data exchange, capacity building and observing technologies.

Alvaro shared a case study from GOOS Regional Alliance for the Upper Southwest and Tropical Atlantic (GRA: OCEATLAN), which connects NFPs in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. Alvaro, as GOOS NFP and IODE Point of Contact (PoC) in Argentina, coordinated with Uruguay for an internship programme for hosting a staff of a new NODC of IODE in Uruguay. Alvaro encouraged NFPs to connect with GRAs, as they offer opportunities to access projects, fundings and calls that can benefit their programs.

Discussion:

Ms Post mentioned the opportunity to hold an in-person NFP meeting, in coordination with bi-annual GRA Forums.

3.2 PI GOOS

Jerome Aucan from the Pacific Community (SPC) discussed the necessity and challenges of engaging GOOS NFPs in the Pacific Islands. PI GOOS members include 22 Pacific Island countries and territories, which are geographically scattered, having strong cultural and historic connection to the ocean, highly relying on the ocean for livelihood and food security, and highly vulnerable to marine hazards. Unfortunately, there is no GOOS NFP in the Pacific Islands, and not all of the Pacific Islands are eligible for an IOC focal point, as they are not IOC member states. However, there are opportunities to connect with Tsunami warning focal points and WMO national representatives. In addition, some of the Pacific Islands are members of the GRA: U.S. IOOS. PI GOOS faces challenges of limited coordination across the regions, sectors and disciplines; lack of national investment in sustained ocean observation; limited capacity and poor curation of ocean data in the region. However, there are opportunities to strengthen regional connections and utilize the existing regional governance mechanism for tsunami and for the meteorological services.

Discussion:

Ms Post mentioned that GBON was established in Fiji in 2017 and highlighted the potential opportunity to create GBOON (Global Basic Ocean Observing Network) in the future.

4. NFP Advisory Group

To better support member states and NFPs, the idea of establishing an NFP Advisory Group was proposed. The group could provide strategic advice to GOOS Management Team, promote engagement among NFPs and GRAs. A quick survey conducted at the end of the Forum, with 16 out of the 42 participants responding, showed positive feedback for the Advisory Group. Respondents suggested it should focus on defining interactions between GOOS bodies and NFPs, fostering collaboration and engagement, and aligning GOOS with national programs and funders. However, concern about potentially delays in communication due to the added structure were raised. Around half of the respondents expressed interest in helping prepare the TOR and joining the group. Detailed survey results are available in Annex 3.



5. Actions

Action 1: Jing/Laura to send an instruction on rotating updates of the LinkedIn Group.

Action 2: Jing/Joanna to get feedback on the questionnaire from NFPs and FSOI meeting, before launching the survey.

Action 3: GOOS Office to consider holding in-person NFP meetings, potentially in coordination with GOOS regional alliance forums.

Action 4: GOOS Office to explore the possibility of establishing a national focal point advisory group, including getting feedback from participants on this idea.

Annex 1: Agenda

1. Introduction (30 mins)

- GOOS priorities (15 mins)
- Progress on Communications since NFP Forum 2023 (10 mins)
- Introducing the new NFP survey (5 mins)

2. Report from NFPs (30 mins) (with a focus on the success in observation coordination in country)

- France (Pierre-Yves LE TRAON)
- Chile (Matias Sifon)
- Slovenia (Daniela Turk)
- Kenya (Amon Kimeli)
- Discussions

3. GRA and NFP connection (30 mins)

- Understanding the Role of GRA & best practices (Carl & Alvaro)
- Discussions:
 - Strengthening the connection between NFP and GRA: Challenges and Opportunities.
 - Case study: Benefits and opportunities for OCEATLAN Alliance (Scardilli Alvaro Santiago)
 - Case study: GRA: Pacific Islands GOOS (PI GOOS) (Jerome Aucan)
 - NFP & GRA joint sessions at regional level.

4. Discussion for next steps (30 mins)

- NFP Advisory Body (an idea for discussion)
Create an NFP representational body to evolve work with, potential work:
 - Understanding national/regional priorities
 - Identifying support needed
 - Engaging more countries
 - Establishing a more effective reporting mechanism
 - Knowledge sharing
 - Quick survey

5. AOB

Annex 2: List of Participants

Name	Role	Member State
Alvaro Scardilli	NFP/GRA vice chair/ GRA: OCEATLAN	Argentina
Sébastien Legrand	NFP	Belgium
Matias Sifon	NFP	Chile
Leonardo Moreno	NFP	Colombia
Dan Hayes	NFP	Cyprus
BOPE BOPE LAPWONG JEAN MARIE	NFP	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Steffen Olsen	NFP	Denmark
Pritha Tutas-Inocar	NFP	Ecuador
Laura Tuomi	NFP	Finland
Pierre-Yves Le Traon	NFP	France
Manfred Zeiler	NFP	Germany
Solveig Olafsdottir	NFP	Iceland
Caroline Cusack	NFP	Ireland
Naotaka Hiraishi	NFP	Japan
Amon Kimeli	NFP	Kenya
Faiza Al-Yamani	NFP	Kuwait
Abdo Swedan	NFP	Libya
RABARY Andriantsilavo	NFP	Madagascar
Octavio Gómez Ramos	NFP	México
Karim HILMI	NFP	Morocco
Henning Wehde	NFP	Norway
Ibrahim Zia	NFP	Pakistan
Agnieszka B. Möller	NFP	Poland

Name	Role	Member State
Joao Vitorino	NFP	Portugal
Sungsan Park	NFP	Republic of Korea
Leonid Ostroumov	NFP	Russia
Daniela Turk	NFP	Slovenia
Manuel Ruiz Villarreal	NFP	Spain
Patrick Gorringe	NFP	Sweden
Nikia Gooding	NFP Rep.	Trinidad and Tobago
Katy Hill	NFP Rep.	UK
Laura Lorenzoni	NFP	USA
Chihiro Kawamura	Observer	Japan
Lucie Cocquempot	Observer	France
Abdul Rabiou	Observer	TBC
Carl Gouldman	GRA Chair/GRA: IOOS	USA
Jerome Aucan	GRA: PI GOOS	France
Joanna Post	GOOS Office	France
Emma Heslop	GOOS Office	France
Emily Smith	GOOS Office	France
Jing Li	GOOS Office	France
Laura Stukonyte	GOOS Office	France

Annex 3: NFP Advisory Group Survey Results

During the 2nd NFP online Forum, a short survey was conducted to explore the possibility of establishing the NFP Advisory Group, and seek feedback from the participants. 16 out of 42 participants responded to the survey. This set of questions are included again in the final NFP Survey questionnaire.

1. Would you support setting up a NFP advisory group?



2. What should an advisory group focus on?

- Main purpose: helping to define the type of interaction between each GOOS bodies and GOOS NFPs. By GOOS bodies I mean the structure Joanna presented in her opening presentation (cf attachment). For instance, I'm very surprised that over the last 8 years, I've not been contacted by any GOOS observing system...
- Promote engagement of non-participating members, and focus on outputs
- Establishing national membership
- I have doubts about the necessity of an advisory group. Anyway, it would be good to have some steering although you at GOOS Office are playing that role. It could be worth trying to set up a steering committee.
- Provide guidance strategic guidance, expert advice, and diverse perspectives to support the NFPs
- Lead and guide NFP's work to create synergy between GOOS and the countries and link them with their GRA's
- In advising countries on how to manage data within global networks
- Ensure GOOS is responsive to needs of national programmes and funders. Formal 'seat at GOOS table' for national implementation perspective
- Advising NFP
- Data exchange Capacity building
- Advice, advocacy
- Role of national coordination structures

- Prepare topics for NFP meetings
- This additional structure would potentially slow communications and add burden to GOOS
- Basic needs, for example rules of monitoring, develop a NOCs, projects to new variables to develop countries,
- Frequent contact with NFP and sharing experiences to benefit all

3. How many people should be in an advisory group? E.g. 5 (1 from each IOC region) 10 (1 from each region and 1 alternate), other.

Option 1: 10 (8 votes)

- 1 from each region and 1 alternate (4 votes)
- 2 per regions including one bigger and one smaller country.
- 2 from each IOC region (gender balance)

Option 2: 5 (3 votes)

1 from each region

Other options (5 votes)

- 5-7
- 3-5
- At least 1 from GOOS management team and one from GRA's.
- 3 regional
- N/A

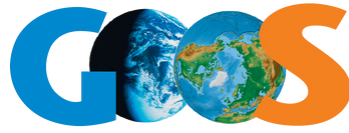
4. Would you like to assist in preparing the TOR for the advisory group?



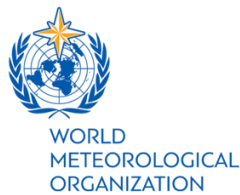
5. Would you be interested in being part of an advisory group?



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