Projects Task Team Proposal: Moving from GOOS Projects to GOOS Endorsed Projects

Version 10 Sep 2025

GOOS has had Projects for many years with varying degrees of responsibilities for reporting to the GOOS SC. A review of the requirements and roles of the GOOS SC and Projects was undertaken during 2024. This review produced several recommendations to strengthen the role of GOOS and the Projects. After discussion with the GOOS SC in December 2024, a further recommendation was made to have a task team review the work completed and draft a terms of reference (TOR) for GOOS Projects.

This discussion brought up the idea of GOOS creating an option for endorsing Projects relevant to GOOS rather than having "GOOS Projects" per se. GOOS endorsed projects would allow GOOS to offer recognition of relevant projects without the role of directing the Projects since financial support is not provided.

The GOOS projects task team proposed to the GOOS SC at its fourteenth session (SC-14) the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the approach to the endorsement process. The TORs were further revised by the task team following feedback from the SC at the session.

The SC also requested the task team to clarify which were the current GOOS projects and which were closed or had been rebranded/reconstituted:
Current Projects:
- Tropical Pacific Observing System (TPOS) https://tropicalpacific.org/
- Deep Ocean Observing Strategy (DOOS) https://www.deepoceanobserving.org/
- Integrated Marine Debris Observing System (IMDOS) https://imdos.org/

Projects that are no longer running:
- AtlantOS

Previous GOOS projects that no longer qualify as GOOS Projects:
- OBPS is now identified by IOC Assembly (2025) as an IOC-wide system,
- SmartCables has been recognised by the Observations Coordination Group as an emerging network

The task team determined that once the GOOS SC agrees to the endorsement process below, the current projects will be examined by the SC who will determine whether they meet endorsement process criteria. Outcomes and next steps will then be discussed with project focal points.

GOOS Project Endorsement Framework

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The endorsement process recognizes projects that contribute directly to GOOS goals, foster collaboration, and promote open, sustainable ocean observing.

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1. Eligibility Criteria

Projects seeking endorsement must:

- Have a clear **project plan** with objectives, timeline, milestones, and deliverables.

- Demonstrate **sufficient resources** (e.g., external funding, in-kind support) to implement activities.

- Align with at least one **GOOS strategic goal**, such as:

    - Observation system integration, design, or delivery

    - Data integration and delivery

    - System implementation (national, regional, applications)

    - Outreach and communications

    - GOOS Reform

- Commit to **open data sharing** in line with IOC and WMO policies.

- Address a **gap or need** within the GOOS system.

- Engage in **capacity development** for under-served communities (e.g., SIDS, Africa).

Preferred (but not mandatory):

- Involve a **GOOS SC, Expert Panel, or GRA member** in the project team.

2. Application and Review Process

1. Project submits an **endorsement application** (using a short template - see below).

2. GOOS Secretariat reviews for completeness.

3. GOOS SC (or designated subcommittee) evaluates against criteria.

4. SC may:

   ○ Endorse the project,

   ○ Request revisions, or

   ○ Decline endorsement.

5. Final decision rests with the GOOS SC.

3. Commitments of Endorsed Projects

Endorsed projects agree to:

- Use the **GOOS logo** and the term *"GOOS Endorsed Project"* in communications.

- Submit an **annual update report** with:

   ○ Progress and deliverables

   ○ Alignment with GOOS goals

   ○ Future plans

   ○ Intention to continue or transition into GOOS

- Promote GOOS work where possible, including with Member State representatives.

4. Commitments of GOOS

GOOS will:

- Announce and promote endorsed projects via the **GOOS website and communications**.

- Maintain **up-to-date links** to project websites.

- Highlight endorsed projects in GOOS outreach to Member States, partners, and stakeholders.

- Encourage collaboration between endorsed projects and GOOS components.

5. Review and Transition

- Endorsement is valid for **three years**, after which projects are reviewed for continuation.

- Projects may transition to formal incorporation within GOOS structures if appropriate.

- Endorsement may lapse if the project repeatedly fails to submit the required reports, specifically, if the project misses 3 consecutive reporting deadlines without sufficient justification, GOOS may review its status and withdraw endorsement.

6. Review of TORs

- These **TORs will be reviewed** by the GOOS SC every 3-5 years as needed and assessed for continuation or revision as appropriate.

GOOS Project Endorsement – Application Form

Project Title:
Lead Institution / Organization:
Contact Person (name, email, role):
Project Website (if available):

1. Project Overview

- **Summary (max 200 words):**

- **Start and End Dates:**

- **Geographic Scope (global / regional / national):**

2. Project Plan

- **Objectives:**

- **Work plan and milestones (short outline):**

- **Deliverables:**

3. Resources

- **Funding sources / in-kind support:**

- **Key partners and collaborators:**

4. Alignment with GOOS Goals

Which GOOS goal(s) does your project address? (select one or more)
☐ Observation system integration, design, or delivery
☐ Data integration and delivery
☐ System implementation (national, regional, applications)
☐ Outreach and communications
☐ GOOS Reform

Explanation (2–3 sentences):

5. Open Data Commitment

Please describe how your project shares data in line with IOC and WMO policies.

6. Contribution to GOOS System

- **Gap or need addressed:**

- **Involvement of GOOS SC / Expert Panels / GRA members (if applicable):**

7. Endorsement Benefits and Future Plans

- **How will endorsement help your project?**

- **Do you intend to transition results/activities into GOOS in the future?**

8. Declaration

By submitting this application, we agree to:

- Use the term "GOOS Endorsed Project" and GOOS logo in communications

- Provide an annual progress update

- Promote GOOS work where possible

Signature / Name / Date