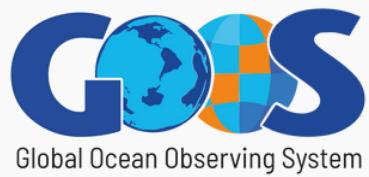


# MEETING REPORT

---



Global Ocean Observing System

## GOOS Steering Committee meeting

23 SEPTEMBER 2025

ONLINE



---

NOVEMBER 2025

# GOOS Steering Committee meeting

## September 2025

**Time:** Session 1. 09:00-10:30 and Session 2. 17:00-18:30 (Paris time)

**Date:** 23 September 2025

**Participants:** See annex I

**Format:** Online

**Webpage:** <https://oceanexpert.org/event/4862>

### Agenda

1. Welcome
2. GOOS Updates and Outcomes from Assembly, and GCOS Update
3. GOOS Reform
4. Task Teams update
5. Confirmation of timing of next meetings

### Summary

The GOOS Steering Committee meeting, chaired by the co-chairs Mr Balakrishnan Nair (Session 1) and Mr David Legler (Session 2), covered updates on recent GOOS activities, outcomes from the IOC Assembly in June 2025, GOOS reform process, and task team work. Budget concerns for the biennium 2026-2027 were highlighted, with a potential 11-22% reduction in UNESCO budget expected.

The meeting invited feedback on specific deliverables on GOOS reform and task teams, discussed timelines for feedback, as well as set dates for upcoming virtual and in-person meetings. A brief update on GCOS was also provided.

The GOOS reform process is underway and being undertaken through a consultancy contract by Accenture. The outcome will be a proposal for GOOS reform expected by the end of the year. The GOOS project endorsement processes, national focal point (NFP) guidelines and ETOOFS TOR were discussed, along with the request for SC members to review the documents.

There was agreement on continuing the presented work, leaving certain questions open for members to reflect on after the meeting, and ensuring all three documents are circulated for SC review and input. Furthermore the meeting put importance on maintaining institutional knowledge and addressing potential gaps in observational assets.

Future online meetings will be scheduled for December and January, and the next in-person meeting is scheduled in March hosted by INCOIS, Hyderabad, India.

All documents and presentations for this meeting are available on the event webpage.

## Meeting Report

### 1. Welcome

The Co-Chairs opened the meeting and introduced the agenda

### 2. Updates and Outcomes from the thirty-third meeting of the IOC Assembly

#### 2.1 GOOS Workplan 2025-2027

Ms Post highlighted that the workplan was adopted at the IOC Assembly and the secretariat will follow and report on progress. However, it was noted that there will be an impact on GOOS budget in the 2026-2027 biennium due to UNESCO budget cuts. Further clarity will be obtained following the UNESCO governing body meetings in October. Due to the budget constraints, the GOOS workplan may need to be prioritised at the in-person meeting in March.

GOOS secretariat is engaging in outreach through a range of channels to try to build investment for GOOS and its coordination.

#### 2.2 Joint Collaborative Board (JCB) update

The IOC Assembly as well as the 79th WMO Executive Council in June welcomed progress on the JCB. This includes the initiation of a JCB working group on the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON), as discussed at the GOOS SC meeting in February 2025. The subgroup is tasked with evolving WMO GBON to include additional ocean variables and to develop a joint understanding of an 'Global Ocean Basic Observing Network' encompassing all GOOS delivery areas. The first kick off meeting of the subgroup on ocean basic observing networks of JCB took place on September 9 and the subgroup will meet monthly.

#### 2.3 Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction (OONJ)

The IOC Assembly requested GOOS to:

- i) consult with its networks, and relevant UN organizations and stakeholders, including DOALOS, on the feasibility of revising the 2010 DOALOS guidelines on MSR "Marine Scientific Research. A revised guide to the implementation of the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea" and report back to IOC

Assembly's 34th session in 2027 (A-34).

ii) to provide a draft proposal to the Executive Council in 2026 on the actions that IOC could take to address the challenges for the Ship-of-Opportunity Programme (SOOP) in taking observations within national jurisdictions. A full proposal would then be presented to A-34.

## **2.4 GCOS Update**

Ms. Belén Martín Míguez provided a brief update on GCOS. Under the framework of developing the GCOS implementation plan, a list of most urgent / impactful actions to be taken to safeguard the observing system for climate (including ocean) is being developed. The focus is on how to maintain the system. The OOPC expert panel will participate in this process and will ensure that GOOS SC and other GOOS components are consulted and can provide input.

### Discussion

The discussion focused on next steps for the work identified by the decision on observations in areas under national jurisdiction. The GOOS SC discussed that for:

- i) the 2010 DOALOS guidelines on MSR, that the secretariat discuss revising this document with DOALOS secretariat colleagues to determine options and feasibility and report back to the GOOS SC
- ii) the SOOP challenges, that the OCG be tasked to discuss the options and present a draft proposal to the GOOS SC.

### Actions regarding agenda item 2:

- Consider workplan prioritisation as part of the in-person meeting in March, depending on biennial budget when known
- GOOS secretariat to discuss revising the 2010 DOALOS guidelines on MSR "Marine Scientific Research. A revised guide to the implementation of the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea" with DOALOS secretariat colleagues to determine options and feasibility and report back to the GOOS SC in order to develop a GOOS position statement on feasibility for the IOC A34.
- OCG to lead discussion and present a draft proposal to the SC on the actions that IOC could take to address and operationalize the challenges identified for SOOP in taking observations within national jurisdictions. Draft proposal needed for the IOC EC 59.
- The GOOS Steering Committee to suggest representatives from the GOOS community to

support developing the OONJ work, this could be country experts, observing networks, SC members, etc.

- OOPC expert team to follow up with GOOS for input to the GCOS implementation plan as appropriate

### 3. GOOS Reform

The co-chairs provided an update on the current status and progress so far by the consultancy, Accenture. Deliverables of the work are:

1. Detailed project plan and approach;
2. Mission and Scoping Review (September '25);
3. Structure Review (October '25)
4. Initial draft of proposal for revised GOOS (November '25):
  - Organizational design for GOOS staff
  - Key principles GOOS' ways of working
  - Revised governance structure
5. Final Proposal following feedback from relevant stakeholders (December '25).

Deliverables 1 and 2 are completed. The process so far has included daily engagement with the GOOS director and the consultancy, interviews with Member States, sponsors and GOOS SC members and team, and a workshop with GOOS SC chairs, IOC executive secretary and GOOS HQ team. The GOOS SC are invited to provide feedback on deliverable 2. The next deliverable is the GOOS structural review, which will analyze the different components of GOOS against the mission and scope identified in deliverable 2. A dedicated GOOS SC meeting will be scheduled for Nov/Dec to support the final review phase of the work. The completed proposal will be further discussed at the in-person meeting in March '26 before being presented to the Executive Council next year.

#### Discussion

The GOOS SC provided feedback on deliverable 2 as follows:

- Pointed out that in the proposed mission statement, the word "evolve" indicates ownership
- The private sector should be integrated more completely, e.g. "scientific community and users" could include stakeholders/private sector
- There needs to be consideration of the scalability of technology and the business case in the proposal. GOOS needs a sustained economic environment to support instead of small project funding.
- To the OKR 3 slide: Consider adding private sector to "member states, scientific

community and users"

- GOOS SC wondered why the proposal includes descoping the GOOS role as "market facilitator" in the current funding-constrained environment
- The connection between the private sector and the UN is important, this is part of the decade. GOOS must help to overcome the Inner resistance in the research community to engage with the private sector, as they are all parts of the value chain.

Actions regarding agenda item 3:

- SC are invited to provide input to deliverable II before 7 October. Document can be found here: [PDF Accenture deliverable II](#)

## 4. Task Team updates

### 4.1 GOOS Projects

Ms. Post presented the developments from the Task Team on GOOS projects. Currently there are four currently identified GOOS projects: AtlantOS, Deep Ocean Observing Strategy (DOOS), the Integrated Marine Debris Observing System (IMDOS), and Tropical Pacific Observing System (TPOS). Previous projects include: OBPS which is now identified as an IOC-wide system, SmartCables which is now an emerging network.

The TT prepared a proposal for a GOOS project endorsement process as well as proposed next steps to coordinate with the current projects on implementation of this proposal. Furthermore, the TT has identified the need to address and discuss a clear process for identifying projects for endorsement.

### Discussion

The GOOS SC discussed:

- The need to include specific topics that projects could be asked to cover in order to be considered for endorsement
- How to manage new projects - should there be calls for projects (bearing in mind the decade methodology? A possibility would be to have one call per year where GOOS could specify what fields of projects they are looking for (e.g identified by GOOS SC) with GOOS expert panels/ others as reviewers
- Future emphasis for projects could be to identify existing challenges and relevant issues, e.g., EW4ALL, food security, climate change and link / co-design observation projects with these efforts.
- GOOS endorsement should be an accelerator for the project, the projects have to report on progress to the GOOS SC.

- GOOS Projects needs to be seen in the perspective of the overall reform of GOOS

Actions:

- SC are invited to provide comments to the proposal from the TT on GOOS projects.  
Document is found here: [Proposal for GOOS Projects](#)
- SC invited to suggest potential projects topics
- TT to reach out to the current GOOS project leads (Atlantos, DOOS, IMDOS and TPOS) to discuss the new endorsement process
- TT to discuss potential procedures for inviting new projects and research existing UN endorsement processes

#### 4.2 ETOOFS

Ms. Jing Li presented the background for the Task Team and the draft updated ToR for ETOOFS. The TT is asking the SC to review the draft so as to finalize by the next virtual GOOS SC meeting.

Discussion

Due to limits in timing, there was no discussion in the meeting on the TOR.

Actions:

- The SC members to review the drafted ToR for ETOOFS before 20 October. Review document is found here: [ETOOFS ToR](#)
- ETOOFS TT to finalize ToR and present at next virtual SC meeting

#### 4.3 NFP task team

Ms. Li presented the approach to develop the guidelines for National Focal Points (NFPs). The TT has identified an outline. There are a number of questions identified by the TT and written into the draft. The GOOS SC is asked to provide feedback by mid-October. The draft will then be presented to the NFP forum in late October and revised. The TT aim to finalise the guidelines to be discussed by SC in March 2026.

Discussion

The GOOS SC discussed:

- To focus the guidelines not only on observations and research reporting, but also on application aspects, e.g. climate change, food and energy security, etc. NFPs could strengthen GOOS' status among Member States, and the connectivity to original causes.
- A welcome pack for new NFPs - by highlighting the list of things GOOS secretariat could provide to help them engage, be productive and feel part of the wider group. The GOOS report card was mentioned as part of this pack.
- [Germany](#) and [Greece](#) as part of their work in ETOOFS have provided schematic diagrams

showing all actors involved in ocean observations in these Member State countries. However, Ms Cusack said that these are good to understand the governance structure of ocean observation in each country but complicated to produce. Ireland is working on a simpler version which may be helpful and Ms Cusack said that she can report back into the TT.

- The need and how to connect across nations was reiterated by SC co-chair. OceanOPS holds a representation of the platforms by country, which could be queried by GOOS NFPs. GOOS SC could request OceanOPS to provide an easy-to-use tool for NFPs. The initial work on the new OceanOPS 5 Year Strategy (under development 2025-2026) has noted interest in national and/or regional views of the system
- NFP guidelines must recognise that the observing assets are also the people who have the knowledge and expertise to support the core observing systems as well as the systems themselves.

Actions:

- The SC members are asked to provide input to the drafted questions before 15 October 2025. Document is found here: [Guidelines for NFP](#)
- The TT to further develop the guidelines and present them to the SC in March 2026 in order to ask for approval and adoption of the drafted guidelines

## 5. Confirmation of timing of next meetings

The next online SC meeting will be planned for end Nov/ early December 2025 and will focus on the GOOS reform and review of the proposal from Accenture.

A GOOS SC meeting to look at progress on activities as well as plan for the in-person meeting will be held in January/early February 2026.

The next in-person SC Meeting will take place on March 25-27 2026 at INCOIS in Hyderabad. The GOOS SC will finish on Friday at lunch time.

Actions:

- Provide doodle poll for next two virtual steering committee meetings

## Annex I: Participants

Co-Chair BalaKrishnan Nair

Co-Chair David Legler

Ana LaraLopez

Audrey Darnaude

Bagus Rachmat Rievan

Belén Martín Míguez

Caroline Cusack

Clive McMahon

Dwikorita Karnawati and staff

Eko Prasetyo

Emma Heslop

Enrique Alvarez

Gabrielle Canonico

Jerome Aucan

Jihye Kang

Jing Li

Joana Akrofi

Joanna Post

Joe O'Callaghan

Julien Narros

Laura Stukonytė

Lebogang Makgati

Lotta Fyrberg

Maciej Telszewski

Mathieu Belbeoch

Nelly Florida Riamá

Orens Pasqueron De Fommervault

Patricia Cabrera

Patrick Gorringe

Patrick Heimbach

Pooja Mahapatra

Riris Adriyanto

Signe Lemcke

Vanessa McBride

Véronique Garçon

Weidong Yu

Weronika Kmiec

Yi Wang



Global Ocean Observing System



Intergovernmental  
Oceanographic  
Commission



WORLD  
METEOROLOGICAL  
ORGANIZATION



The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

Published in **2025** by the Global Ocean Observing System  
Programme under the Intergovernmental Oceanographic  
Commission of UNESCO, 7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP,  
France  
©UNESCO

