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Agenda Item: 2.2

IOC-WMO-UNEP-ICSU/GSSC-IX/7
Paris, February 2006
English only

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL
OCEANOGRAPHIC
COMMISSION**
(of UNESCO)

**WORLD
METEOROLOGICAL
ORGANIZATION**

**UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT
PROGRAMME**

**INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL FOR
SCIENCE**

**Ninth Session of the Global Ocean Observing System
Scientific Steering Committee (GSSC-IX)**
Paris, France, 6 – 8 March 2006

GOOS Director's Report to GSSC-IX
Keith Alverson
3/2006

OVERVIEW

Past Successes

During the past biennium (2004-2005) GOOS can point to three major accomplishments. First, the open ocean observing system for climate is now more than 50% complete. Second, the coastal ocean observing system strategy and implementation plans were endorsed and published. Finally, and most importantly, relevant components of the observing system, specifically tide gauges, are now providing data in real time to operational hazard warning centers providing, one of many visible and concrete societal benefits from GOOS.

Future Challenges

Last year Nature called for enhanced support for GOOS as the oceanographic component of GEOSS - calling the system 'chronically underfunded' (Nature 433, 785; 2005). Nature also specifically called for the need for 'global' and 'sustained' monitoring of the ocean in a second editorial entitled 'the circulation challenge' (Nature 439, 244; 2006). Heeding these calls will require three future successes. First and foremost that nations support the development of a robust commitments mechanism that can efficiently take stock of individual national efforts and at the same time increase the resources available for coordination. This mechanism must be the Intergovernmental committee for GOOS (I-GOOS) and the number one goal of the secretariat in the coming biennium is to help to transform I-GOOS into an effective coordination and commitments mechanism. Second, GOOS will need to vastly increase its efforts to reach out to, and build capacity for, a much wider range of potential contributors and users of the system than have heretofore been identified. This biennium, for the first time, the GPO has allocated a small budget for outreach and communication. Finally, GOOS will need to support the GOOS regional alliances as the primary implementation bodies for coastal GOOS including clarifying a global coordination mechanism amongst them.

In the results based management system of UNESCO (SISTER), these future challenges are quantified as two "expected results" with associated "performance indicators", "means of verification", and "benchmarks" as follows:

Expected Result 1: "Increased member state contributions to operational open ocean observing systems." Performance Indicator: "20% increase in national commitments to GOOS and its OOPC." Benchmark: "initial GOOS commitments meeting report, June 1999"

Expected Result 2: "Establishment of clear principles and guidelines for GOOS regional alliances as the primary implementation bodies for coastal GOOS." Performance Indicator: "Functionality of GOOS regional alliances as a synergistic global implementation mechanism." Means of verification: "Outcome, outputs and level of follow-up to GOOS regional forum to be held in November 2006 and degree to which COOP plan is implemented by GRA's." Benchmark: "Somewhere very close to zero"

MEETINGS ORGANISED AND ATTENDED:

Meetings organized and attended in 2005 are listed on the web page at <http://ioc.unesco.org/goos/Calendars/calend05.htm> and those for 2006 at <http://ioc.unesco.org/goos/Calendars/calend06.htm>.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

GOOS budgeted no funding or staff time for outreach and communications in the previous biennium. Extrabudgetary funding for this purpose was obtained by the GPO director in 2005. In the current biennium, for the first time, the GPO will dedicate budgetary resources to outreach and communications. Top priority will be a new website which will go on line in early 2006 in its basic form and augmented with content management databases for people, documents, calendar and news by the I-GOOS meeting in early 2007. A GOOS brochure will be produced and available for the I-GOOS meeting. A GOOS folder for meeting documents will be produced and available for the I-GOOS meeting. A GOOS display for exhibition at conferences and in the secretariat including sample hardware (float, buoy, xbt etc) and posters will be available for the I-GOOS meeting. These activities will only be possible if the budgeted and agreed funds for outreach and communications are made available as planned.

Future publication of a newsletter is not envisioned. GOOS contributions to electronic bulletins, either on its own or in cooperation with JCOMM are not envisioned.

GOOS REPORTS PUBLISHED IN 2004

The GPO is strongly resisting requests to publish GOOS reports in the grey literature. For the list of reports published in 2005 lease see <http://ioc.unesco.org/goos/docs/doclist.htm> In the coming biennium the most important report will be the report of the 2007 I-GOOS meeting including national commitments formalized as signed MoUs between IOC and each country and collected in a GOOS report. This report will additionally serve as one of several GOOS lead contributions to GEO (CL-06-04).

FINACIAL AND STAFF RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE GOOS SECRETARIAT IN 2004

In accordance with IOC resolution XXIII-5, the GSSC retains the responsibility of providing scientific and technical advice to I-GOOS. However, it no longer has responsibility for program and budget. Thus, unlike in previous Director's reports, resources available to GOOS are presented, but are not broken down or tabled for discussion. Any GSSC advice relevant to program and budget may be submitted to I-GOOS, or inter-sessionally to the I-GOOS board, for consideration.

Finances

The **regular program** budget available to the GPO, including JCOMM, in the last biennium was \$582k/year. The regular budget allocation to GOOS for the 2006-2007 biennium is 386k/year. An additional, separately managed, 82k/year is budgeted for JCOMM. The total of 468k represents a cut of 114k/year.

Core **Extrabudgetary resources** received in 2004-2005 were approximately 60k/year in total from ICSU, UNEP and WMO, provided as sponsors of the GSSC. The financial contribution from ICSU has ceased and WMO's contribution has shrunk making expected annual contributions from these sponsors on the order of 35k/year for the coming biennium, a cut of 25k/year.

Note that substantial additional extra budgetary are routinely applied for, obtained, and processed by the GPO. However funds that donors have provided for various GOOS related activities around the world are utilized under the direction of the donors, not GSSC or I-

GOOS, and thus not tabled for discussion by these groups. Nonetheless such fundraising activities are certainly an important activity of the GPO staff.

Personnel

The GOOS secretariat human resources in 2005 are listed below as professional (P) and general staff (G) posts in units of person-years. IOC has managed to secure promise of a new regular P4 post (shared with JCOMM and IODE) from UNESCO with an anticipated starting date in mid 2006. Additional contracted staff is also being considered.

UNESCO Regular Program Funded (RPF) Staff at GPO (Paris)

- 0.2P Keith Alverson, Director (20% time for GOOS),
- 0.5P Thorkild Aarup, Professional (50% time for GOOS)
- 0.8G Ho Hien Lam, Secretary (80% time for GOOS)
- 0.2G Irene Gazagne, Clerk (20% time for GOOS website)
- 0.5G Laurence Ferry, Secretary (50% time for GOOS)

Contracted Staff at GPO (Paris) funded by UNESCO RPF

- 0.5P Justin Ahanhanzo, Professional (50%, GOOS Africa)

Contracted Staff at GPO (Paris) funded from extra budgetary sources

- 0.7P Albert Fischer, Professional (70% for OOPC)
- 0.2G Pam Coghlan, Secretary (20% time for GOOS)

Contracted Staff outside Paris funded by UNESCO RPF: currently 1.5 PY

- 1.0P Bill Erb, Professional (100%, Perth Office)
- 0.5P Jance Trotte, Professional (50%, Rio Office)

The human resources available to the GPO are extremely limited. One clear problem is that all of the staff are required to serve in various extra-GOOS capacities – the so-called GPO director, for instance, estimates his GOOS contribution to be only a 20% time commitment.