

Restricted distribution
Agenda Item: 7

IOC-WMO-UNEP-ICSU/I-GOOS-Board
Paris, March 2006
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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL
OCEANOGRAPHIC
COMMISSION**
(of UNESCO)

**WORLD
METEOROLOGICAL
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**UNITED NATIONS
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**INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL FOR
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IOC-WMO-UNEP Committee for the Global Ocean Observing System (I-GOOS) Board Meeting
9 – 10 March 2006
Paris, France

DEFINE KEY GOAL OF NEXT I-GOOS MEETING

GOOS needs help to keep an eagle eye on oceans

SIR — Your Editorial “Circulation challenge” (*Nature* **439**, 244; 2006) calls for ocean observations to be “sustained for much longer periods than foreseen in the six year RAPID programme” and “augmented globally”. But you do not mention the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), which already exists to take up specifically this challenge (ioc.unesco.org/goos). GOOS provides an operational structure for sustained global observations comprising the oceanographic component of the Global Earth Observing System of Systems. The open-ocean module of GOOS is designed to describe and forecast the state of the physical ocean to help understand and predict weather and climate. Implementation is achieved by pooling the commitments of individual nations made through their government agencies, navies and oceanographic research institutions, together with sponsorship from international agencies.

Not long ago *Nature* called for enhanced support for GOOS (*Nature* **433**, 785; 2005). Heeding this call requires first and foremost that nations support the development of a robust commitments mechanism that can efficiently take stock of national efforts and at the same time increase the resources available for coordination. GOOS will also need to increase its efforts to reach, and cater for, a wider range of contributors and users of the system. GOOS welcomes the circulation challenge.

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