**Minutes V1.0**

**263rd CEOS SECRETARIAT MEETING**

Tuesday 24 March 2020

Chaired by ISRO

**Participants**

**CEO:** Kerry Sawyer

**ESA:** Ivan Petiteville

**EUMETSAT:** Robert Husband, Ken Holmlund

**GEO SEC:** Doug Cripe

**ISRO:** Raj Kumar (Chair), Nitant Dube, Matthew Steventon

**JAXA:**  Osamu Ochiai, Toshi Kamei

**NASA:** Sandra Cauffman, Christine Bognar

**NOAA:** Steve Volz, Chuck Wooldridge

**SIT Chair Team:** Adam Lewis, Alex Held, Jonathon Ross, Flora Kerblat, Andreia

Siqueira, Stephen Ward, George Dyke

**SEO:** Brian Killough

**VAST-VNSC:** Linh Phan

**WGCapD:** –

**WGClimate:** Jörg Schulz

**WGCV:**  –

**WGDisasters:** David Green

**WGISS:** Rob Woodcock

1. **Welcome and Introductions, Review of Agenda**

Raj Kumar (ISRO, CEOS Chair Team) welcomed everyone to the call and reviewed the agenda.

1. **Discussion Regarding Reinstatement of GTOS CEOS Associate Status**

Kerry Sawyer (NOAA, CEOS Executive Officer) noted the perhaps premature removal of the CEOS Associate status of GTOS as a result of an action agreed at the 2019 CEOS Plenary. The CEO was approached by Doug Muchoney (FAO) following the Plenary to dispute the assumption that GTOS is inactive.

The proposal is to reinstate the CEOS Associate Status of GTOS at SIT-35, with Doug Muchoney (FAO) to serve as the CEOS Principal for GTOS, supported also by UNEP (Alexander Caldez). The proposal is being raised with CEOS SEC now to ensure there are no objections. None were heard. The proposal will be presented for approval by CEOS Principals at SIT-35.

1. **WMO Restructuring and GCOS Status**

Jörg Schulz (EUMETSAT, WGClimate Chair) reported on CEOS SEC Action 262-02. He has written to UNFCCC representatives for their perspective on the WMO/GCOS situation and is awaiting a response.

Anthony Rea (WMO) will be participating in SIT-35. CEOS will take the opportunity to request clarification on the restructuring and future operation of GCOS. Based on what is reported, CEOS SEC can consider whether it is necessary to follow up further as called for in CEOS SEC Action 262-02.

Kerry Sawyer (NOAA, CEOS Executive Officer) urged CEOS to identify some questions to raise collectively, given the integral place GCOS has in defining the space agency response to climate. Jörg noted that the Joint CEOS-CGMS presentation for SIT-35 has a slide covering the CEOS dependence on GCOS for the Architecture for Climate Monitoring from Space and encouraged CEOS SEC to review his slides before SIT-35.

Ken Holmlund (EUMETSAT) provided further comments on the restructuring. WMO is looking to hire a new Chief for the GCOS section, to strengthen the WMO side. The three GCOS panels will continue to support the GCOS Secretariat. WMO is assembling an expert task team to look into the details of how GCOS will be organised and function in the future. Ken noted that there is a shared concern of losing the credibility and efficiency that GCOS has shown. One of the desired effects of the restructuring was increased integration with WMO.

Doug Cripe (GEO Secretariat) noted a communication to Gilberto Câmara (GEO Secretariat Director) from Anthony Rea (WMO) that confirmed all GCOS panel meetings will continue as planned.

1. **Review Status of Select Action Items**

**259-01: Reply on the Decade of Ocean Science**

Adam Lewis (GA, SIT Co-Chair) provided an update on his plan and the rationale behind it:

* In September 2019 CEOS was approached to provide research proposals through the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) to support the UN Decade of Ocean Science, to help formulate its Science Action Plan (SAP).
* CEOS Agencies, through their individual and joint activities, provide invaluable data and observations on the ocean. CEOS Agency experts are also active in the international leadership of ocean science.
* CEOS is a best-effort international coordination organisation and is not well placed to commit to programs in the manner anticipated by the invitation. To do so would require internal coordination which comes with overheads that don’t appear to be justified at this point and would require approval through CEOS annual planning cycles.
* However, several CEOS activities are pertinent to the objectives of the Decade of Ocean Science. COASTS, COVERAGE, and ARD for Oceans (a concept only) are examples of work that may be critically needed if the ocean science community is to leverage its research to move into more directly informing decisions.
* It is proposed that the response to the IOC have the following messages:
  + CEOS is indeed critical to the Decade of Ocean Science, however we are not in a position to respond in the form that was asked.
  + Several activities of CEOS are relevant to the SAP, and we encourage IOC to remain in contact with these.
  + CEOS would welcome a briefing and side discussion at the SIT Technical Workshop in September 2020.

Chuck Wooldridge (NOAA) noted that the IOC organised a number of regional preparatory teleconferences, which concluded just recently. All inputs they are seeking from partners and organisations are being included in implementation documents, which were meant to be input to the UN Ocean Conference, which was supposed to be held in Lisbon in June 2020. The likely postponement of this meeting means that there should still be time to provide input via the CEOS response.

Steve Volz (NOAA) agrees with Adam’s suggestion that a new coordination mechanism in CEOS is not required, but CEOS should make it clear in the response that that it will make a point of coordinating within our own organisation around how the various CEOS entities are interacting with IOC, and to discuss in our various meetings. NOAA is prepared to assist going forward.

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| **263-01** | Adam Lewis to work with Steve Volz and Chuck Wooldridge to finalise the draft response to the IOC on the Decade of Ocean Science, and to circulate it for review by CEOS SEC. | **ASAP** |

**259-02: CEOS Executive Officer – Efforts to Identify a Successor**

Raj Kumar (ISRO, CEOS Chair Team) and Sandra Cauffman (NASA) summarised some of the options that have been raised recently. One key suggestion has been to establish a mechanism through which CEOS Agencies can pool resources to help fund the CEO position to ease the financial burden and make it possible for agencies with qualified candidates but limited resources to nominate candidates for the role. Raj also noted the suggestion to have the CEO responsibility rotate regionally.

Christine Bognar (NASA) noted the importance of looking at options to bring stability and predictability to the CEO role. These could include CEOS being open to having an executive officer who could be a CEOS Agency representative or a qualified person who would be contractor acceptable to CEOS. It would be helpful to identify a successor (Deputy CEO) to allow for a smooth transition and knowledge transfer. The NASA team will summarise their proposal regarding pooled funding in a slide for SIT-35 to show a potential way forward. This will be followed by a short discussion and opportunity for agencies to either support the proposal or take an action to prepare a different proposal. A decision is not expected at SIT-35, rather the outcome would be for the proposal to be further explored and documented.

Steve Volz (NOAA) sees challenges associated with the collective funding approach, and he is uncertain about having an external contractor in the role, noting that an agency representative has a different level of authority and ability to speak on behalf of agencies. Further feedback will be provided in response to the proposal at SIT-35.

1. **Walkthrough of SIT-35 Calls**

Alex Held (CSIRO, SIT Co-Chair) explained the outline of the SIT-35 virtual meetings, which are planned over two days with four hours each:

Day 1 (Wednesday): CEOS-COAST, SDGs, SEO Report, Carbon and Biomass

Day 2 (Thursday): ARD, Work Plan Deep Dive, Future Meetings

Adam Lewis (GA, SIT Co-Chair) noted the inclusion of substantial discussion time where possible for CEOS Principal interaction.

Jonathon Ross (GA, SIT Chair Team) reviewed the protocols and processes for the calls, covering GoToMeeting operation, the use of Slido for interventions, and other logistical matters. Slido was confirmed as the default chat stream.

Steve Volz (NOAA) suggested that the SIT Chair Team compile and distribute a synopsis of the Slido side discussions.

**SIT Technical Workshop 2020**

Adam Lewis reported that SIT Technical Workshop 2020 is planned to be a virtual meeting due to COVID-19 risks. This substitution is being announced early to provide certainty to the CEOS community in planning their calendars and preparations. The SIT Chair Team is committed to ensuring an effective event that allows CEOS to prepare well for CEOS Plenary.

Steve Volz (NOAA) and Sandra Cauffman (NASA) thanked the SIT Co-Chairs for making an early call on the meeting. They offered to support the SIT Chair Team as needed.

1. **Meetings and Events Calendar**

Kerry Sawyer (NOAA, CEOS Executive Officer) directed everyone to the CEOS Events Calendar on the last page of the agenda for SEC-263. Kerry has tried to reflect as many of the changes to virtual meetings as possible. She called on SEC to provide further updates. Kerry will work with Kim Holloway (SEO team) to update the CEOS website calendar once the website is operational again.

* Jörg Schulz (EUMETSAT, WGClimate Chair) noted that the virtual WGClimate-12 meeting has been postponed by two to three weeks to the end of April.
* Ken Holmlund (EUMETSAT) noted that EGU 2020 has been replaced by a virtual meeting.
* Jörg reported that CGMS-48 Plenary has been postponed to 25-26 August (location TBD). The associated Working Group meetings will possibly be held sooner, virtually.

1. **AOB**

**2020 CEOS Chair Initiatives Update**

Raj Kumar (ISRO, CEOS Chair Team) reported an update on the ISRO initiatives:

* Investigating better planning of constellations of EO satellites, looking firstly at scatterometers as an example where better coordination can improve coverage. Sessions on a scatterometer constellation were proposed for CGMS-48 and IOVWST-2020.
* SDG Applications for the BIMSTEC Region: Looking to organise long-term datasets for vegetation, crop monitoring, land use and land change, water, etc. Investigating the use of Analysis Ready Data. Also looking at capacity building activities.
* Renewable Energy Assessment (Solar & Wind) from Space: Developed web-based and mobile applications and tools for site selection. Initially developed for India and now expanding to Africa (global coverage planned in future).
* Also exploring new tools for disaster management, including GEO-LEO applications. Improved flood monitoring and forest fire danger index have been agreed as foci. ISRO is coordinating with WGDisasters on this topic.

1. **Next Meeting, Adjourn**

Raj Kumar (ISRO, CEOS Chair Team) thanked everyone for attending. CEOS SEC-264 will be held on April 9. The plan for CEOS SEC teleconferences/meetings leading up to the 2020 Plenary is as follows (typically Thursday):

SEC-264: April 9, 2020

SEC-265: May 14, 2020

SEC-266: June 18, 2020

SEC-267: July 16, 2020

SEC-268: August 27, 2020

SEC-269: September 2020 (alongside the 2020 CEOS SIT TW)

SEC-270: October 1, 2020

SEC-271: October 2020 (at the 34th CEOS Plenary)