



EG12.24  
October 2012

## Chairman's Report 2012

1. The year since the last Annual Meeting in December 2011 was dominated by the essential changes EuroGOOS is undergoing which also led to an extraordinary General Meeting in Brussels on 5 and 6 June. These changes include the new legal structure, the move of the Office to Brussels and the appointment of a new EuroGOOS Director. Besides that a lot of efforts were undertaken to further strengthen the relations with European bodies, to clarify the relations with the ROOSs and to contribute to the establishment of a sustainable GMES marine service and other European initiatives.
2. All the related issues were thoroughly discussed in the five Board meetings we held this year: in Rome on 15 December 2011 immediately after the Annual Meeting, in London on 13 March 2012, in Brussels on 2 and 3 May 2012 and on 6 June 2012 immediately after the extraordinary General Meeting, and in Tallinn on 25 and 26 September 2012. Again the Board had to face the problem that due to other commitments and directives not all members attended the meetings. When electing Board Members, in future even more consideration should be given to the requirement that the candidates are in a position to meet the responsibilities of the Board by regular participation. The Board again invites the chairs of the ROOSs and the working groups to attend the meetings as some of them have already done.
3. To a great extent the work of the Board was already taken into account by the extraordinary General Meeting. In so far I refer to the minutes of that meeting.
4. For preparing the new legal structure of EuroGOOS, together with the EuroGOOS Director I had several meetings with the Belgian lawyer. In the meantime all questions concerning the establishment of EuroGOOS AISBL are solved so that at the Annual Meeting the new agreement can be signed by the Members. As requested by the extraordinary General Meeting a small drafting group has elaborated draft Internal Rules for EuroGOOS AISBL. The group was chaired by me. The Board has accepted the work of the group and inserted additional regulations taking into account the role of the ROOSs. The Board's proposal is submitted to the Annual Meeting for consideration and consent, though the formal decision has to be taken by the first General Meeting of EuroGOOS AISBL.
5. As concerns the move of EuroGOOS to Brussels the necessary agreements with Belspo as the new host and the seconding member institutions have been discussed and are under preparation.
6. On several occasions I had an opportunity to promote operational oceanography. Together with the EuroGOOS Director I visited the Oceanology International exhibition in London in March 2012 where we discussed with experts and representatives of the oceanographic community the significance and needs of operational oceanography. In April we had a meeting with the new Secretary General of ICES in Copenhagen and agreed on closer contacts, among others in the context of the MARCOM+ project which will be continued

under the leadership of ICES. The Director and I participated in the European Maritime Day which was held in Göteborg. I acted as co-chair of a workshop which was organised by EuroGOOS together with the University of Göteborg and dealt with long-term ocean observation strategies and implications for European sustainable maritime policies. The key messages of the workshop were:

- *Long term observation is needed and you cannot always foresee what is needed in the future.*
- *Long term observation is needed and a good way to make observations long term is to focus on the user.*
- *We need more data, we need a system for the data and we need the data to be accessible.*

7. The establishment of a GMES marine service is making progress. I participated in the formal closure event of the first MyOcean project and the kick-off meeting of MyOcean II in Brussels in March 2012. I also attended a meeting of ECOMF and the national centres and an internal ECOMF meeting on Cyprus on 10 and 11 October. The meeting with the national services resulted in the Nicosia Declaration for an ECOMF Strategic Partnership.

The EuroGOOS Director and I visited the GMES Bureau to learn more about the intended establishment of the GMES marine service. We made certain that the new EuroGOOS AISBL can play an important role in this context. In particular we stressed the importance of the in-situ component of the GMES service which needs a firm funding.

8. The discussions with EEA about a close co-operation with regard to in-situ measurements were continued. The Director and I discussed with EEA in Copenhagen the basic items for an agreement. A major issue is the role of the regional data centres of the ROOSs in the future GMES marine service which will be further considered in a meeting of EEA, EuroGOOS and the ROOS Chairs on 21 November 2012 in Hamburg immediately before the Annual Meeting. The results will be reported to the Annual Meeting.
9. In the light of the discussions with EEA as well as with regard to other European activities such as EMODNET, "Blue Growth", "Marine Knowledge 2020" and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive EuroGOOS has to develop a consistent strategy concerning the relations with these activities. The Board tries to present a first paper on this issue before the Annual Meeting.
10. In summing up my impression is that the role of EuroGOOS in promoting and co-ordinating operational oceanography in Europe is more and more accepted by the relevant European bodies and players. Now it is up to EuroGOOS to show that it is willing and able to act as a competent partner. I am convinced that the changes we are just undergoing will provide a firm basis for that.