

Agenda Item 4.7: Improving the functionality of Working Groups

Meeting Document 4.7: Note on functionality of Working Groups

*The General Meeting is invited to **approve** the proposed approach for Working Groups*

Note on functionality of Working Groups

- During the EuroGOOS Annual Meeting of 2012 (Hamburg, November 2012) the need to improve the functionality of Working Groups has been identified. Mainly to address the fact that some WG are inactive for some time.
- From the existing WG:
 - SAWG had low activity for some years. It was re-formed recently and in 2013 was reactivated with a specific focus – task (white paper on research priorities of Operational Oceanography).
 - TPWG was also inactive for some time. The Jerico project supported some relevant activities, thus re-vitalizing the WG in 2012.
 - DATAMEQ is active and continues its work linked to the progress of relevant projects (MyOcean, EMODNET-Physics, Jerico, GROOM).
 - EPWG never started. A new approach and new ToR will be proposed by the chair during the 2013 annual General Meeting.
 - Coastal modeling and ECOMF Strategic Partnership WGs have recently started their work. They have already focused their efforts on producing 2 respective documents.
- Which are/were the reasons for low activity in some WG? It is generally accepted that standing WG tend to lose their momentum after some time of operation.
- Various other reasons can affect their operation:
 - Over-commitment of their members (when senior scientists)
 - Lack of motivation (not linked to a publication – project)
 - Inability of Member Organizations to support financially
- How to respond to these barriers? Proposed approach:
 - Create time limited rather than open-ended WG. Typically 18 months.
 - Nominate members who are active / experts in their own domain of expertise and willing to allocate time for such activities. Even scientists of non-member institutions.
 - Include in ToR the need to deliver a publication at the end. A EuroGOOS publication (supported by the office) and possibly a peer-reviewed publication.
 - Request the commitment of MO to support their WG members (also financially) when nominated. Try to allocate some funds in the EuroGOOS budget to partially support their operation. Urge them to use teleconference meetings more often.
- Does this mean that we have to stop existing standing Working Groups? No, we just need to adjust / revise them as appropriate:
 - Existing non-functioning WGs can be considered in sleeping mode until we decide to activate them with a specific “Mission / Task”.

- SAWG has been already reactivated with a specific time-limited task
- TPWG could work during 2014 with the proposed new joint EMB-EuroGOOS WG on “Next Generation Observing Systems”. Alternatively it could consider focusing on harmonizing / creating regional monitoring strategies / plans (18 months period)
- Coastal Modeling WG and ESPWG have already focused on development of specific position papers / publications.
- New WG will have the above rules in their ToR.