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EuroGOOS Short-term Strategy 2009-2013

Introduction

EuroGOOS contributes to assessing the state of the ocean, its use and role with regard to sustainable development to preserve the integrity of the ocean.

EuroGOOS promotes operational oceanography in Europe, and assists its members in defining activity areas, infrastructure needs and governance models. To that extent EuroGOOS interacts with the European Commission and international and intergovernmental entities. In this EuroGOOS strives to coordinate the development of a blueprint for establishing and maintaining a pan-European infrastructure for operational oceanography, and advocating it with customers, operators and other users. In addressing these issues EuroGOOS actively involves stakeholders, politicians and the public at large.

To guide the implementation of operational oceanography, EuroGOOS will develop a Master Plan based on the Priorities defined in the Short-term Strategy.

EuroGOOS is an association of currently 36 European public bodies with national responsibilities for operational oceanography. EuroGOOS activities are tasks agreed to be performed by the members together or in subgroups. The present activities are to a large extent based on priorities agreed in 2002, together with EuroGOOS objectives laid out in the EuroGOOS Agreement.

The following priorities are intended to steer the work of EuroGOOS and its members for the period 2009 – 2013:

Priority 1:

From its beginning the objective of EuroGOOS has been to promote operational oceanography in Europe by fostering and coordinating the activities of those institutions of the European States which contribute to GOOS, and by providing a platform to discuss new developments. Since then the cooperation on the European level, in particular in the framework of the European Union, has steadily increased. A multitude of institutions, bodies, working groups, projects and workshops are dealing with many different aspects of operational oceanography. It is becoming more and more urgent to avoid duplication of work and contradictory developments. With this regard the consultancy role of EuroGOOS and its representation in these bodies is gaining in importance. This requires that the EuroGOOS representatives have a clear mandate to speak on behalf of the EuroGOOS members and their States.

EuroGOOS shall act as the authoritative and competent expert voice of operational oceanography in all European activities.

Priority 2:

Right from the start, EuroGOOS has been involved in the development of the marine part of the GMES initiative. From competing, but not very different internal proposals, MerSea

Strand 1 followed by the MerSea Integrated Project took the lead in the development of European Global Ocean forecasting. Projects such as ECOOP and SEPRISE have continued to build and demonstrate the system design for a cost-efficient pan-European system for operational oceanographic services. The GMES Marine System which is expected to be implemented in its first phase by the MyOcean project is based on joint production of European and regional core services to be used freely by public and private service providers in down-stream services. EuroGOOS members and regional partners are main producers as well as important users of the system.

Take the lead in representing and promoting operational marine services in Europe

Priority 3:

The continued production of required marine knowledge and maritime services requires sustained observations of ocean variables. EuroGOOS has created and updated inventories of existing long term observations performed by European countries in EDIOS, the European Directory of Ocean observing Systems, which has strong links with SeaDataNet. User surveys in some countries have shown a need and preference for different ocean variables. New systems and technologies have been promoted to increase access to required data, such as Argo floats and Ferryboxes. Existing observations are not satisfying the needs, and spatial and temporal resolution is in general insufficient. Better co-ordination, improved or renewed technology, and systems that resolve time and space are needed to satisfy data demands and required services. EuroGOOS has substantial experience in assessing the needs for adequate monitoring networks for high seas and climate issues, and could therefore bring valuable input to meet the needs of the Marine Strategy Directive and the Maritime Policy, and also the data policy within EMODNET development.

Improve the observing system for operational oceanography in Europe, and its contribution to global systems

Priority 4:

National government agencies and institutes have the duty to produce public services for safety of people and property, safe and cost-efficient use of ocean resources, protection of the environment, and spatial planning. In many areas these are cross-boundary tasks that can benefit from good international co-operation. The initial argument behind the EuroGOOS regional task teams that became the ROOSs was cost-efficiency and sharing of workload. The concept of Core Services and Downstream Services is being implemented by the ROOSs and gives good support to the development of multi-national downstream systems that also satisfy the needs of individual nations.

Encourage links between member state national systems and setting up of downstream services

Priority 5:

To build the Global Ocean Observing System in parallel with the Climate and Terrestrial systems is a Global international Commitment expressed in the Agenda 21 from the Summit in Rio 1992. UN/UNESCO/IOC panels have developed strategies and plans for the development of GOOS. GOOS is also regarded as the Ocean component of GEOSS. An original argument for the creation of EuroGOOS was to further the goals of GOOS and to co-ordinate the European national contributions to GOOS. Eight out of twenty EuroGOOS objectives are directly related to GOOS. EuroGOOS has in particular been active in

supporting the development of GOOS Regional Alliances, the GOOS Regional Forum and the GOOS Regional Council in order to create a stronger mechanism for the development of a truly global system. EuroGOOS together with MedGOOS has taken the initial responsibility to co-ordinate the contributions from the Regional Alliances to Coastal GOOS.

Contribute to the further development of GOOS, in particular by taking the lead in advancing Coastal GOOS

Priority 6:

Operational oceanography is developed both top-down and bottom-up. EuroGOOS has mainly chosen the bottom-up approach, building on members' needs and resources. Seen from the operational level the development of GOOS, GEOSS, GMES and other international initiatives are driven top-down. EuroGOOS as an organisation is also active in observer and expert functions in the top-down process, but the ability to influence that process lies at the Intergovernmental and Member State level. Operational oceanographic services require a long term reliable commitment of the States including the provision of adequate resources. To better communicate the strength of the EuroGOOS members, and to improve funding of activities leading towards the EuroGOOS objectives, we need to promote EuroGOOS at higher levels in both EU and Member States. For several years EuroGOOS has been successful at the European Commission level, but the Commission needs support from the Member States both in the internal process and in the Parliament to be successful on its part.

Promote EuroGOOS at a high level for members' countries and European organisations.

Priority 7:

Operational oceanography has to be based on the underpinning science and technology. The first goal of EuroGOOS was to realise the benefits of fifty years of European investments in basic and strategic research in the marine environment by developing new or improved services for different maritime user sectors. At the same time as many problems are still unsolved, progress creates new requirements. Operational oceanography will thus have a continued need for new scientific knowledge and new technologies to satisfy existing and new users.

Promote and foster the necessary research and technological developments for operational oceanography, and their implementation in operational systems.

Priority 8:

Since 1999 the EuroGOOS organisation is self-financed and as such independent of funding agencies and other organisations. Public bodies with national responsibilities for operational oceanography can subscribe as members of EuroGOOS. The number of members has increased from 22 at the inauguration to 36 at present and should be further increased as appropriate. The EuroGOOS role as a representative for European operational oceanography is successively getting stronger both at EU and global level. To allow for firmer actions in this role, all European coastal states and their institutions which contribute to operational oceanography need to be involved in the work.

Work towards involving all European coastal states, through their operational oceanographic institutions, in EuroGOOS work.