

GGC Informal VTC 10 March 2021

Agenda items communicated beforehand:

- Relation GEBCO with IOC, with IHO, opportunities
- Governance
- Relation to Seabed 2030 / relation to the Nippon Foundation
- Participation of Director Seabed 2030 to GGC meetings as observer
- GEBCO is called a project. It should be a program as it is running since 1903 and will continue after 2030. How to change.
- Education & Training
- Welcoming two new IOC appointed members
- 40 % gender equality in the GGC (6 out of 15 members) and relatively good geographical spread with Africa the only continent not represented
- AOB including identifying need for follow-up meetings (for example quarterly).

Notes provided by IHO Secretary after consultation with chair:

1. GGC Chair provided an introduction and some background to the reasons for the informal meeting. He welcomed the two new IOC appointed members to the GGC – Kim Picard (IOC - Australia) and Prashant Srivastava (IOC – India).
2. He highlighted the issue of governance and the conflict of interest. He requested comments and input from the GGC members. He indicated that some changes needed to be considered in the leadership personnel as there were people who were in leadership positions in Seabed 2030 as well as being members of the GGC, both of the individuals involved were aware of these considerations. David Millar noted that there needed to be clarity on what ‘conflict of interest’ was understood to mean. He noted that the GGC had an action to develop a GEBCO wide code of conduct that would be developed over the next few months. He noted that the GGC is the oversight body which provides guidance to the Director Seabed 2030, which means that potentially he is receiving guidance from his own Center leads. There was general agreement that the situation needs to be clarified and procedures laid down. The Chair explained more detail on the reasons behind his thoughts and the imbalance between the different Center leaders.

The GGC agreed that ‘conflict of interest’ needed to be defined within the GEBCO Project. It was acknowledged that for transparency and to ensure clarity of the Director of the Seabed 2030 Project position, it would be preferable that Seabed 2030 Regional Center leads were not members of the GGC in any formal capacity. It was also acknowledged that the current situation created an imbalance between the four Center leads. It was agreed the way forward would be confirmed at the GGC intersessional meeting planned for May but that any changes in Chair should be undertaken in the normal Sub-Committee meeting cycle to allow the extended membership to participate in the process. Aligned to this, it was agreed that the task of developing a GEBCO wide Code of Conduct, an action on the GGC from the IHO and IOC, should be started as soon as possible with a mature draft document submitted to

the GGC intersessional meeting for further discussion and action as appropriate. The Chair noted that initial guidance for this Drafting Group had been created, although it was acknowledged that further clarifications would be required. The Chair had invited the Vice-Chair to lead the group.

3. The Chair proposed that the Director Seabed 2030 should be a formal permanent observer to the GGC, in a similar manner to the representatives of the IHO and IOC Secretariats. Martin Jakobsson supported the idea to ensure the Center heads had a formal representative at GGC meetings. Noting there was a quorum, the GGC approved the decision to invite the Director Seabed 2030 to become a formal permanent observer to the GGC, and this decision should be communicated to the IHO and IOC via the Chair report to the IRCC13 and A-31.

It was agreed that the Director Seabed 2030 should attend GGC meetings in a formal capacity and that having permanent observer status would be appropriate. However, after further consideration by the Chair and closer reading for the ToRs, it would appear a formal amendment of the GGC ToRs would be required, an undesirable process noting the sensitivities involved if a private organizational donor's name was written into the ToRs; therefore it is proposed to extend a permanent invitation to participate under article 1.5 of the RoPs.

4. The Chair proposed that intersessional meeting in May 2021 should be held with GEBCO principles included. The individuals included in the GEBCO principles list was highlighted, which were the individuals holding leadership roles throughout the GEBCO project. It was agreed that this was an appropriate approach and in accordance with the ToRs. The GEBCO principles list will be expanded to include the Seabed 2030 Center leads.

5. The Chair provided background on the proposal to establish a new Sub-Committee on Education and Training. He noted the action placed on the GGC and the progress achieved to date and what actions needed to be completed before the SCET can be formally established. He noted that the relationship with the other subordinate bodies had to be clarified. He identified the two individuals who would lead the establishment of the SCET and then could put themselves forward for election once the SCET was formally established by the GGC. The Chair highlighted the strategic difference between the roles of SCOPE and SCET, which was emphasised by the Chair of SCOPE. The Chair proposed that Kim Picard and Karolina Zwolak continue the task with support from those who have been involved in the initial work with the objective of presenting a more mature draft to the GGC intersessional meeting.

There was agreement that the task of developing the ToRs for a new SCET should be progressed with the objective of presenting a more mature version at the GGC intersessional meeting with the goal of approval and therefore formal establishment at GGC38. The GGC acknowledged the rationale of the individuals developing the initial ToRs should also be the first Chair and Vice-Chair to ensure a smooth establishment of the SCET, before handing over to new elected officers from within the SCET membership.

6. The Chair proposed that the title of GEBCO should be amended from a Project to a Programme. SG agreed fully and indicated a number of advantages of this change. It was proposed that it could be approved by the GGC as an editorial change and reported through the Chair reports to IRCC13 and A-31.

The rationale for this proposal was acknowledged and agreed that it should be discussed with the IHO and IOC Secretariats prior to informing the appropriate bodies in the relevant Chair report.

7. The Chair identified the need to investigate different avenues of funding support for GEBCO and Seabed 2030. David Millar provided some details of the work of the Funding Working Group and his concerns on the receptiveness of the NF. The SG noted that clarity was required as GEBCO was not an entity to receive funds, whereas in-kind support could be accepted, he did acknowledge that obtaining additional funds for Seabed 2030 did have issues which needed to be addressed. Martin Jakobsson did note that the NF was becoming more receptive to the idea. David Millar noted that the output from the contracts would need to be accessed and the appropriate items taken forward.

8. The Chair articulated his views on expectations of GGC members. He indicated what his approach would be and what his expectations would be for GGC members.

9. The Chair noted the geographical spread, noting that Africa was not represented.

10. Kim Picard asked whether read-ahead and documents would be provided from the GGC prior to a meeting. The requirements for the intersessional meeting would be discussed between the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.