

GEBCO CHARTER

Submitted by Vice-Chair

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document provides details on the development of a wide GEBCO Code of Conduct

Action to be taken: See paragraph 3

Related documents: ToRs, GEBCO Charter

1. Overview/Introduction

Recognising the continuing expansion of activities of the GEBCO Program and the significantly increased global profile achieved as a result of the successes of the Seabed 2030 project, it has been considered appropriate by IHO/IOC leadership to formalise the way in which those within the GEBCO Community interact and are perceived externally to ensure all actions and activities can be seen to be being undertaken in the best interests of the GEBCO Project without any perception of gain, either institutional/organizational or personal.

In a Post meeting note of GGC37 report, the IHO and IOC Secretariats therefore requested the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GGC to lead on the development a GEBCO wide Code of Conduct (CoC) to provide guidance and clarity on behaviours and expectations to all those involved with the GEBCO Project. For doing so, a GEBCO Code of Conduct Drafting Group (DG) was appointed in the aftermaths of GGC37, in early Spring 2021. The initial members of the working group were: J. Jencks (DCDB Director), R. Obino (GGC Member), J. Cheveaux (Secretary Seabed2030), J. McMichael-Phillips (Director Seabed 2030), S. Sharma (Head of Engagement and Development Seabed2030). The task has been coordinated by M. Rovere (GGC Vice-Chair). Due to resignation from GGC of R. Obino, P. Brett volunteered to join the group during GGC38.

The Objectives of the drafting group were assigned in the ToRs (attached to this material) and included several tasks: i. develop a GEBCO wide Code of Conduct covering standards of respect and tolerance; ii. define individual status within GEBCO in relation to host national organisations and industry stakeholders; iii. address governance issues in relation to leadership positions and potential conflicts of interest.

2. Background information

After fruitful internal discussions and bilateral online meetings, a first draft of the CoC was issued in Summer 2021 and circulated among members of the DG. The DG agreed that the document was too long and it contained sensitive matters that were seen from different perspectives depending on the affiliation and nationality, on November 2021 a conference call of the DG was organized to refine the draft text. For the sake of clarity, a second shorter

version was drafted. In this version, explicit examples of inappropriate behaviours were removed. The DG decided also that the inclusion of disciplinary measures and procedures was out of scope.

The draft comprised a foreword with the inspiring principles and an ethical conduct section subdivided into:

I. General Conduct

II. Conflicts of interest

III. Proper Use and Protection of GEBCO brand and assets

IV. Outside Communications

V. Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying

VI. Whistleblowing

IOC offered support via the UNESCO Ethics office to which the draft was submitted in early 2022. During GGC38 J. Barbière reported comments and suggestions from the UNESCO Ethics office, addressing the following:

1. Scope of document very broad, separate the tasks.
2. For meetings, follow the code of conduct developed for UN meetings.
3. With regards to the conflict of interest, develop a GEBCO Charter which would set the standards and ethical value to which GEBCO adheres.
4. Mitigation mechanisms could/should be addressed within the governance review process.
5. For the use of the GEBCO brands/logo, develop separately a set of branding guidelines which provide graphic/format standards for the use of the logo, and defines a process for i) defining who can use the GEBCO logo and ii) for requesting the use of the logo, through the parent organization.

The WG redrafted the code into a pager/charter during Summer 2022, which is now submitted to the GGC for evaluation.

3. Action

The GGC is requested to:

- a. **Note** the contents of this report;
- b. **Comment** and **discuss** the current version of the charter;
- c. **Consider** approval;
- d. **Take** any other action deemed appropriate.