

GEBCO Governance Review Update

Submitted by IHO Secretary

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document provides details of the work completed to date on the GEBCO Governance Review and the proposed next steps

Action to be taken: See paragraph 5

Related documents:

- Governance Review Project Team Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure
- Governance Review Project Team Work Plan

1. Introduction

In light of the changing oceans policy landscape, the growing visibility of GEBCO thanks to the work of the NIPPON Foundation – GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project (Seabed 2030) and the need to engage an increasing number of stakeholders, the 38th meeting of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC38) decided to create a project team to conduct a governance review of GEBCO (referred to as the GRPT). This project team was to be led by the GEBCO Secretary (Chair) and supported by the IOC GEBCO Representative (Vice Chair). In doing so, the GGC noted that “whilst this was clearly a much needed and worthwhile endeavour”, it could be a significant undertaking and the project team “should be cautious not to make it too detailed or over burdensome”. As such it was agreed that the aim should be to create “a repeatable continuous improvement process rather than just a standalone report”.

The core elements of the review are stakeholder mapping and engagement, mapping of the existing organization and functional structure, a review of the legal structure and framework, a gap analysis of existing governance instruments, a review of the financial status and the identification of findings and recommendations.

This report provides an update on the progress made to date including initial findings and next steps.

2. Process – work to date

Following the endorsement of the proposed creation of the GRPT by IRCC14 and the IOC Executive Council, work on the Governance review was commenced. It was agreed that the initial work would be focused on mapping GEBCO’s organisational and functional structure which would allow a gap analysis of the various governance instruments to be started with initial findings identified. Given the size and complexity of the task, it was necessary to initially focus on the core entities within the GEBCO Programme (being the sub-committees)

and their relationship to their parent organisations. SCUFN and the subordinate projects will be reviewed in the next phase of work following feedback on work undertaken to date.

2.1. Alignment to Strategy

At GGC38 it was acknowledged that ordinarily a governance review of this type would be undertaken against some form of organisational strategy to ensure that it could be properly implemented. Further, it was noted that until the new GEBCO Strategy reached an initial level of maturity, it was unlikely that the governance review would be completed. Following assessment of the initial findings presented in this paper at GGC39, it is anticipated that the circulation of a final draft of the GEBCO Strategy planned for early 2023 will allow the final phase of the Governance review to be compiled and considered for endorsement at an intersession meeting in March.

2.2. Initial Considerations

In order to identify the initial set of findings presented in this paper, a series of questions were developed to ensure a consistent and repeatable approach was taken to what is a largely qualitative assessment process. These questions are:

- Do the relevant governance instruments exist?
- Are the governance instruments up to date and adequately support the work of the group or committee?
- Is the work plan clear, current and logically structured?
- Is the work of the GGC and SCs appropriately structured in terms of programme delivery hierarchy?
- Is the membership of the group or committee appropriate and are there any barriers to effective contribution?
- Are any relevant working practices sufficiently clear, formalised and fit for purpose?

2.3. External Advisory Panel

The GRPT ToRs and RoPs state that “the project team is empowered to identify suitably qualified members of an External Advisory Panel, and to engage them as required in order to provide assurance to the GGC (and the bodies to which the GGC is accountable) that the work that undertaken is of sufficient quality, is impartial and is objective in its recommendations”. The GRPT considered carefully how they would make use of such a resource and it was decided that they would be best employed as an external or peer review of the final report.

To date, three of the four positions identified have been filled with only a representative from industry to be appointed. Currently the EAP is constituted of:

Legal Representative – Dr Virginie Tassin Campanella, Avocat à la Cour (Paris Bar) & EU/EFTA Attorney-at-Law (Zürich Bar), Vice President of the Scientific Council of INDEMER (Monaco)

Financial Representative – Mrs Sandrine Brunel, IHO Secretariat

Academic Representative – Dr Paul Elsner, University of London

Industry/Private Sector Representative – TBC

3. Summary of Initial Findings

Based upon the initial organisational and functional mapping of the GEBCO programme, the following initial findings have been identified. They are presented by organisational entity to aid discussion and validation. Each finding has been categorised by ‘type’ and where appropriate, a recommendation for onward action suggested. It should be noted that the suggested recommendations (where made) are to stimulate discussion and are subject to agreement by those bodies affected and ultimately endorsement by the GGC.

3.1. Parent Organisations

Table 1 provides a summary of the key finding relating to the two parent organisations. The review of existing governance instruments showed that the MoU between the two organisations predated key developments such as the UN Decade of Ocean Science for sustainable development and Seabed 2030.

Table 1 Parent Organisations Initial Findings

Finding Ref.	Type	Detail	Recommendation
IHO - IOC 1	Instrument	MoU between two organisations is out of date and predates SB2030 and the UN Ocean Decade	Review and update MoU

3.2. GEBCO Guiding Committee

Table 2 summarises the findings as relate to the GGC. The main themes relate to the membership of the GGC and the way that the modern portfolio of work is structured. The nature of the findings identified are largely a reflection of how the work of the GEBCO programme has evolved over recent years into complex portfolio of different work items.

Table 2 GGC Initial Findings

Finding Ref.	Type	Detail	Recommendation
GGC 1	Instrument	ToRs largely fit for purpose but should be reviewed in light of Strategy to ensure that objectives are consistent	Review ToRs to ensure alignment with strategy
GGC 2	Process	No portfolio/project board and lack of programme structure	Discuss at GGC39
GGC 3	Membership	Membership (especially Ex-Officio) is problematic in that there is the potential for conflict of interest where committee members are the recipient of GEBCO project funds	Discuss at GGC39
GGC 4	Finance	No formal guidance on financial management and	Note and include in financial review. Get external advice

		accountability	
GGC 5	Personnel	Difficulty with subordinate projects using IHO/IOC postal address and the status of individuals working on them	IHO to engage Gov of Monaco to discuss
GGC 6	Membership	Unlike IHO/IOC appointed members of the GGC, it is not a condition of SC Chair's membership of GGC to be able to attend annual meetings, with associated T&S covered by their employer or individually.	Adjust ToRs to reflect that on taking up office, the expectation is that they will have the support of their organisation or the personal means to attend GGC meetings

3.3. Technical Sub-Committee of Ocean Mapping

Table 3 summarises the initial findings as relates to TSCOM. TSCOM (with perhaps the exception of SCUFN) has the largest and most complex programme of work. As such, it has a number of functional relationships and dependencies on external entities. A number of the findings relate to how these relationships could be formalised and the potential for consolidating work items. It is likely that the latter will only be possible once the GEBCO strategy has been completed.

Table 3 TSCOM Initial Findings

Finding Ref.	Type	Detail	Recommendation
TSCOM 1	Instrument	ToRs largely fit for purpose but should be reviewed in light of Strategy to ensure that objectives are consistent	Review ToRs to ensure alignment with strategy
TSCOM 2	Operations	Work Plan is very complex and could be rationalised	Rationalise work plan to reduce items and improve clarity
TSCOM 3	Instrument	No instrument in place to describe the role of NOAA in hosting the Archived GEBCO grid in the DCDB	Incorporate into IHO - DCDB MoU
TSCOM 4	Instrument	No instrument in place to describe the role of NOC/BODC in managing the GEBCO website	IHO/IOC to consider implementing an MoU
TSCOM 5	Membership	Need for dedicated secretary that can accommodate more frequent meetings	Identify a secretary from within the membership, establish terms of service and update ToRs accordingly
TSCOM 6	Instrument	No formal instrument/agreement to describe interface with SB2030	? Postpone until after GGC39

TSCOM 7	Product	No formal statement of the ownership of GEBCO products	Give all GEBCO products an IHO/IOC formal publication reference e.g. Digital Atlas
---------	---------	--	--

3.4. Sub-Committee on Regional Undersea Mapping

Table 4 summarises the initial findings as relates to SCRUM. The main issue identified related to the work of SCRUM that supports other activities/bodies such as TSCOM and Seabed 2030. In discussion with the SCRUM Chair Team it is evident that this is likely to be an exercise in clarifying the wording in the work plan as opposed to materially adjusting any activity.

Table 4 SCRUM Initial Findings

Finding Ref.	Type	Detail	Recommendation
SCRUM 1	Instrument	ToRs largely fit for purpose but should be reviewed in light of Strategy to ensure that objectives are consistent	Review ToRs to ensure alignment with strategy
SCRUM 2	Work Plan	Potential overlap in terms of scope with TSCOM/SB2030 - May just need clarification in Work Plan	Work with other SCs and SB2030 team to review work plan and add notation where required to clarify areas of common interest
SCRUM 3	Work Plan	Work plan is complicated and could be rationalised	Review Work plan once strategy has been published and agree prioritisation
SCRUM 4	Process	Timing of meetings could be adjusted to have one preparatory virtual meeting and one in person meeting alongside Map the Gaps and GGC	SCRUM to consider and agree on a routine that works for membership

3.5. Sub-Committee on Outreach and Public Engagement

Table 5 summarises the initial findings as relates to SCOPE. The main issues identified surround the interaction between SCOPE and the other GEBCO bodies, including the parent organisations. Given the purpose of SCOPE is to coordinate and support the outreach and communication requirements of the GEBCO Programme, strong coordination with the other GECBO bodies is essential. Further, the Parent Organisations being IGOs that are accountable to their member states, need to have a more effective means of supporting the work of SCOPE. It is felt this could be achieved by the creation of a new category of participation/membership for the Communication leads of the parent organisation, together with the formalisation of a process for review planned communication material

Table 5 SCOPE Initial Findings

Finding Ref.	Type	Detail	Recommendation
---------------------	-------------	---------------	-----------------------

SCOPE 1	Instrument	ToRs largely fit for purpose but should be reviewed in light of Strategy to ensure that objectives are consistent	Review ToRs to ensure alignment with strategy
SCOPE 2	Process	Potential need to define a formal process for approval of comms material that affects other SCs or bodies.	Define process diagram that can be appended to ToRs
SCOPE 3	Process	Timing of meetings could be adjusted to have one preparatory virtual meeting and one in person meeting alongside Map the Gaps and GGC	SCRUM to consider and agree on a routine that works for membership
SCOPE 4	Membership	Role of Reps of IHO/IOC unclear and process for reviewing outward communications activity not in place.	Consider a new category of participation of IHO/IOC Comms Reps in SCOPE

3.6. Sub-Committee on Education and Training

Table 6 summarises the findings as relates to SCET. SCET is the newest Sub-Committee and is still in its initiation phase. As a consequence the only finding relates to the need to review the ToRs once the new GEBCO Strategy has been developed.

Table 6 SCET Initial Findings

Finding Ref.	Type	Detail	Recommendation
SCET 1.	Instrument	ToRs largely fit for purpose but should be reviewed in light of Strategy to ensure that objectives are consistent	Review ToRs to ensure alignment with strategy

4. Next Steps

The initial findings presented in this paper have been discussed with the Chair Teams of the GEBCO bodies concerned. The output of this initial phase of work will be circulated to the wider GGC and GEBCO community for comment in order to validate the approach taken so far. In parallel, work on the Governance Instrument gap analysis will continue and the financial and legal reviews will be commenced. The initial review process will be repeated for Seabed 2030 and SCUFN with the benefit of the feedback from the GGC. It is intended that this work will be completed by the end of January 2023 so that the final draft report can be circulated with the final draft of the GEBCO Strategy.

5. Action

The GGC is requested to:

- a. **Note** the contents of this report and the proposed next steps;
- b. **Discuss** the initial findings;
- c. **Take** any other action deemed appropriate.