

GEO WEEK 2019 OFFICIAL SIDE EVENTS

GEO Plenary Side Event Summary



The Role of the Group on Earth Observations in the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021 – 2030)



2021 United Nations Decade
2030 of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

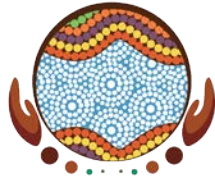
A side event to the 2019 GEO Plenary on the role of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development took place on 5 November 5 2019 in Canberra, Australia.

Session Overview

- Karen Evans (CSIRO/Decade Executive Planning Group) provided an overview of the Decade of Ocean Science.
- Emily Smail (GEO Blue Planet/UMD/NOAA) provided an overview of GEO Blue Planet's proposed approach to the Decade and a draft of suggested science priorities and potential contributions of GEO to the Decade (prepared with input from the GEO Blue Planet Steering Committee and stakeholders from other GEO activities that have expressed an interest in the Decade). [Link to presentation.](#)
- Panelists Karen Evans (CSIRO/Decade Executive Planning Group), Ken Ando (JAMSTEC/AOGEO Oceans, Coasts and Islands Task Group/IOC-WESTPAC), Duncan McIntosh (SPREP), Nic Bax (MBON/CSIRO) and Doug Cripe (GEO Secretariat) provided their insights into GEO's role in the Decade on Ocean Science and suggested science priorities for the Decade.
- The audience and panelists discussed GEO, the Decade and science priorities.

Primary messages and recommendations about GEO's role in the Decade

- GEO Blue Planet and the broader GEO Community are supportive of the Decade.
- GEO's role as a convening body for the production and use of Earth Observations provides a platform to raise concerns at the ministerial level.
- GEO Blue Planet receiving a mandate from UN Agencies to support the Decade on Ocean Science would help boost coordination efforts and strengthen the importance and visibility of the Decade within GEO.



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Primary messages and recommendations about the focus of the Decade

- Engaging with citizens is important and aquaria and other outreach organizations should be enlisted to raise awareness of the Decade and the importance of Ocean Science.
- Communications should emphasize positive success stories and provide action recommendations in order to galvanize change and avoid crisis fatigue.
- Linkages between traditional ecological knowledge and geospatial analysis should be advanced.
- The urgency of the current environmental situation needs to be communicated. Thresholds or tipping points should be identified and understood.
- Decades are potentially too long to appeal to politicians so short term goals and tasks should be identified.
- The outcomes must extend past the Decade and goals may evolve throughout the Decade.
- The Decade needs a champion(s) to endorse and give voice to the Decade (i.e. a celebrity who has clout outside of the scientific community).