

ANNUAL REPORT ON 2025 ACTIVITIES

YEAR 2025
Edited by the GEO Blue Planet Secretariat

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnBVnuxImVc&t=2s

Introduction

Bridging the Gap between ocean and coastal data and societal needs to deliver actionable information

GEO Blue Planet is an initiative of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) that focuses on leveraging ocean and coastal data to inform policy and decision-making. It operates at the intersection of science, policy, and society, aiming to ensure that observation and prediction are translated into actionable knowledge for sustainable ocean and coastal management.



The initiative is structured around three Core Action Areas:

- Stakeholder Engagement – Identifying information needs.
- Cooperation and Co-design – Developing knowledge and tools collaboratively.
- Capacity Development – Building and transferring capabilities for long-term use.

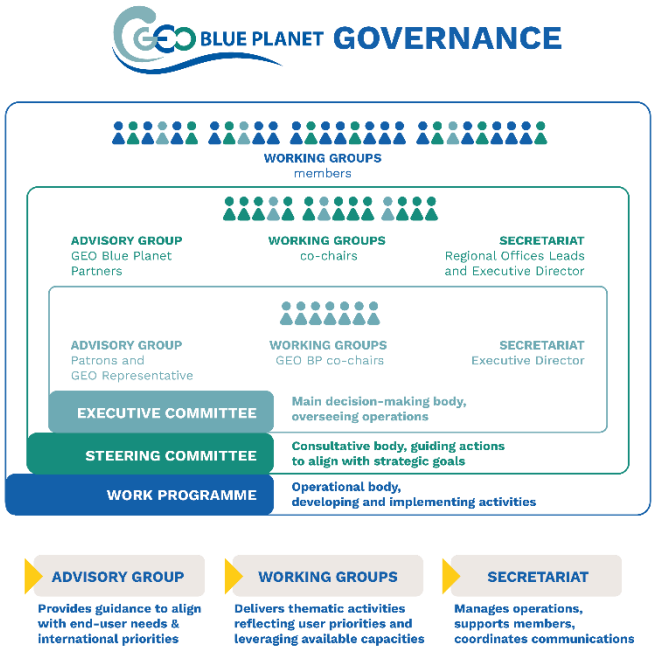
GEO Blue Planet works through a network of experts, partner organizations, and working groups to produce outreach materials, host workshops, develop decision-support tools, and facilitate training and information exchange.

GEO Blue Planet Updated Governance

Endorsed by the Executive committee, the updated 2025 Terms of References strengthen GEO Blue Planet's governance, clarify roles across its committees, and formalize processes for working group formation, decision making, and strategic planning. Reflecting lessons learned and evolving stakeholder needs, the document reinforces transparency and inclusivity while better aligning the initiative with GEO's post 2025 structure and global policy frameworks. It also provides clearer operational guidance for the Secretariat, Working Groups, and governing bodies, ensuring more coherent coordination, improved accountability, and sustained support for delivering actionable ocean and coastal intelligence.

Access here:

https://geoblueplanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Blue-Planet_ToR2025_jan26.pdf



Working Groups Activities

Marine Litter Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Daphné Lecellier

GEO Blue Planet co-supports the **Integrated Marine Debris Observing System** (IMDOS), a global initiative developing a coordinated and sustained observing system for marine debris. IMDOS works to harmonize monitoring methods, integrate data, and provide open-access information to meet the science and policy needs of stakeholders addressing plastic pollution worldwide.

In 2025, this group pushed forward many activities including

- **Nomination of Steering Committee members**, election of the two co-chairs and establishment of the governance structure of IMDOS. The 30 members from 20+ institutions including UN specialized agencies and the EC (JRC) and from 10+ countries.
- **1st** in person Steering Committee meeting held in Paris in January 2025 https://geoblueplanet.org/next-steps-for-imdos-at-its-first-steering-committee-meeting/
- Draft **Terms of References** under review with co-chairs

- Coordination with the **UNEP Global Partnership on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter** (GPML) Community of Practice to ensure harmonization and objectives alignment.
- Supporting the plea for the mention of monitoring and scientific evidence in the **Global Plastic Treaty negotiations** (INC).
- **Resource mobilisation** for the IMDOS secretariat with the Horizon Europe (HE) project BioGeoSea (start date Sept 2025).
- **Workshop with IORA** (Indian ocean rim association) to enhance knowledge on regional/international initiatives on marine debris monitoring

At the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) in June 2025 (Nice, France), IMDOS reaffirmed its vital role to advance coordinated marine debris monitoring, highlighted by **the signature of the Declaration of Common Purpose**, alongside other events. The signature represents a shared commitment to harmonise monitoring efforts, reduce knowledge gaps and deliver accessible reliable data. Read the blogpost: https://geoblueplanet.org/push-for-global-marine-debris-monitoring-at-unoc/



More IMDOS news here : https://imdos.org/news

More on the Fisheries WG activities: https://geoblueplanet.org/fisheries/

Sargassum Working Group

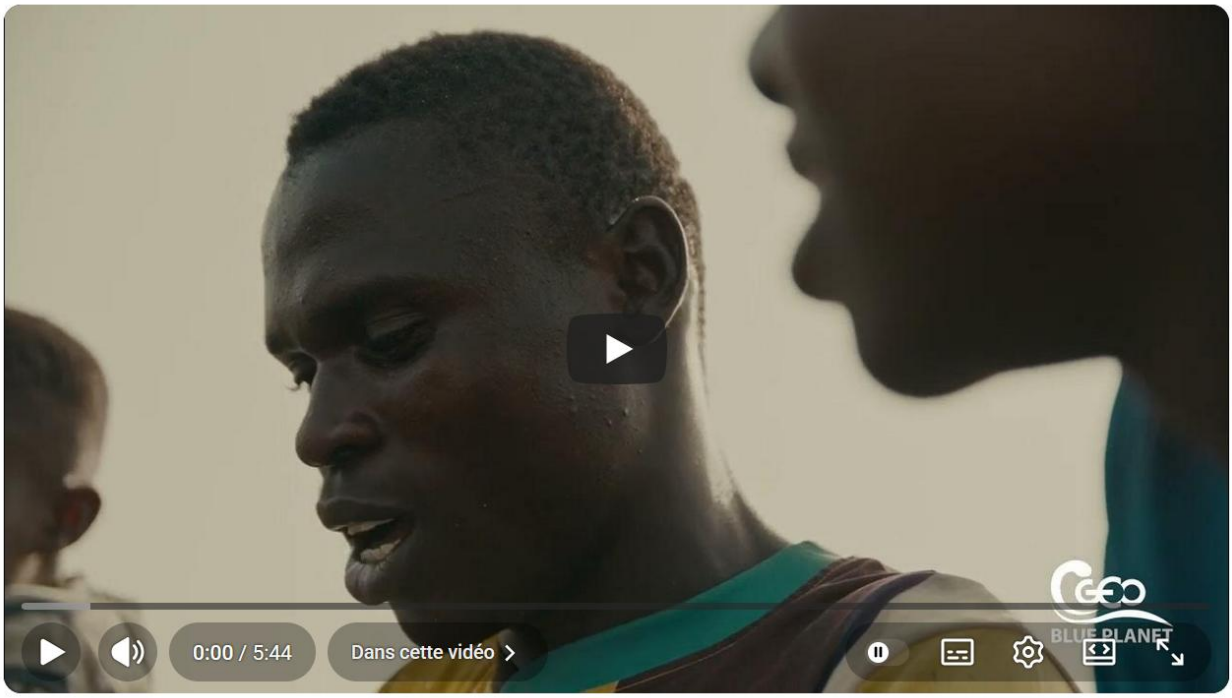
Secretariat Lead: Audrey Hasson

The **Sargassum Working Group (SWG)** brings together more than 60 members across research, policy, and operational communities to serve as the leading coordination and expert body for

Sargassum monitoring and prediction in the Wider Caribbean Region, recognized by IOCARIBE and UNEP Cartagena Convention.
In 2025, the WG strengthened dialogue through regular cross-sector meetings and workshops, deepened collaboration with key regional partners—including EC DG INTPA, OECS, ACS, UNEP-SPAW RAC, IUCN, the World Bank, Région Guadeloupe, and AFD—and continued to stimulate technical cooperation among modelling and remote-sensing groups.

A major milestone was the **Sargassum Information Hub** update, now widely recognized as the region's central access point for Sargassum-related data and resources. The WG also advanced the design of decision-support tools, including regional bulletins and indicators developed under SargCOOP2, reinforcing its position as the primary reference for Sargassum observation and prediction efforts.
Access Sargassum Information Hub here: https://sargassumhub.org/

SARGASSUM
INFORMATION HUB



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3yIIFDhBpU

At UNOC-3 in June 2025, the SWG organized an official side-event called "Turning the tide: Advancing science, solutions and cooperation on the Tropical Atlantic Sargassum situation".

Designed for technical experts and policymakers, civil society and private sector actors, the high-level event translated complex scientific knowledge into accessible insights to implement actionable strategies.
Read more here : https://geoblueplanet.org/turning-the-tide-on-sargassum-at-unoc/



More on the Fisheries WG activities: https://geoblueplanet.org/sargassum/

Fisheries Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Daphné Lecellier

The **Fisheries Working Group** is supporting sustainable fisheries resource management through advanced Earth observation (EO) technologies. The group's activities have been presented to several conferences in 2025 such as the GEO Global Forum and the One Ocean Science Congress.

Looking ahead, the WG is also planning for an in-person workshop with the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) Secretariat Networks (RSN). The workshop is titled "**Earth Observation and prediction for global sustainable fisheries management**". This stakeholder engagement workshop is aimed at enhancing cooperation between stakeholders and the fisheries experts to facilitate the use of EO-based information for global sustainable fisheries management. The workshop is planned for April 2026 at the RSN HQ.



More on the Fisheries WG activities: https://geoblueplanet.org/fisheries/

Climate Adaptation Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Nikelene Mclean

GEO Blue Planet launched a new white paper at NAPEXPO 2025, published by the UNFCCC as supplementary guidance to the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process. Co-authored with HEREON (Germany) and titled "**Coastal and Ocean Adaptation: Recommendations to Improve the Inclusion of Coastal and Ocean Adaptation in the Development of National Adaptation**



Plans", the paper provides targeted recommendations to strengthen the integration of coastal and ocean considerations in national adaptation strategies.

Read more about our NAPEXPO session https://geoblueplanet.org/coastal-and-ocean-adaptation-in-focus-at-nap-expo-2025/
Read the white paper here : https://geoblueplanet.org/nap_sm_release/

Building on this milestone, the GEO Blue Planet Secretariat is establishing a dedicated Working Group to advance efforts on integrating Earth Observation intelligence and Climate Services into the NAPs of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), with initial meetings planned for early 2026.

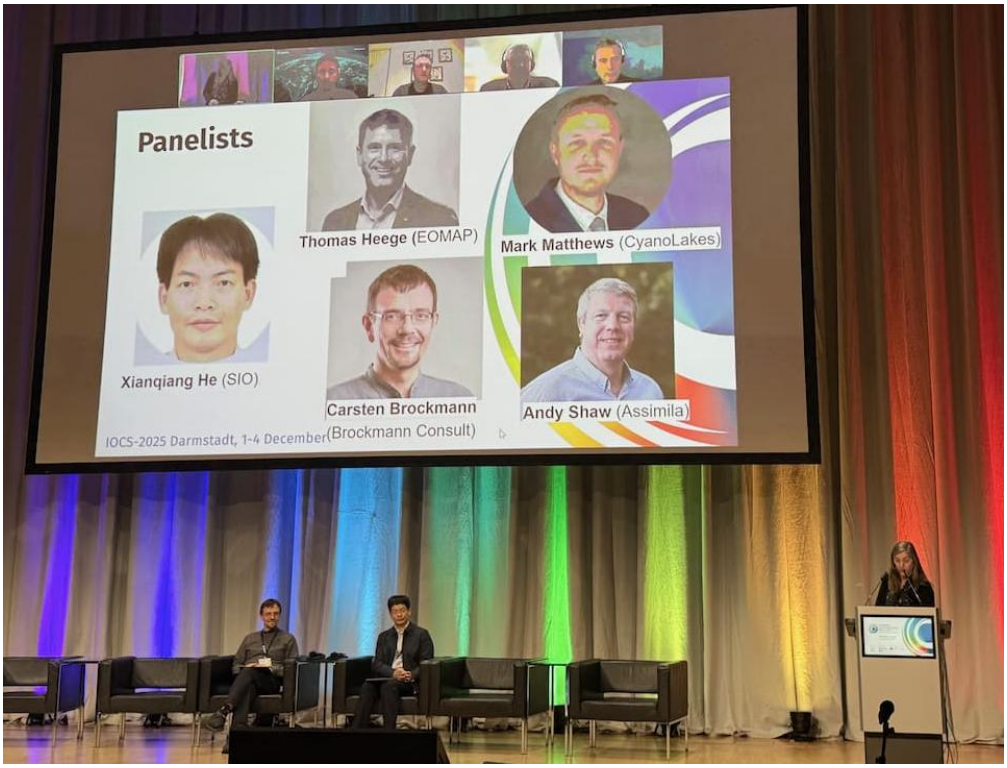
More on the Climate Adaptation WG activities: https://geoblueplanet.org/adaptation/

Eutrophication Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Merrie Beth Neely

The **Eutrophication WG** began 2025 by convening the **Nutrient Monitoring Across the GEO Work Programme** workshop in Paris on 9 January, in collaboration with colleagues from across the GEO community, including GEO AquaWatch. The event brought together GEO entities, UNEP representatives, and national experts to explore how remote-sensing approaches can complement existing source-to-sea nutrient monitoring efforts. The workshop's final report, released in March 2025, outlined a set of recommended next steps for GEO, including a proposed GEO Secretariat-led pathway to advance coordinated action in this area. Later in the year, at the **International Ocean Colour Science (IOCS) Meeting**, GEO Blue Planet and GEO AquaWatch co-hosted a hybrid community dialogue with Commercial Data Service Providers, where invited panelists shared perspectives on the value of public–academic–private partnerships in aquatic science. Participants examined four "Grand Challenges" for future collaboration in aquatic remote sensing, and through interactive polling identified the top priorities as **innovation for locally relevant yet globally applicable solutions** and the **conservation and restoration of ecosystems**.

More about "Nutrient Monitoring Across the GEO Work Programme workshop" https://geoblueplanet.org/eutrophication-a-global-challenge-requiring-collaborative-solutions/
More about the IOCS event https://geoblueplanet.org/international-ocean-colour-science-meeting/
More on the Eutrophication WG activities: https://geoblueplanet.org/eutrophication/



Coastal changes, Oil Spill, Inundation and Flooding Working Groups

These Working Groups are dormant or going at a slower pace since 2024. We will let members and the broader community know as we revive activities.

Strengthening our Regional Nodes

In 2025, GEO Blue Planet strengthened its collaboration with regional GEOs by co-organising a dedicated **marine and coastal session** at the AfriGEO Symposium, bringing together African experts and institutions to advance data-driven coastal resilience and marine management. It also helped launch the new **EuroGEO Marine and Coastal Action Group**, introduced during the EuroGEO Workshop 2025, to better coordinate Europe's marine and coastal Earth Observation activities and foster stronger links across EU projects and partners. Building on this progress, GEO Blue Planet will further strengthen its engagement with **AOGEO** and **AmeriGEO** in 2026 to deepen regional cooperation across all GEO regions.

More on AfriGEO Symposium 2025 https://geoblueplanet.org/marine-and-coastal-session-at-afrigeo-symposium/

More on EuroGEO Week 2025 https://geoblueplanet.org/shaping-the-marine-and-coastal-action-group-at-eurogeo-2025/



2025 Key Events

GEO Blue Planet Thematic Workshops - Paris, January 2025

The **nutrient workshop**, co-hosted with UNEP, with participation from the European Commission (JRC, EEA), the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, GEOGLAM, GEO Human Planet, GEO Aquawatch and ESRI aimed to assess the need for a task team within the Eutrophication Working Group to coordinate cross-GEO efforts in nutrient and nitrogen species monitoring. Experts discussed leveraging satellite remote sensing to support UNEP in developing National Action Plans to reduce pollution. Key outcomes included establishing the task team's potential scope, drafting its strategy and deliverables for the first 24 months, and setting next steps for implementation.

The **marine litter workshop** also served as the 1st hybrid IMDOS Steering Committee (SC) meeting. The SC reviewed existing monitoring activities and discussed possible Task Team Action Plans for the first year, years 2-5, and beyond. Emphasizing the need for sustained funding, they explored financial sources to ensure IMDOS's long-term viability and enhance awareness of marine debris issues. This hybrid meeting showed participation from 20+ institutions including UN specialized agencies and the EC.

GEO Global Forum - Rome, May 2025



GEO Blue Planet was actively involved in the **GEO Global forum** held in Rome in May 2025**.**

GEO Blue Planet held a booth, where the mission and achievements of the initiative were shared with the public. During the main event, WP4 organised a Community Event on **"Bringing Ocean Observation and Prediction to Decision Makers for the benefit of Society",** spotlighting GEO Blue Planet mission and success stories from four of its Working Groups.

One Ocean Science Congress – Nice, June 2025

GEO Blue Planet was well represented during the **One Ocean Science Congress** held in Nice in June 2025**,** with two presentations from the Marine Litter and the Fisheries Working Groups. GEO Blue Planet also participated as a panelist in the Town Hall: "Call for action to advance ocean prediction capabilities for the benefits of society".

ONE OCEAN SCIENCE CONGRESS

Third UN Ocean Conference – Nice, June 2025

GEO Blue Planet was very active during **UNOC3**. On the EU Pavilion, GEO Blue Planet participated in several events:

- Presentation of the state of plastic pollution in the ocean at the **Media Workshop** "Communication of the impact of climate change in the oceans: knowledge, tools and perspectives".
- Co-organization with OSPAR of the **thematic session on Marine Pollution** bringing speakers from OSPAR, UNEP, EMSA, EUmetsat and JRC.

- Organization and participation in session entitled "**EU contribution to GEO**" with a representative of the EC, GEO, EuroGEO and GEO Blue Planet.
- Organization and participation in a high-level event to officially have IMDOS Advisory and Sponsors Committee sign the **IMDOS declaration of common purpose** (see Marine Litter WG activities above). Members include representatives of GOOS, GESAMP, IOC, UNEP, IOCCG, IAEA and Mercator Ocean.
- Co-organization with the UN Decade ECOP Program, two events at the EU Digital Ocean Pavilion to showcase the **contribution of the youth, ECOPs and civil society**.



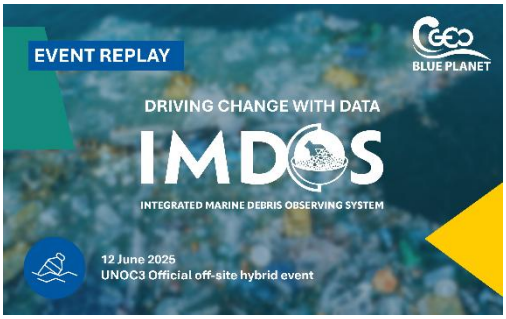
GEO Blue Planet also organized 2 off-site thematic workshops presented below. Both workshops were recognized as **official side events to UNOC3** and were the "green zone" relay of official UNOC3 "blue zone" events organized with the same partners.

On the sidelines of UNOC3 in June 2025, GEO Blue Planet also organized two **UN Official Side-events** addressing pressing ocean challenges: marine litter and sargassum influxes. These events brought together global experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to explore innovative Earth observation solutions for monitoring, forecasting, and mitigating these threats. Both workshops were the "green zone" relay of official UNOC3 "blue zone" events organized with the same partners.

The **marine litter side-event** co-organised with IMDOS partners convened experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to showcase successful examples of global cooperation in marine litter monitoring, data harmonization, and policy support from the European Commission JRC, the IAEA-NUTEC programme, and the Clean Ocean Network from Brazil. It also highlighted the importance of integrated observation systems for informed action. The marine litter side-event was proceeded by a IMDOS Steering Committee meeting held hybrid.

The **Sargassum side-event** entitled *"Advancing Science, Solutions, and Cooperation on the Tropical Atlantic Sargassum Situation" was* organized with partners including Région Guadeloupe, OECS, ACS, and UNEP-SPAW RAC. The event convened over 200 participants to address the growing environmental and socio-economic impacts of Sargassum influxes. The event fostered dialogue between scientists,

policymakers, and regional actors, reinforcing the need for coordinated international action and science-based strategies to support coastal resilience.





Sargassum replay https://youtu.be/BHRIVdXgU9w?si=eMGgd3qZEhDKwCPm
More on Sargassum side event https://geoblueplanet.org/turning-the-tide-on-sargassum-at-unoc/

IMDOS replay https://youtu.be/KUR5qvSV0IA?si=1oL1B7TatCCt_rIG
More on IMDOS Event https://geoblueplanet.org/push-for-global-marine-debris-monitoring-at-unoc/

Other events GEO Blue Planet Contributed to

UNEP–IAEA Plastic Pollution Workshop (11–13 Mar 2025, Monaco)

SargCOOP2 Interreg Project Kick-off Meeting (26–28 Mar 2025, Guadeloupe) https://sargassumhub.org/turning-the-tide-on-sargassum/

NAPexpo 2025 (12–15 Aug 2025, Lusaka) https://geoblueplanet.org/coastal-and-ocean-adaptation-in-focus-at-nap-expo-2025/

AAORIA Forum 2025 (25–26 Sep 2025, Brussels) https://geoblueplanet.org/ecops-at-aaoria-2025/

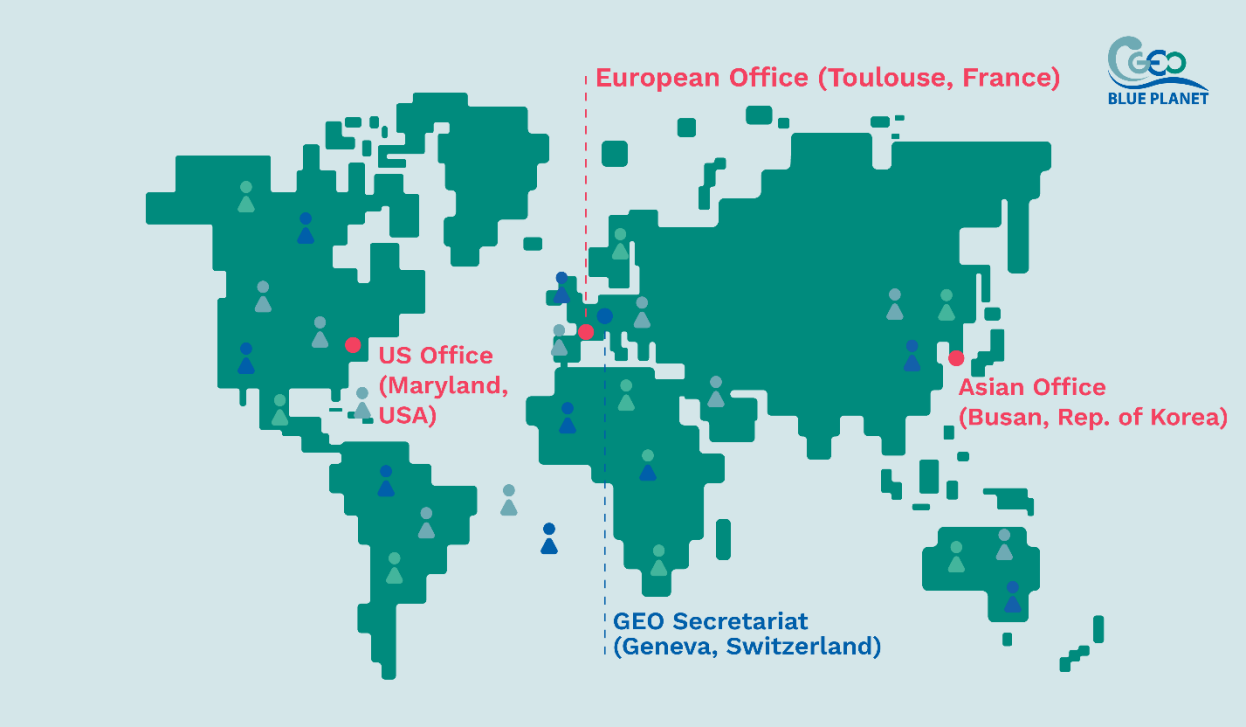
AfriGEO Symposium 2025 (6-9 Oct 2025) https://geoblueplanet.org/marine-and-coastal-session-at-afrigeo-symposium/

Global Gateway Sargassum Event (8 Oct 2025, Brussels) https://sargassumhub.org/3rd-eu-caribbean-global-gateway-conference-on-sargassum/

EuroGEO Week 2025 (13-15 Oct 2025) https://geoblueplanet.org/shaping-the-marine-and-coastal-action-group-at-eurogeo-2025/

SARSEA Project launch (28-29 Oct 2025) https://sargassumhub.org/sarseakickoffannoucement/

IOCS (1-4 Dec 2025) https://geoblueplanet.org/international-ocean-colour-science-meeting/


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