

ANNEX VII

GOOS REGIONAL POLICY

1. PURPOSE

Establishing and improving the GOOS are critically dependent on the coordinated development of GOOS Regional Alliances (GRAs) that contribute to and benefit from the global system. GRAs are created to facilitate sustained ocean monitoring to meet regional and national priorities. They require interagency collaboration and an internationally accepted policy. The activity and cooperation of GRAs is especially important to the development of the coastal module of GOOS.

2. QUALIFICATIONS

- 2.1 GRAs are formed by agreement between participating countries, national organizations, and/or international bodies (Regional monitoring networks, Regional Fishery Bodies, Regional Seas Conventions, etc.). Membership should be chosen to best serve the data and information needs of organizations that use, depend on, or are responsible for the management of the marine environment and its resources in the region.
- 2.2 To be recognized as a part of the GOOS, a GRA must conform to the GOOS principles, policies and practices that are established and endorsed inter-governmentally by the IOC, WMO or UNEP from time to time.
- 2.3 To the extent that the geographic range and activities of a GRA overlap with those of other GRAs, the GRAs involved must establish agreements to ensure effective use of resources to the benefit of all.
- 2.4 Each GRA is expected to benefit from and contribute to the activities of the GOOS Regional Forum established by the Intergovernmental Committee for GOOS (I-GOOS).

3. APPROVAL

- 3.1 The compliance of the activity of an organization requesting recognition as GRA with the GOOS principles must be reviewed by the GOOS Steering Committee and endorsed by the Intergovernmental Committee for GOOS (I-GOOS), upon evaluation of issues of inter-governmental cooperation, sponsorship or endorsement. The I-GOOS will inform the executive body of the GRA concerned about the evaluation. Where improvements, changes or actions are recommended to secure recognition, these shall be negotiated through the GOOS Project Office. After its endorsement by the I-GOOS, the case for each GRA will be submitted for the approval of the General Assembly or the Executive Council of the IOC.
- 3.2 Proposals to be recognized as a GRA must include the following:
 - Evidence that a management structure is in place that can deliver an integrated and sustained system by linking, enhancing and supplementing existing infrastructure and expertise in the region.
 - Provision of an acceptable business plan that has been endorsed by stakeholders (data providers and users) from the region and describes the procedures by which the observing system will be established, developed, and sustained. This must include procedures for quality assurance, conformance to internationally accepted standards and protocols for measurements, data management, and communications.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 4.1 To ensure that there is a single forum where GOOS activities can be considered in their entirety, all recognized GRAs are expected to: (i) be active members of the GOOS Regional Forum, (ii) be represented at meetings of the I-GOOS, (iii) provide periodic reports on their activities to I-GOOS. Reports should include among other things (a) analyses of the extent to which GOOS Principles have been implemented, and (b) information about the provision of data and information in forms and at rates required by user groups, about data quality, and about the continuity of data streams.
- 4.2 A GRA may be dropped from the GOOS based on the recommendation of I-GOOS and approval by the General Assembly or Executive Council of the IOC.