

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Annex I

Terms of Reference for the IOCARIBE-GOOS Working Group

1. PURPOSE:

The Working Group serves as the IOC Regional Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE) Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Programme's planning, implementation, and oversight body. The objective of IOCARIBE-GOOS is to deliver a sustained ocean observing and forecasting system for the Caribbean and adjacent regions. The Working Group will review and recommend to the IOCARIBE Sub-Commission priorities and actions required for the full establishment of a coordinated, integrated, interoperable, and sustainable regional ocean and coastal observing system in the IOCARIBE region.

2. FUNCTIONS:

2.1. Identify

- Regional sustained observing requirements for societal benefit areas.
- Transboundary observing networks and their link to Global GOOS and the Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (OceanOps) networks.
- Real-time and archived data streams from in situ and relevant satellite observations and their link to regional and global networks, including through the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE).
- Information, products, and model output for the region that provide societal benefits, and their links to GOOS and other international efforts.
- Gaps in the existing observing systems and develop mechanisms to fill these gaps, including project proposals.

2.2. Assess

- Regional readiness and capacity in each of these areas and the overall performance of the system in providing users with fit-for-purpose data and information products.

2.3. Advise, Train, and Build Capacity:

- Provide strategic direction and oversight for ocean observation initiatives in alignment with IOCARIBE-GOOS regional priorities.
- Advise Member States on technical requirements needed for deploying, operating, and maintaining sustainable ocean and coastal observing and forecast systems.
- Support IOCARIBE's Capacity Development Working Group and regional partners in establishing relevant technical training programmes and sustaining appropriate regional expertise.

- Foster regional collaboration and sharing of resources and expertise among Member States, organizations, and stakeholders.
- Encourage and assist with compliance with GOOS design principles and agreed standards for the observing and forecasting system.

2.4. Represent the GOOS Programme within the region:

- Represent the Caribbean and adjacent regions as a Regional Alliance within GOOS and ensure the integration and coordination of regional efforts with the Global GOOS framework.
- Encourage the development of Regional and National Ocean Observing Systems.
- Promote the open and free dissemination of ocean data for scientific research, environmental management, and socio-economic development.
- Promote the visibility and recognition of the services provided by ocean observing systems with governmental agencies and private companies.

3. MEETINGS:

The Working Group proposes one annual meeting and will encourage in-person meetings biannually. Other meetings will be arranged as required by the Programme Coordinator or Co-Coordinators. The IOCARIBE-GOOS Programme Coordinator(s), Programme Consultant, and Working Group project leaders shall ensure communication among the members between meetings.

4. COORDINATION:

The Sub-Commission will engage through the IOCARIBE Secretariat and Programme Coordinator or Co-Programme Coordinators for IOCARIBE-GOOS. The Programme Coordinator(s) will work with the IOCARIBE-GOOS Programme Consultant (as available) to execute the following duties: coordinate all activities leading to an integrated Ocean Observing and Forecasting System for the region, report to IOCARIBE, maintain collaboration with other UNESCO-IOC and IOCARIBE programmes, develop proposals and agreements, and represent IOCARIBE-GOOS at relevant global and regional forums.

5. WORKING GROUP:

The IOCARIBE-GOOS Working Group will be composed of a combination of GOOS National Focal Points (NFPs) are Member State representatives who will be able to represent their nation's ocean observing interests, as well as Technical Experts, Ocean Decade Project or Activity leads, Task Team leads, stakeholders, Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs), and relevant partners.

Working Group members will play an important role in guiding the development and implementation of the IOCARIBE-GOOS work plan, identifying programme goals and priorities, supporting the technical and operational components of the IOCARIBE-GOOS programme, and providing support, guidance, and review as needed to drive effective progress towards achieving the goals.

In accordance with recommendations from the IOCARIBE Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM), the Working Group will develop a work plan for the biennium. A calendar of intersessional work may be determined by the Working Group during its meetings. The WG may invite experts in different fields when necessary to accomplish its goals.

6. NOMINATIONS for GOOS NFPs (Member State Representatives):

In alignment with the recommendation from recent IOCARIBE Assemblies, Member States will nominate GOOS National Focal Points (NFPs) for the regional Working Group through a Circular Letter nomination process. IOCARIBE Member States are encouraged to submit one or two NFP nominations to join the Working Group, with a preference for putting forth one technical expert and one policy or governmental representative.

Nominated members will represent their country's interests in ocean observing and act as liaisons between the Working Group and national governing bodies on GOOS-related matters. While technical expertise is preferred, it is not mandatory for participation. Nominees should be able to support the Working Group's activities and provide relevant technical or policy guidance as needed.

Relevant expertise includes topics such as ocean observing (including in situ and satellite), forecasting, data management, operational services, ocean hazard and risk management, governance, resource mobilization and management, technology development, capacity development, coastal adaptation, and/or outreach and communications.

Nominations are evaluated by criteria that promote gender balance, geographic representation, and a broad spectrum of expertise within the field of ocean observation and its governance to enhance the strength, breadth, and diversity of the WG.

To become a GOOS NFP for the IOCARIBE-GOOS Working Group, please refer to IOCARIBE's [GOOS NFP Nomination Form](#) supporting [CL 029-24/LI/pw](#).

7. MOVING TOWARD EQUITY AND REPRESENTATION:

IOCARIBE-GOOS will promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Working Group by encouraging representation from historically underrepresented communities, including SIDS/Large Ocean States, Indigenous peoples, and Early Career Ocean Professionals.

8. REPORTS:

The IOCARIBE-GOOS Programme Coordinator(s) and the Secretariat will prepare an annual report, with contributions from all project coordinators, on the progress and achievements of IOCARIBE-GOOS, which will be circulated to the IOCARIBE-GOOS Working Group for review before being presented to the IOCARIBE Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) for consideration and approval. Financial reports will accompany the annual report to be presented to the Working Group for consideration.

The Programme Coordinator(s), in collaboration with the Working Group, will present work plans and summary reports to the IOCARIBE Board for consideration intersessionally.

9. TASK TEAMS:

The Working Group may establish open-ended sub-groups or task teams as needed to undertake specific activities of the approved work plan or other initiatives. Members of the Working Group are encouraged to join these Task Teams to accomplish more focused goals throughout the biennium.

10. DECISION MAKING:

The Working Group will develop and present recommendations that will go to the IOCARIBE biennial Intergovernmental Meeting for approval. Recommendations will either:

- a. be approved by the Member States at the annual Intergovernmental Meeting of the IOCARIBE, or
- b. be approved intersessionally by the IOCARIBE Board at any time during the year.

11. FINANCIAL RESOURCES:

Working Group members will normally participate at the expense of their national or host institutions, except in those circumstances where extra budgetary expenses are available.

12. AMENDMENTS:

The Working Group, on the advice of the Programme Coordinator(s), may review the IOCARIBE-GOOS structure and Terms of Reference periodically to agree on amendments as appropriate, and to ensure effectiveness in alignment with its objectives.