



Global Ocean Observing System



# Session: 2

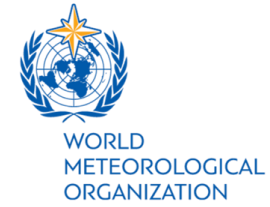
# GOOS reform - the big picture

Session chair: David Legler

15th GOOS Steering Committee meeting | 25-27 March 2026 | Hyderabad, India



Global Ocean Observing System



# Looking to the Future

David Legler, GOOS SC Co-Chair

15th GOOS Steering Committee meeting | 25-27 March 2026 | Hyderabad, India

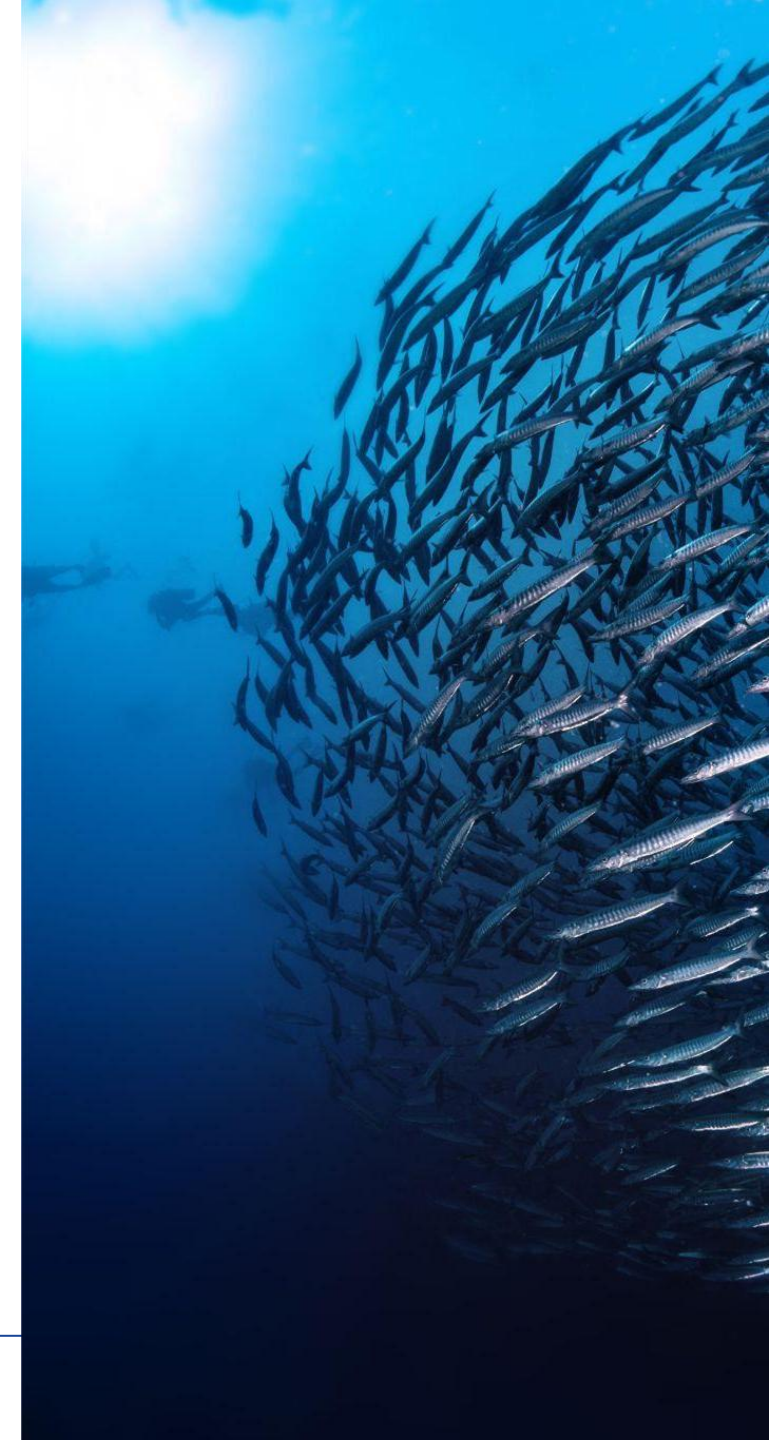
# WHY REFORM?

- GOOS is well known to implementers, but not known by many UN nations
- GOOS governance (and functionality) is not optimal - confusion about roles, functions, etc
- Observing system sponsor engagement is fragmented
- No observing plan but adopts many network observing plans - which sets up competition for resources...no recommendations of priorities
- There are too few GOOS staff to support current and aspirational GOOS action



# EVOLUTION OF GOOS through Reform (organization chart is just the start!)

- Identify and justify priority observing
- Sustained in its operations and multi-usable
- Integrated and interconnected system
- GOOS is more strategic
- GOOS is more authoritative
- GOOS is more decisional and authoritative
- GOOS is transparent in its deliberations, processes, & decisions
- GOOS Articulates and uses value-propositions for decision making



# Demonstrating value of the reform

What are the 4-5 priority actions (already underway or new) to demonstrate the improved GOOS?

- Priorities and Resourcing: What do we as GOOS state are the most important observation needs in 4-5 application areas: EOVs and priority obs?
- Ocean carbon and biodiversity plans, etc
- GOOS role and engagement in the coastal space?
- Data architecture, tools, and use of AI for 2030
- Additional GOOS 2030 strategy action?





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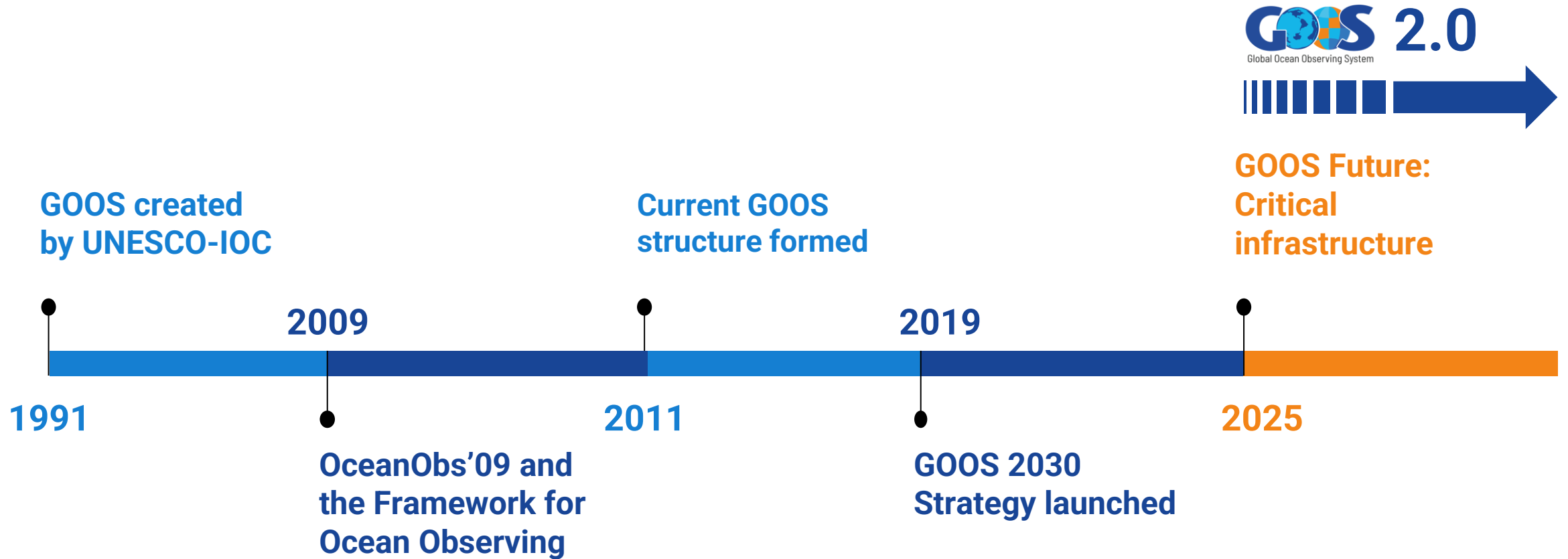


# Introduction to GOOS reform proposal and process so far

Joanna Post

15th GOOS Steering Committee meeting | 25-27 March 2026 | Hyderabad, India

# GOOS Evolution



# Mandate

## The 32nd IOC Assembly

- Requested the Executive Secretary to review progress with reform of GOOS governance to meet the needs of Member States, including any proposed actions. In response to the Neville Smith report.

## The 57th Executive Council

- Invited the Executive Secretary to develop a proposal to evolve GOOS governance and present the proposal to the 33rd IOC Assembly session

## The 33rd IOC Assembly

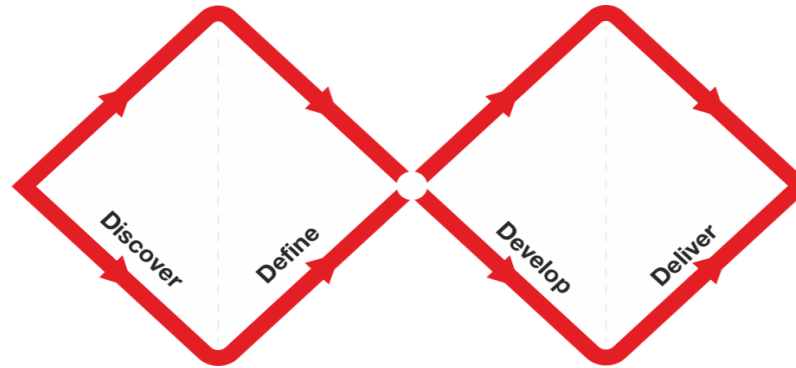
- Requests the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the GOOS Steering Committee and representatives from Member States and GOOS sponsors, to provide an update on the work to the IOC Executive Council at its the 59th session for Member States review and additional guidance;

## GOOS 2030 Strategy



# Proposed approach to evolve GOOS

The evolution of GOOS will follow a double diamond approach



## Phase 1 - 2025:

Define the mission and scope of GOOS moving forward – the WHY and the WHAT.

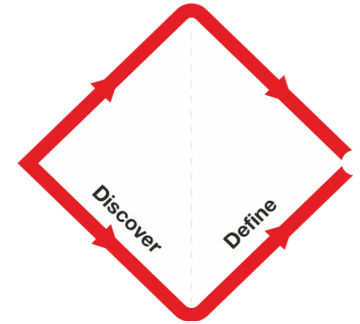
| Phase 1. Discover and Define GOOS |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1                                 | Mission and Scope review and revision |
| 2                                 | Structure review                      |
| 3                                 | Draft Proposal for GOOS reform        |
| 4                                 | Communications toolkit                |

Phase 2 - 2026+: the HOW - the approach taken to develop and deliver a reformed GOOS (subject to outcomes from 1).

| Phase 2. Develop and Deliver GOOS |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 5                                 | Revised GOOS (mission, scope, structure, TOR, processes, delivery mechanisms) |
| 6                                 | User and Uptake Strategy  |
| 7                                 | GOOS status and implementation plan   |
| 8                                 | IOC Data Architecture   |
| 9                                 | Communications Plan   |
| 10                                | GOOS 2030+ revised strategy (2029)  |

# Phase 1: First diamond

- Enable development of revised GOOS 2.0 structure aligned with GOOS 2030 objectives and addressing GOOS review (Smith report)
- Set GOOS up for better Member State engagement and overall success



## Progress:

### Workshop at GOOS SC-14

Discussed critical areas for GOOS's development, including strengthening positioning, refining messaging, optimizing organizational efficiency, and engaging key stakeholders

### Communications toolkit

Consultant developed GOOS communications toolkit

### Accenture Consultancy

Developed reform proposal

# A four-month journey with consultations across the GOOS system brought clarity to the mission and actionable recommendations for GOOS's future

## Who did we engage throughout the process?

Throughout the project, we engaged over 45 individuals across the GOOS ecosystem during one-on-one interviews, workshops, status meetings and offline feedback including the following:

- Member State representatives (including IOC Chair and Vice Chairs)
- GOOS Director and GOOS Secretariat staff
- GOOS Steering Committee Co-Chairs and members
- GOOS sponsors
- IOC Executive Secretary
- Expert panel scientific officers
- GRA and NFP representatives
- OceanOPS
- Other external collaborators (full list in [appendix](#))

In addition to interacting with key stakeholders, the project team reviewed over 40 documents, including TORs, GOOS reports, and others, to better understand the system's history and current state.



3

Project steering committee meetings held to align on key recommendations



2

Workshops held to co-create the mission statement and discuss key structural changes needed

45+

Stakeholders engaged through interviews, workshops, and written feedback



40+

Documents analyzed including 8 Terms of Reference



4

Success metrics for GOOS



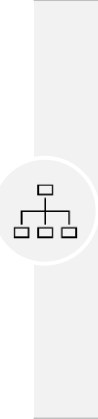




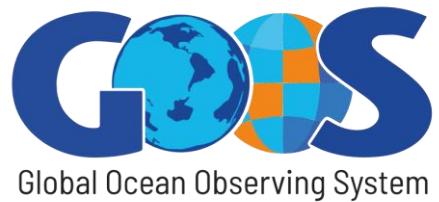
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GOOS components remaining after streaming and optimization



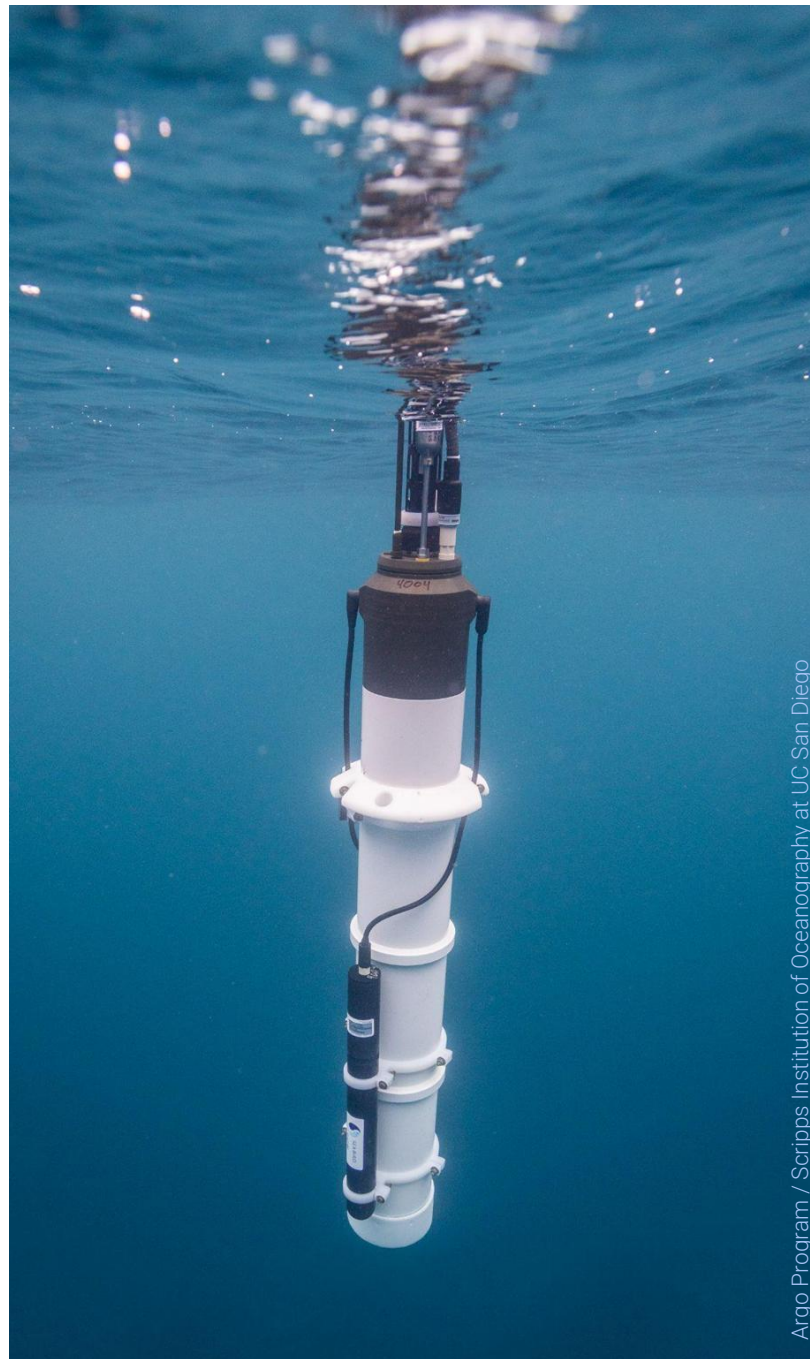
# The proposal for GOOS reform on a page

|  <p><b>Mission</b></p>                   | <p>To enable and evolve a globally integrated, responsive, and resilient ocean observing system for thriving communities and a healthy ocean</p>   |  |  |  |           |                               |   |  |  |            |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|-----------|-------------------------------|---|--|--|------------|--|--|---|--|
|  <p><b>Value Proposition</b></p>         | <p>We enable and evolve a globally integrated, responsive, and resilient ocean observing system for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Member States</b> to strengthen <b>marine ecosystems, ocean economy, national resilience, and maritime security</b> through data-driven decisions and policy-relevant observations</li> <li><b>Ocean Observing Data Providers</b> to advance <b>groundbreaking research</b> and relevant <b>operational ocean science</b></li> <li><b>Ocean Observing Data Users</b> to fuel <b>innovation</b>, support disaster risk reduction, and support thriving marine ecosystems and ocean economies via smarter, <b>data-driven decisions</b></li> </ul>  |  |  |  |           |                               |   |  |  |            |  |  |   |  |
|  <p><b>Structure</b></p>                 | <p>The following key changes are recommended to optimize how GOOS will be operating going forward:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Streamline GOOS reporting structure and refresh component responsibilities</b></li> <li><b>Consolidate sponsorship under the IOC and WMO</b> based on existing contributions and distinguish sponsor, donor, and partner roles</li> <li><b>Enhance resource mobilization through the Donor Coordination Group</b> to convene funders, foster alignment, and drive investment for GOOS</li> <li><b>Elevate the GOOS Steering Committee’s function</b> through stronger strategic oversight, targeted skillsets, and longer terms</li> <li><b>Empower the GOOS Secretariat</b> to have clear identity to support the system</li> <li><b>Introduce the Infrastructure Coordination Group (ICG)</b> as an OCG with broadened mandate to centralize the coordination of GOOS networks and other observing communities</li> <li><b>Strengthen NFP’s role and interaction model</b> to further enable Member States participation, national coordination, and integration with GOOS standards</li> </ol> |  |  |  |           |                               |   |  |  |            |  |  |   |  |
|  <p><b>Accountability mechanism</b></p> | <p>GOOS components to report on four results linked to the revised mission to drive system-wide performance and ensure accountability</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Objective</th> <th>Enable ocean observing system</th> <th>Evolve globally integrated ocean observing system</th> <th>Be responsive to Member States, suppliers of ocean observation data, and users</th> <th>Ensure resilience of the global ocean observing system</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Key result</td> <td>% observing systems with interoperable EOV dataflows</td> <td># of Member States contributing to and sharing data from GOOS Networks</td> <td># of co-developed initiatives or products with stakeholders</td> <td>% increase in GOOS funding and commitments</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>                         |  |  |  | Objective | Enable ocean observing system | Evolve globally integrated ocean observing system | Be responsive to Member States, suppliers of ocean observation data, and users | Ensure resilience of the global ocean observing system | Key result | % observing systems with interoperable EOV dataflows | # of Member States contributing to and sharing data from GOOS Networks | # of co-developed initiatives or products with stakeholders | % increase in GOOS funding and commitments |
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| Key result   | % observing systems with interoperable EOV dataflows   | # of Member States contributing to and sharing data from GOOS Networks | # of co-developed initiatives or products with stakeholders                    | % increase in GOOS funding and commitments             |           |                               |   |  |  |            |  |  |   |  |
|  <p><b>Governance</b></p>              | <p><b>New governance meetings to be introduced:</b> 1) Donor Coordination Group to strengthen resource mobilization, 2) NFP Advisory Group with IODE representatives to improve data exchange linkages, 3) GOOS Conference and joint Panel Meeting to strengthen cross-component coordination</p> <p><b>Existing governance meetings to be clarified and strengthened</b> e.g., Executive Committee to start exploring innovative ideas, standardized governance across Expert Panels</p>  |  |  |  |           |                               |   |  |  |            |  |  |   |  |



# Thank you

[goosocean.org](http://goosocean.org)



Argo Program / Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego

