



**COMBINE, COORDINATE, COOPERATE**

Be a part of the future EuroGEO  
Project 101134335 — EuroGEOSec

A large circular graphic is centered on the page. It features a dark blue globe with orange and yellow highlights, representing a satellite or space theme. The globe is surrounded by a light green circular area filled with numerous thin, green, curved lines that resemble data or network connections. A semi-transparent blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the circle, containing the section header text.

## D4.4 Sustainability strategy and action plan for EuroGEO (revised)

#OneEuroGEO

## Abstract

The sustainability strategy and Action Plan for EuroGEO (D4.4) complements a series of Deliverables charting the way to a EuroGEO Secretariat.

The first element, D2.1 “Updated proposal of the EuroGEO Implementation Plan - initial version” was based on a large consultation of the EuroGEO Community during the 2024 EuroGEO workshop. It defines the revised vision, mission, functions and governance of a EuroGEO Secretariat supporting the European EO community and its contribution to GEO.

The proposal built on all outcomes of the EuroGEOsec project. It condensed the efforts to build the EuroGEO ecosystem and activities; research and innovation impacts; and strategic discussions held EuroGEO during the EuroGEO Workshop, complemented by diagnosis reports of the EuroGEO Action Groups supported by the JRC-KCEO.

This effort presented a single vision for a revived, relevant EuroGEO for the third decade of GEO. The proposal considered the evolution of the strategy of GEO, and the preparation of its new strategic implementation plan, but also the change in the European Earth Observation (EO) ecosystem surrounding EuroGEO.

The concept introduced a revised governance scheme and differentiates the roles of a EuroGEO Secretariat, between Activities and Services - supporting the EuroGEO Community. These differentiated roles are essential to distinguish core funding from “on demand” activities supported by an agile EuroGEO Secretariat, essentially based on outsourcing.

The second deliverable, D4.3 “Sustainability strategy and action plan for EuroGEO - draft version” provided initial costing estimates and tentative budget. It established that core funding activities should require continuous funding, “Services” could be scaled according to the actual needs, funding opportunities and be performance-based. Such services could be funded through various avenues: in kind contributions; grants; projects to allow a large contribution base from various actors and programmes, enabling to enlarge the sources of potential contributions to EuroGEO, and consistent with the core concept (the 3Cs) underlying EuroGEO.

Finally, D4.1 “Potential legal structures for EuroGEO - draft version” and D4.2 “Potential legal structures for EuroGEO - final version”, investigated potential legal structures allowing to support the mandate of the EuroGEO Secretariat and its implementation plan, while preserving its governance model.

A scenario for 2026 was proposed, whereby the Secretariat would be hosted by a European entity, selected through an IPO (an offtaker) with demonstrated capabilities in communication and management. The offtaker would externalize specialized function of the Secretariat (conveyor belt) to trusted, competent entities, mobilized on demand. In this scenario, the offtaker would be supported by external European contributors such as the Horizon programme, KCEO, REA, EEA, GEO Secretariat.

These elements were circulated to the EuroGEO High Level Working Group during the European Caucus meeting held on the occasion of the GEO Forum (Rome, May 5-9), and published to the EuroGEO website as a White Paper.

Several representatives expressed interest to engage into the EuroGEO Secretariat, pledges were expressed, and the European Commission is committing significant resources to support the initiative.

This report builds on the latest status of discussions to present: a short-term action plan; a consolidated budget estimate for the EuroGEO Secretariat, considering the current pledges and upcoming calls in preparation for the upcoming budget cycle, and a draft proposal for an open call for “Independent Project Office”.

*Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.*

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| v0.x              | draft before peer-review approval |
| v1.x              | After the first review            |
| v2.x              | After the second review           |
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| STATUS / DISSEMINATION LEVEL |                                         |  |                     |              |
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| STATUS                       |                                         |  | DISSEMINATION LEVEL |              |
| S0                           | Approved/Released/Ready to be submitted |  | <b>PU</b>           | Public       |
| S1                           | Reviewed                                |  | <b>CO</b>           | Confidential |
| S2                           | Pending for review                      |  |                     |              |
| S3                           | Draft for comments                      |  | <b>CI</b>           | Classified   |
| S4                           | Under preparation                       |  |                     |              |



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# 1. White paper: the new era for EuroGEO

## 1.1. EuroGEO's strategic vision

GEO's post-2025 strategy envisions a world where Earth Intelligence is universally accessible, driving systemic shifts needed to accelerate the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals and fostering a sustainable future for people and the planet.

In Europe, the EU Space Programme<sup>1</sup> seeks to harness the transformational potential of Earth Observation for our societies and citizens' lives in a fast-changing international environment, by empowering policy makers to design, implement, and monitor European and national policies; as well as empowering citizens in their daily lives.

The Space Programme Regulation established Copernicus as the European contribution to the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)<sup>2</sup>, managed by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). It seeks to establish national and European policies as drivers of the demand for commercial applications and services in Europe. In this Endeavor, it invites the European Commission and Member States to establish closer links between Copernicus and policies. The private sector, in particular SMEs and start-ups, should be stimulated to develop applications based on Copernicus data and information, aiming to develop a competitive Earth Observation data ecosystem in Europe.

Europe aims to remain a global leader in sustainable prosperity and competitiveness<sup>3,4</sup>. In this direction, building on the outcomes of the EU Space Programme<sup>5</sup>, EuroGEO should support the transformational global vision of GEO, and promote Europe as a lighthouse for global sustainability.

Already, multilateral frameworks are greatly benefitting from Copernicus and other European observing systems and infrastructures (like ICOS, EuroArgo, etc.). The European EO sector can strongly support EU commitments towards this global agenda<sup>6</sup>.

In this context, it is important to note the need to provide products and services in a consistent manner so that they can be used both in EU Policy directly as well as in the global provision of data for European commitments to international Conventions and Treaties<sup>7</sup>.

In this context, EuroGEO implements a user-driven research and innovation agenda and develops EO applications that support user communities addressing EU policies like the European Green Deal and GEO priorities. Supported by Horizon Europe, EuroGEO fosters demonstration, incubation, up-scaling, and replication. EuroGEO also coordinates the European contribution to the GEO global initiatives and priorities. EuroGEO thus supports the valorisation of Copernicus outputs by delivering user-tailored services in Europe, and also on an international scale, through the GEO initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> European Parliament & Council of the European Union. (2021). *Regulation (EU) 2021/696 establishing the Union Space Programme and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme*. Official Journal of the European Union, L 170, 69–148.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (85)

<sup>3</sup> Europe's choice. Political guidelines for the next European Commission. 2024-2029. Ursula von der Leyen. July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

<sup>4</sup> European Commission. (2025). *A Competitiveness Compass for the EU* (COM(2025) 30 final). Brussels.

<sup>5</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2021/696, Art. 6. "Actions in support of an innovative and competitive Union space sector"*

<sup>6</sup> European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Rixen, M., Dowell, M., Immler, F., Dusart, J. and Kristopaitis, E., *Earth Observation Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/18985>, JRC136730.

<sup>7</sup> European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Rixen, M., Dowell, M., Immler, F., Dusart, J. and Kristopaitis, E., *Earth Observation Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/18985>, JRC136730.

## 1.2. Unity and synergies are key to realise this vision

In 2024, the EuroGEO Community<sup>8</sup> was largely consulted to redefine the EuroGEO vision and objectives, in light of the advances in Earth Observation in Europe, and the transition in GEO towards Earth Intelligence.

The revised EuroGEO vision states the willingness to leverage and build synergies among the multiple contributions to Earth Intelligence in Europe—primarily through Copernicus, EU-funded projects and initiatives, national contributions, and a stronger involvement of the private sector— to deliver a coordinated contribution to GEO.

Over the past period, Europe successfully addressed the challenge of open data, open knowledge, open science, and interoperability. The new challenge for the downstream EO community is to bridge the “grand distance” between data and intelligence, i.e., from Research and Innovation to Operations and the Market.

Embedding the notion of Earth Intelligence implies managing change in daily practices of the downstream Earth Observation sector<sup>9</sup>. This calls for a proactive and operational initiative capable of conducting change management on a large scale, engaging the EO downstream value chain, and in particular, the industry. Building on the ongoing efforts of Copernicus and other initiatives and bringing its direct community engagement through Action Groups, EuroGEO can act as a catalyst for change.

Reflecting these elements, and the large consultation process conducted, the current revised vision of the EuroGEO initiative is:

*“EuroGEO promotes, showcases and stimulates Combination, Coordination and Cooperation to serve European and international policies and users through Earth Intelligence leveraging European excellence”*

Supported by EuroGEO objectives:

- Actively stimulate and monitor the European contribution to GEO and increase GEO benefits for Europe, including through enhanced communication and engagement with regional GEOs and through national and European cooperation programmes.
- Act as a Coordination forum for European and national initiatives relevant to both the GEO work programme and European priorities. Building on an integrated and collaborative community to reduce the fragmentation of actions and of the European EO ecosystem; both supporting the implementation of the Green Deal and GEO engagement priorities as #OneEuroGEO.
- Address the significant gap between policy needs, end-user requirements, and technology providers through (i) the Combination or integration of activities to reach critical mass of use, and (ii) Cooperation beyond individual programmes and user communities in Europe.
- In this endeavor, ensure a broad participation of both demand (institutions, public entities, international conventions) and solution providers, leveraging the entire Copernicus value chain and user community, the private sector, and platforms/twins/infrastructures within its Action Groups. GEO instruments and Regional GEOs should be engaged.
- Support Action Groups mobilised as agents of change, embedding the notion of Earth Intelligence to produce and scale up sustainable and operational solutions in support of

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<sup>8</sup> Defined as stakeholders of the downstream EO sector in Europe engaged in GEO: European Commission DGs and JRC-KCEO; High Level Working Group; Entrusted Entities ; Horizon projects ; ERICs and EDICs ; EuroGEO Action Groups ; EuroGEO Workshop participants.

<sup>9</sup> e-shape project. European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement 820852. [www.e-shape.eu](http://www.e-shape.eu)

policies and end users.

*Note to readers:* the previous section reflects the wording of the EuroGEO vision through the various exchanges within the EuroGEOSec consortium, European Commission, HLWG, captured through D2.1, Vfinal March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025; and conveyed through an online White Paper<sup>10</sup>. An alternative formulation was proposed by the European Commission (REA) in September 2025, which would require reopening the text to consult other European Commission participants (RTD, DEFIS, JRC), suggesting a presentation and endorsement by the HLWG.

*“EuroGEO combines European EO assets, coordinates GEO related activities and fosters cooperation across countries/regions, institutions, and sectors. It promotes, showcases responding to EU policy needs, drives the EO research to operations pipeline and stimulates European excellence to create Earth Intelligence for national, regional, and international policies and users.”*

### 1.3. A revised EuroGEO framework

The ambitious objectives of EuroGEO require a strong and functional governance framework that coordinates the different components of the initiative and ensures a strategic alignment of its outcomes. A draft proposal was put forward based on a large consultation of the EO downstream sector, organised as the EuroGEO Workshop 2024.

Most contributions to EuroGEO should be provided in-kind<sup>11</sup>, leveraging existing resources that are already mobilised within GEO through EuroGEO. This approach ensures additionality by optimising the use of available resources without requiring significant new financial commitments.

To facilitate this, a **Coordination Board** should oversee the EuroGEO initiative, ensuring efficient supervision, resource mobilisation, and strategic commitment. It is expected that the Coordination Board will be the prime coordination mechanism engaging the European Caucus to GEO, Copernicus, European Commission DGs, the private sector, and EuroGEO Action Group Chairs<sup>12</sup>.

EuroGEO **Action Groups** structure the engagement in EuroGEO through thematic areas of European relevance<sup>13</sup>. Under the supervision of the Coordination Board, it is essential for EuroGEO to ensure full alignment of Action Group themes with European priorities. GEO recently restructured its activities around Focus Areas, which are relevant to the global context and cross-sectoral. As the regional implementation of GEO to the European context, EuroGEO should maintain its European relevance, and federate efforts to provide the necessary interface between European priorities and the GEO Focus Areas. To guarantee solid engagement of the European EO community to the next phase of EuroGEO, it is however essential to provide Action Groups with a clear mandate; targeted outcomes and resources. The mandate of Action Groups should be revised to operate both as practitioner forums and think tanks, as well as agents of change for improving R&I impact in Europe. With the support of a Secretariat, EuroGEO Action Groups should onboard a culture of an integrated ‘conveyor belt’ (or Research to Operation “R2O” in the GEO Work Programme), supported by comprehensive support services throughout all stages of the innovation process.

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<sup>10</sup> [https://eurogeosec.eu/pdf/White\\_Paper\\_EuroGEO\\_f.pdf](https://eurogeosec.eu/pdf/White_Paper_EuroGEO_f.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> For the scientific and technical contributions to the content of EuroGEO, these activities could be resourced through the EU Framework Programme for R&I, and other programmes managed by the European Commission and Member States. Contributions for the EuroGEO secretariat would require a core of dedicated funding and should further leverage existing in-kind resources that are already mobilised within GEO through EuroGEO.

<sup>12</sup> The proposal is not to create a new body redundant to the governance of the EU Space programme, rather to build on existing governance schemes.

<sup>13</sup> [https://eurogeosec.eu/action\\_group.html](https://eurogeosec.eu/action_group.html)

**National engagement within EuroGEO** through national GEOs and Copernicus national Collaboration Programme enhances the European representation in GEO initiatives by coordinating data flow across sectors and pooling resources for global projects. Coordination helps identify key national experts for GEO's working groups. EuroGEO supports national contexts by promoting open science, knowledge, data, and capacity building, adopting common standards, and ensuring data interoperability. Advanced tools are leveraged to connect local innovations with global GEO initiatives.

Building on ongoing European partnerships, EuroGEO should engage further with **regional GEOs** to support the uptake of EO solutions globally, particularly by promoting Copernicus services and fostering international collaboration. In partnership with the regional GEOs, EuroGEO should bridge the gap between technical EO capabilities and their application in developing regions. Together, they can advance sustainable development by scaling EO applications, supporting capacity building, and further integrating EO into international and national policies.

The **EuroGEO Secretariat** should adopt a lean structure, focusing only on core activities, thus maintaining limited fixed costs. Support activities should rely on external expertise, on a variable cost basis and through in-kind contributions. This principle is implemented through a distinction between "**EuroGEO Activities**" and "**EuroGEO Services**", ensuring a clear separation between operational tasks and strategic services.

The **EuroGEO Activities** fulfill the regular tasks of a Secretariat:

- **Planning and reporting** to the Coordination Board and mobilizing the EuroGEO community for the update and monitoring the EuroGEO Implementation Plan: the evidence-based roadmap for the European contribution to GEO, ensuring proper resourcing of activities through in-kind and direct funding;
- **Organisational support** to the governance of EuroGEO and the organisation of the EuroGEO Workshop, a prime event for coordination and engagement fostering progress and strategic developments for the downstream EO sector in Europe;
- **Stakeholder engagement**, with the implementation and monitoring of the EuroGEO stakeholder engagement plan aligned with the ambitions of the Implementation Plan, ensuring diversity and the inclusion of youth. It ensures a strong liaison and operational engagement in the Action Groups with Copernicus, JRC-KCEO, DestinE, National Data Platforms, and large infrastructures;
- **Communication** and promotion of the outcomes of EuroGEO coordination efforts as #OneEuroGEO.

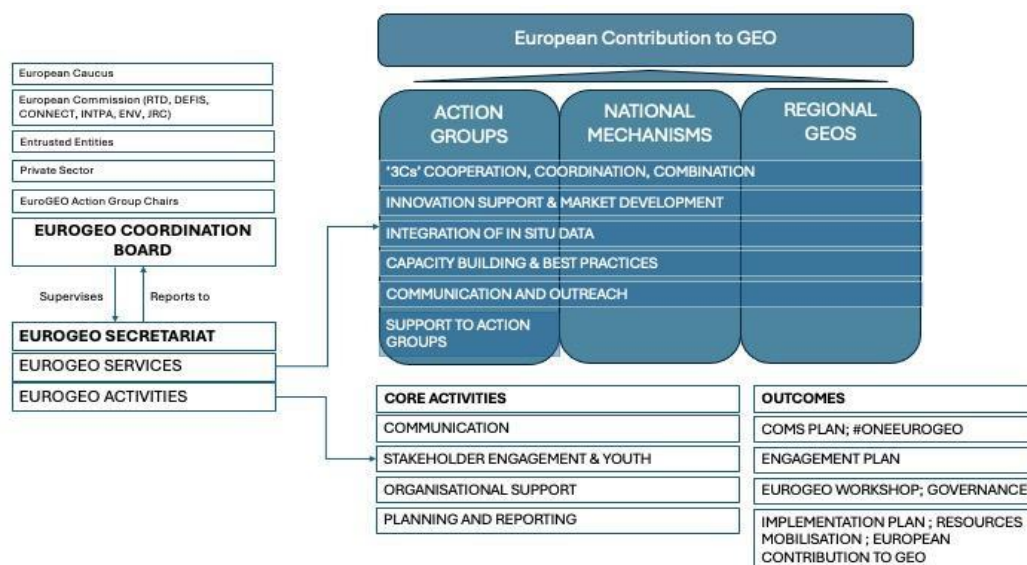
The **EuroGEO Services** should be specifically designed to bring value to the European Earth Observation sector. Their target audience includes **Action Groups**—acting as solution providers and agents of change—alongside **national coordination mechanisms** and **regional GEOs**. Draft service definitions are proposed, based on the collected feedback from the consultation of the EuroGEO Action Groups:

- **“3Cs” Cooperation, Coordination, Combination.** EuroGEO acts as a coordination forum by aligning European and national initiatives with the GEO work programme and European priorities. This coordinated approach supports key goals such as the Green Deal, ensuring alignment with GEO's global engagement priorities under the #OneEuroGEO framework.
- **Innovation Support and Market Development.** EuroGEO offers a portfolio of externalised services that help the EuroGEO community maximise the impact of Research & Innovation (R&I) on Operations and Market uptake. These services include commercialization support,

co-design, data/infrastructure guidance, and the development of operational pipelines with the support of the Research and Innovation Observatory (RIO)<sup>14</sup>;

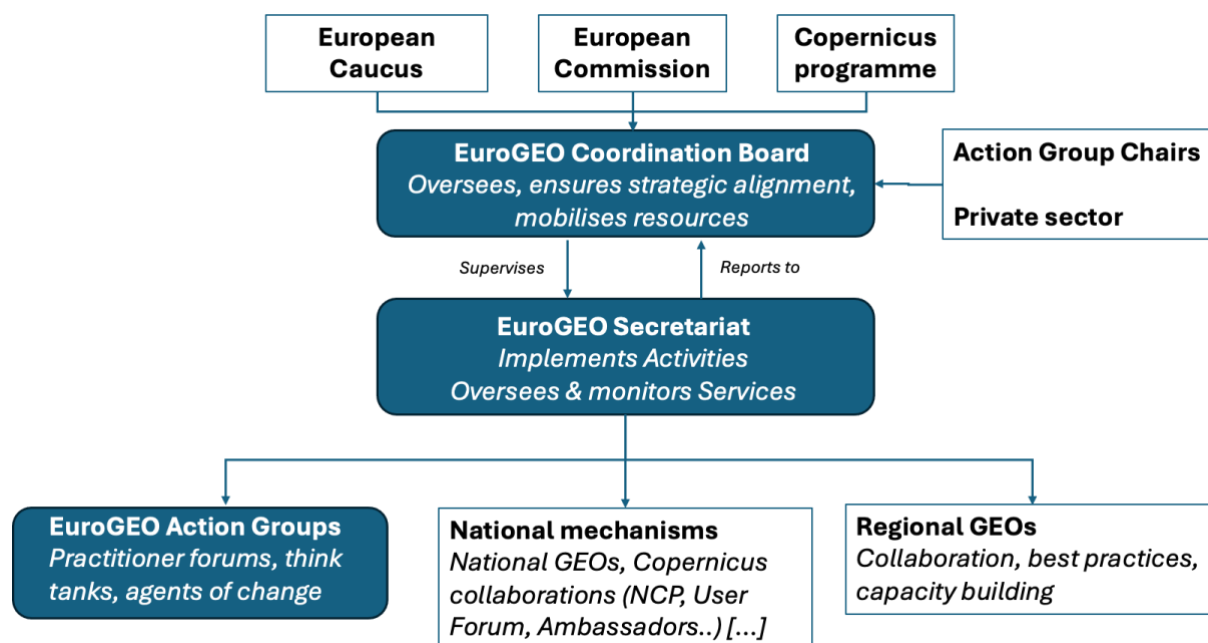
- **Integration of in-situ data.** EuroGEO catalyses ongoing European efforts, primarily under Copernicus, to strengthen the synergies between in-situ and EO, e.g., improving in-situ data usability, licensing, maximizing efficiency, reducing duplication of work, and providing guidance to in-situ data users.
- **Capacity Building and Best Practices.** EuroGEO gathers initiatives to empower Action Groups by organising targeted training sessions, workshops, and knowledge exchange initiatives. EuroGEO promotes and shares open-source tools and frameworks and champions the adoption of interoperable standards and the GEO and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data sharing and management principles across Action Groups.
- **Communication and outreach.** EuroGEO ensures that each Action Group develops a distinct identity and effectively communicates its objectives and outcomes, while remaining aligned with the broader EuroGEO initiative. This approach strengthens the visibility and impact of each Action Group while reinforcing its connection to EuroGEO's overarching mission of leveraging EO data for tackling global challenges.
- **Support to Action Groups.** EuroGEO supports Action Groups by facilitating meetings, monitoring membership, drafting and monitoring their Activity Plans, organizing meetings, and providing consultancy services for surveys, reports, and interactions with relevant Action Groups.

**Figure 1: Concept of a EuroGEO Secretariat coordinating the European contribution to GEO and increasing benefits for the downstream EO sector in Europe.**



<sup>14</sup> <https://www.eurogeosec.eu/research.html>

**Figure 2: Alternative (simplified) view of the EuroGEO Secretariat concept. In blue, EuroGEO governance organs. In white, engaged stakeholder and bodies.**



### Pathways towards a sustainable EuroGEO Secretariat

At the heart of EuroGEO is the notion of “Cooperation, Coordination, Combination”. In an Earth Observation ecosystem rich in initiatives, projects and programmes, and in an era of scarce public resources, this core value is central to making the most of European resources, creating synergies, and avoiding duplication of efforts.

The EuroGEO Secretariat should maintain a lean and nimble operational structure by strategically outsourcing service delivery to trusted and experienced partners. This approach should allow the Secretariat to focus on its core functions, such as coordination, governance, and strategic oversight, while leveraging the expertise and capacity of external partners for specialised services.

By collaborating with established and reliable partners, EuroGEO should ensure high-quality service delivery that aligns with its goals and values. This model enhances flexibility, enabling the Secretariat to scale services according to demand and available resources without incurring the overhead costs associated with an expanded internal structure. Moreover, the outsourcing framework should foster innovation and efficiency by drawing on the diverse capabilities of a broad network of contributors.

The legal structure supporting EuroGEO should prioritize flexibility and scalability to adapt to evolving demands and funding opportunities while maintaining a modular framework for distinguishing continuous "Core" activities from scalable "Service" activities. It should ensure transparency and accountability through robust financial reporting, governance oversight, and regular audits, fostering trust among stakeholders.

Legal recognition is essential to establish the initiative’s legitimacy, enabling it to engage in contracts, receive funding, and manage resources in compliance with EU regulations. The structure should also facilitate efficient resource management, allowing for the handling of diverse funding sources, including grants, in-kind contributions, and project-based funding.

An integrated governance framework is critical, with a Coordination Board empowered to oversee resource mobilisation and prioritise activities while ensuring inclusive representation from public, private, and academic stakeholders. An important element for the legal structure is also its capability to be instated over a short- to medium-term horizon, in order to maintain momentum for EuroGEO.

Three sustainability pathways were explored for the organisation and funding of a EuroGEO Secretariat:

- In the short term and for a limited timeframe, a call for International Project Office could be issued by DG RTD to mandate an offtaker<sup>15</sup> entrusted to operate the EuroGEO Secretariat functions, based on its internal resources.
- The growth of the initiative in the medium term could justify the creation of an independent AiSBL (International Non-Profit Association, based in Brussels), funded through a combination of national and European funds to operate a EuroGEO Secretariat. This option would involve the identification and commitment of seed Members willing to sustain EuroGEO in the long run.
- Longer- term options involving an EDIC or an ERIC were evaluated as not suitable for this stage.

## 1.4. Draft short term action plan for EuroGEO

### 1.4.1. Existing background

|                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Initial implementation plan</b> | Initial implementation plan should be based on the EuroGEOsec Implementation Plan, compiled from EGW24 and EGW25 and European contributions to GEO work programme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- European contributions to GEO work programme were submitted by European partners through the 2024 GEO call for proposals.</li> <li>- EGW24 provides the short-term activities for support services to the Action Groups; and a draft Stakeholder engagement plan.</li> <li>- EGW25 outcomes build on the Copernicus SRIA (Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda) and the JRC-KCEO Policy engagement. It substantiates the future contributions to GEO and pathways for future R&amp;I funding programmes.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Stakeholder engagement plan</b> | Initial stakeholder engagement plan should be based on the corresponding Action Group sections included to the EuroGEOsec Implementation Plan, compiled from EGW24.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

### 1.4.2. Short-term Action Plan (2026 and after)

|                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Coordination Board<br/>(European Commission)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene the first meeting of the coordination board.</li> <li>• Evaluate the in-kind contributions, programmes and key partners contributing to the initial implementation plan, identify initial commitments from existing programmes.</li> <li>• Initiate a discussion on the governance and membership of Action groups.</li> <li>• Review and discuss the initial stakeholder engagement plan.</li> <li>• Discuss the monitoring and reporting framework.</li> <li>• Set up the process for an annual update of the implementation plan.</li> <li>• Ensure update on ongoing European contributions to GEO.</li> <li>• Initiate the discussion for the next European contribution to GEO.</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

<sup>15</sup> e.g., international organisation, Member States institution, Foundation.

|                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for EGW26 and EGW27.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Regional GEOs</b><br>(GEO Secretariat Regional coordinator)                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate to regional coordination meetings organised by GEOSec and engage bilaterally with regional GEOs.</li> <li>• Coordinate with DG INTPA and National donor agencies to reference ongoing European activities in downstream EO ensure their promotion through the EuroGEO implementation plan as part of the European contribution to GEO.</li> <li>• Promote these achievements and activities in GEO and Regional GEO events.</li> </ul>                    |
| <b>National mechanisms</b>                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with the Copernicus National Collaboration Programme; National GEOs; EuroGEO High Level Working Group to propose an initial series of Joint Action Plans (JAPs) to increase the use of Earth Intelligence in national contexts. These JAPs should be included to the EuroGEO implementation plan as part of the mobilization of resources and coordination of programmes.</li> <li>• Promote Earth Intelligence through National engagement in GEO.</li> </ul> |
| <b>“3Cs” Cooperation, Coordination, Combination within the thematic Action Groups</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the active participation of Copernicus; DestinE; European funded projects and initiatives and National programmes to the thematic Action Groups.</li> <li>• Monitor engagement and targeted onboarding.</li> <li>• Review, implement, monitor the “3C” section of the implementation plan (EGW24 inputs).</li> <li>• Build EuroGEO as the major federated European forum for downstream EO in Europe.</li> </ul>                                               |
| <b>Innovation Support and Market Development</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with EUSPA, DestinE, Initiatives (e.g. Space Climate Observatory) and incubators to support best practices.</li> <li>• Build cases studies with the Action Groups on efficient management of R2O, building on the experience demonstrated within e-shape and EuroGEOSec.</li> <li>• Promote Earth Intelligence achievements and case studies in GEO.</li> </ul>                                                                                                |
| <b>Integration of in-situ data.</b>                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with EEA. Build on the initial findings of EGW24 captured by the EuroGEOSec draft implementation plan.</li> <li>• Engage the Action Groups into activities regarding the integration of in situ data for Earth Intelligence.</li> <li>• Promote this contribution to GEO.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Capacity Building and Best Practices</b>                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with Copernicus. Build on the initial findings of EGW24 captured by the EuroGEOSec draft implementation plan.</li> <li>• Engage the Action Groups into the capacity building activities for improved Earth Intelligence.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop toolkits and training webinars on the use of Copernicus and DestinE data to develop Earth Intelligence products along the R2O schema or the conveyor belt approach.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Communication and Outreach</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a communication plan with each action group, including web presence, social media, event calendar ...</li> <li>• Ensure effective mobilization and contribution of Action Groups to major events (GEO; Copernicus; DestinE; ESA ...).</li> <li>• Promote the European contribution to GEO as #OneEuroGEO</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Support to Action Groups</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide operational secretariat support to Action Groups.</li> <li>• Capture the need for R&amp;I from Action Groups and review and update the implementation plan.</li> <li>• Review and update the stakeholder engagement plan.</li> <li>• Review proposals and progresses on the European contribution to GEO.</li> </ul> |

## 2. Budget estimate

### 2.1. Cost drivers

EuroGEO's Sustainability Strategy should distinguish core Secretariat Activities from Secretariat Services. Secretariat Activities are assimilated to fixed costs, while Services aim to be “on demand”, formulated as variable costs. This distinction is important to identify the potential funding sources supporting the sustainability of the EuroGEO Secretariat.

Table 1 is an initial cost breakdown for the EuroGEO Secretariat, with an attempt to qualify the cost centers between fixed and variable costs.

**Table 1: Initial cost breakdown for the EuroGEO Secretariat.**

| Type               | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Cost driver                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EuroGEO Services   | Cooperation, Coordination, Combination                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Variable. Targeted Stakeholder Engagement Plan per group, including stakeholders mapping, enrolment, funding opportunities. Production of the inputs to the SRIA                                                          |
| EuroGEO Services   | Innovation Support and Market Development.<br>Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercialisation Support</li> <li>- Co-design</li> <li>- Data/Infrastructure Guidance as a service</li> <li>- Operational pipelines</li> </ul> | Variable. Licence to the Observatory, cost per licence, maintenance and development, content management, user management, performing analyses on the data. Services: Number of pipelines addressed. Number of activities. |
| EuroGEO Services   | Integration of in situ data                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Variable. Targeted engagement plan per group.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| EuroGEO Services   | Building Capacities and promoting Best Practices                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Variable. Per Capacity Building module; per best practice published.                                                                                                                                                      |
| EuroGEO Services   | Communication and Outreach                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Variable. Targeted communication and outreach plan per Group; per activity.                                                                                                                                               |
| EuroGEO Services   | Support to Action Groups                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Variable. Per Action Group.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| EuroGEO Activities | Communication (institutional): e.g. Communication Plan; Website                                                                                                                                                                                  | Fixed costs                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| EuroGEO Activities | Stakeholder engagement and Youth: Stakeholder engagement Plan; engagement activities                                                                                                                                                             | Fixed costs                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

| Type               | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Cost driver |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
|                    | (Workshops; Bilateral; Memorandums)                                                                                                                                                                                                        |             |
| EuroGEO Activities | Organizational support; Coordination Board; Action Groups; National Coordination mechanisms; EuroGEO Workshop                                                                                                                              | Fixed costs |
| EuroGEO Activities | Planning and reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates the delivery of the EuroGEO Implementation Plan with governing bodies and partners</li> <li>Coordinates and monitors the European contribution to GEO</li> </ul> | Fixed costs |

## 2.2. Initial cost estimate

Some cost dimensions were already addressed by the EuroGEOsec project in year 1 of operations and are presented in Table 2. This Table should be updated by M20 (D4.4), based on a detailed activity breakdown and cost estimates of the EuroGEO Secretariat activities.

A EuroGEO Secretariat annual budget depends strongly on the expected level of “EuroGEO Services”, and pledges which can be committed to support activities. Table 2 proposes an initial assessment. The subsequent sections capture the current level of contributions and pledges earmarked to the initiative. A 2026 budget simulation is therefore proposed by Table 3 and Table 4.

**Table 2: Initial overview for specific cost items.**

| Type                                                | Activity                               | Cost item                                                                                                                                                                             | Expenses (EUR) | Operations (p.m.) |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>I - Variable costs (annual, per cost driver)</b> |                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                |                   |
| EuroGEO Services                                    | Cooperation, Coordination, Combination | Support to stakeholder engagement to Action Groups according to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.<br>Production of the inputs to the SRIA<br>Coordination of the EuroGEO Action Groups | 20,000-30,000  | 2 p.m. per Group  |

| Type                             | Activity                                         | Cost item                                                                                                                                                                                  | Expenses (EUR)              | Operations (p.m.)                            |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
|                                  |                                                  | Communication plan per Action Group (incl. website)                                                                                                                                        |                             |                                              |
| EuroGEO Services                 | Innovation Support and Market Development        | Observatory (licence and operations)                                                                                                                                                       | 30,000-40,000 <sup>16</sup> | 0,2 p.m. for operation                       |
|                                  |                                                  | Commercialisation Support<br>Co-design<br>Data/Infrastructure<br>Guidance as a service<br>Operational pipelines                                                                            |                             | 2 p.m. per request                           |
| EuroGEO Services                 | Integration of in situ data                      | Partnership with EEA                                                                                                                                                                       |                             | 1 p.m. (monitoring, evaluation)              |
| EuroGEO Services                 | Building Capacities and promoting Best Practices | Organisation of workshops<br>Contribution to workshops or thematic events<br>Best practices; case studies; templates and tools (e.g. DMP)<br>Capacity building sessions / training modules | 2,000 per workshop          | 2 p.m. per thematic (e.g. climate, energy..) |
| <b>II - Fixed Costs (annual)</b> |                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                            |                             |                                              |
| EuroGEO Activities               | Communication                                    | Website content management; maintenance; update                                                                                                                                            | 20,000-30,000               | 3 p.m.                                       |
|                                  |                                                  | Communication plan design , implementation and monitoring, incl. social media; EuroGEO workshop identity and promotion                                                                     |                             | 3 p.m.                                       |

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- <sup>16</sup> 9,000 licence, 10,000 for hosting, maintenance, 5-10k budged for optional development

| Type               | Activity                         | Cost item                                                                                    | Expenses (EUR) | Operations (p.m.)                |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| EuroGEO Activities | Stakeholder engagement and Youth | Stakeholder engagement plan; implementation; monitoring                                      |                | 3 p.m                            |
| EuroGEO Activities | Organizational support           | Governing bodies and EuroGEO Workshop                                                        | 100,000        | 4 p.m.                           |
| EuroGEO Activities | Planning and reporting           | EuroGEO implementation plan, Coordination and monitoring of the European contribution to GEO |                | 8 p.m.                           |
|                    |                                  | GEO Knowledge Hub                                                                            |                | 1 p.m. for 30 knowledge packages |

### 2.3. Status of discussions

The EuroGEO implementation plan was presented to the 59<sup>th</sup> High Level Working Group (HLWG) meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024. An update was provided to the 60<sup>th</sup> HLWG meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025. On this occasion, the sustainability of the EuroGEO Secretariat was introduced, and background documents were requested for consideration by the HLWG.

ARMINES released a White paper document for circulation to the HLWG in advance to the European Caucus meeting held on the occasion of the GEO Forum (Rome, May 5-9), and published to the EuroGEO website as a White Paper (Annex 1)<sup>17</sup>.

The concept of a public collaborative call for an Independent Project Office was acknowledged by the European Commission. Draft Terms of Reference of an IPO were shared with DG RTD for consideration (Annex). Expressions of interest were formulated during the European Caucus meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at the EuroGEO Workshop The Hague. Discussions are fluid and ongoing seeking solutions to anchor the Secretariat functions with stable resources.

### 2.4. Current pledges and 2026 budget

The below budget estimate is based on an expected level of activity of the EuroGEO Secretariat for 2026. It assumes the Secretariat would be hosted by a European entity, selected through an IPO (an offtaker) with demonstrated capabilities in communication and management. The offtaker being selected outside the e-shape or EuroGEOsec consortium, it would externalize the EuroGEO Services (conveyor belt) to trusted entities, mobilized on demand. In this scenario, the offtaker would be supported by external European contributors such as the Horizon programme, KCEO, REA, EEA, GEO Secretariat. The proposal attempts to reflect current pledges:

- provision for the 2026 EuroGEO workshop (EUR 50,000, REA);

<sup>17</sup> White paper: the new era for EuroGEO. [https://eurogeosec.eu/pdf/White\\_Paper\\_EuroGEO\\_f.pdf](https://eurogeosec.eu/pdf/White_Paper_EuroGEO_f.pdf)

- Ongoing call “*HORIZON-CL6-2025-03-GOVERNANCE-09: Delivering Earth Intelligence to accelerate the green and digital transition*” (EUR 15 mEuro) under item “contribute to the EuroGEO initiative and support the EC Knowledge Centre on Earth Observation (KCEO) on uptake of Environmental Observations (EO) for EU policy making (noted Horizon in Table 3);
- Ongoing recruitment at the GEO Secretariat for a Regional GEO liaison officer, fostering the link to the European Caucus and Regional GEOs (40% for EuroGEO eq. 4p.m.).

Prospects from Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026- 2027 involve:

- HORIZON-CL6-2026-03-GOVERNANCE-07: Interconnect Earth Observation research for addressing environmental policies. EUR 6m
- Reinforcing the European contribution to GEO in addressing EU and global Policy needs (EC4GEO II, 2028-2030), EUR 2m (JRC activity).
- Service Level Agreement with European Environmental Agency (EEA) on integration of in-situ Earth Observation data, EUR 2m.

Table 3 and 4 form a 2026 budget overview, based on current discussions and identified pledges as of July 31st, 2025.

**Table 3: Simulated 2026 budget, including current pledges to the Secretariat.**

| Type               | Activity                                         | Hypotheses 2026 | Expenses (EUR)     | Operations (p.m.)                            | Resulting budget      |      | Insourced / vs Outsourced         |            | Example outsourcing party (example)                             |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    |                                                  |                 |                    |                                              | Procurement EUR)      | p.m. | EuroGEO Secretariat <sup>18</sup> | Outsourced |                                                                 |
| EuroGEO Services   | Cooperation, Coordination, Combination           | 9 Action Groups | 20,000-30,000      | 2 p.m. per Group                             | 25,000                | 18   |                                   | 18         | JRC/KCEO <sup>19</sup> , NOA                                    |
| EuroGEO Services   | Innovation Support and Market Development        | 5 requests      | 30,000-40,000      | 2 p.m. per request + 0,2 fixed (observatory) | 35,000                | 10   |                                   | 10         | EVF ; MINES Paris PSL; EARSC; Horizon projects <sup>20,21</sup> |
| EuroGEO Services   | Integration of in situ data                      |                 |                    | 1 (monitoring, evaluation)                   |                       | 1    | 1                                 | n.c.       | EEA <sup>22</sup> , GEO Data Working Group                      |
| EuroGEO Services   | Building Capacities and promoting Best Practices | 6 thematics     | 2,000 per workshop | 2 p.m. per thematic                          | 12,000                | 12   |                                   | 12         | MINES Paris PSL; EARSC, CNR, JRC <sup>16</sup>                  |
| EuroGEO Activities | Communication                                    |                 | 20,000-30,000      | 6 p.m.                                       | 20,000                | 6    | 6                                 |            |                                                                 |
| EuroGEO Activities | Stakeholder engagement and Youth                 |                 |                    | 3 p.m                                        |                       | 3    | 3                                 |            |                                                                 |
| EuroGEO Activities | Organizational support                           |                 | 100,000            | 4 p.m.                                       | 100,000 <sup>23</sup> | 4    | 2                                 | 2          | JRC/KCEO; RTD; REA                                              |

<sup>18</sup> Offtaker contribution

<sup>19</sup> Potentially supported as HORIZON-CL6-2026-2027 HORIZON-CL6-2026-03-GOVERNANCE-07: Interconnect Earth Observation research for addressing environmental policies.

<sup>20</sup> Potentially supported by ongoing call HORIZON-CL6-2025-03-GOVERNANCE-09: Delivering Earth Intelligence to accelerate the green and digital transition.

<sup>21</sup> Potential ramp up as "Science Service" under HORIZON-CL6-2026-2027 Reinforcing the European contribution to GEO in addressing EU and global Policy needs (EC4GEO II, 2028-2030).

<sup>22</sup> Potentially supported as HORIZON-CL6-2026-2027 Service Level Agreement with European Environmental Agency (EEA) on integration of in-situ Earth Observation data.

<sup>23</sup> 50% from REA budget 2026

|                    |                        |                                                     |  |                 |  |   |   |                 |                 |
|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|---|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| EuroGEO Activities | Planning and reporting | GEO regional coordinator 40%; 30 knowledge packages |  | 8 p.m. ; 1 p.m. |  | 9 | 4 | 5 <sup>24</sup> | GEO Secretariat |
|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|---|---|-----------------|-----------------|

**Table 4: Budget summary 2026. Total, procured, man.power, insourced, outsourced.**

|                           |                    | Procurement (EUR) | p.m. / FTE <sup>25</sup> | EuroGEO Secretariat (p.m. / FTE) | Outsourced man.power (p.m./FTE) |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>EuroGEO Services</b>   | <b>TOTAL</b>       | 60,000            | 41 / 3,5                 | 1 / 0                            | 40 / 3,5                        |
| <b>EuroGEO Activities</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>       | 132,000           | 22 / 1,7                 | 15 / 1,2                         | 7 / 0,5                         |
|                           | <b>GRAND TOTAL</b> | 182,000           | 63 / 5,2                 | 16 / 1,2                         | 47 / 4                          |

<sup>24</sup> 40% of 1 FTE supported at GEO Secretariat (European Caucus, engagement in GEO). 60% is devoted to coordination amongst Regional GEOs.

<sup>25</sup> Full-Time Equivalent, expressed as a fixed-term position. 1 FTE is expressed as 12 p.m.

# ANNEX: Call for collaborative Proposals to host a EuroGEO International Project Office (EuroGEO-IPO)

## EuroGEO Background

The EuroGEO initiative supports the European contribution to the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), focusing on leveraging Earth Observation (EO) data and intelligence to achieve sustainable development, societal benefits, and policy support across Europe. Building on Copernicus and EU-funded projects, EuroGEO promotes coordination among European EO activities, fostering collaboration among EU institutions, Member States, and the private sector.

EuroGEO is piloted by the GEO High Level Working Group coordinated by the European Commission. It operates nine Action Groups and organizes the annual EuroGEO Workshop. On period 2024-2025, the initiative was supported by the EuroGEOSec project, which proposed a revised vision, mission and governance for EuroGEO to improve its relevance to Europe and to GEO through enhanced coordination and a focus on Earth Intelligence. ([www.eurogeosec.eu](http://www.eurogeosec.eu)).

## The Need for a EuroGEO International Project Office

Given the upcoming completion of the EuroGEOSec project in November 2025, a dedicated secretariat support structure is required to ensure continuity and effective coordination of EuroGEO activities. An International Project Office (IPO) is sought to temporarily fulfill secretariat roles, providing necessary administrative, organizational, technical, and communication support.

While an IPO can efficiently provide immediate operational capabilities, governance and strategic oversight will remain fully with the European Caucus to GEO, piloted by the European Commission. The IPO's role will therefore focus solely on operational aspects, acting under clear delegation from EuroGEO's governance bodies.

## Expected qualifications of the Host Institution

Organizations submitting a proposal to host the EuroGEO-IPO must fulfill the following requirements:

- Willingness and ability to host an international project office providing secretariat, administrative, financial, technical, and scientific support to EuroGEO as described by the EuroGEO reference documents listed in Annex 1.
- Strong ability to actively engage in coordination and planning of EuroGEO activities under the guidance of the Coordination Board.
- Demonstrated experience in managing large-scale international initiatives.
- Demonstrated capacity for effective international collaboration and stakeholder engagement (Member States, European Commission, Copernicus, private sector, academia, etc.).
- Ability to recruit qualified candidates and relevant supporting positions through open, international processes.
- Commitment to supporting the IPO for an initial period of at least three years, including securing necessary resources and funding.
- Capacity for potential future expansion of the Project Office.
- Ability to provide suitable office space and support infrastructure.

- Capacity to organize virtual and physical meetings and arrange participant travel.

## Minimum Requirements of a Proposal

Proposals must include a commitment covering the following:

- Programme Officer (1 to 2 full-time equivalents).
- Dedicated administrative support for the IPO.
- Office space, facilities, and operational budget.
- Budget allocation for EuroGEO-related activities (meetings, travel, communication, outreach, stakeholder engagement).

Equivalent combinations of personnel and financial resources will be considered. Offers providing additional staffing, activity funds, or longer commitments will significantly strengthen proposals.

**Pooling of resources with partners is encouraged.**

## Selection Process

The European Commission will establish a Selection Committee composed of Member States representatives, European Commission representatives, and relevant stakeholders. Proposals will be evaluated for completeness, capacity to meet stated requirements, and potential strategic benefit to EuroGEO. The selected host will be determined through a transparent process, including clarifications and negotiations, concluding with a formal Memorandum of Understanding.

## Timeline

Milestone Deadline Call for Proposals [Date] Submission deadline [Date] Enquiries, negotiations, and notification of selection [Date] Expected start of EuroGEO IPO [Date]

Proposals submitted after the deadline will be evaluated case-by-case at the discretion of the Selection Committee. Proposals must remain valid for at least 180 days following submission.

## Content of Proposals

Proposals should address all points outlined in Annex 2 and must be submitted electronically in a single PDF file not exceeding 20 pages.

## Useful links

- White paper for a EuroGEO Secretariat<sup>26</sup>
- EuroGEOSec implementation plan (D2.1 / D2.2)
- EuroGEOSec Sustainability Plan (D4.4)
- EuroGEOSec potential legal structures for EuroGEO (D4.2)
- EuroGEO Action Groups analyses:  
<https://gkhub.earthobservations.org/search?q=KCEO&l=list&p=1&s=10&sort=bestmatch>

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<sup>26</sup> [https://eurogeosec.eu/pdf/White\\_Paper\\_EuroGEO\\_f.pdf](https://eurogeosec.eu/pdf/White_Paper_EuroGEO_f.pdf)

## ANNEX 1 – Terms of Reference for the EuroGEO IPO

1. The EuroGEO-IPO consists Professional staff, and support staff. It works closely under the strategic oversight of the EuroGEO Coordination Board.
2. The EuroGEO-IPO is hosted by [Institution], located in [City, Country].
3. The EuroGEO-IPO shall report directly to the EuroGEO Coordination Board for strategic guidance and the host institution for administrative matters.
4. The EuroGEO-IPO provides support for planning, coordination, and implementation of EuroGEO Activities, ensuring alignment with GEO's global vision and European priorities.
5. The EuroGEO-IPO oversees and monitors the implementation of additional activities committed by third parties as “EuroGEO Services”.

Responsibilities are described by the applicable documents, i.e. “EuroGEOsec Sustainability Plan”. These include: (a) Secretariat, administrative, technical, and scientific support such as the organisation of the governance meetings (b) Coordination and planning of EuroGEO activities. (c) Organization of EuroGEO meetings, workshops, and stakeholder events. (d) Communication, outreach, and stakeholder engagement. (e) Preparation of strategic reports, correspondence, and publications. (f) Maintenance and oversight of EuroGEO communication channels. (g) Mobilization and management of financial and human resources. (h) Promotion of stakeholder engagement, including Copernicus and other European EO initiatives. (i) Oversight of in-kind contributions supporting the implementation plan.

## ANNEX 2 – Expressions of Interest template

1. Cover page (organization details, legal representative)
2. Executive summary
3. Vision and strategy for the EuroGEO IPO (10%)
4. Host institution details (administrative capacity, infrastructure, support) (20%)
5. EuroGEO relevance of the host institution (experience, stakeholder ecosystem, EO-related activities) (10%)
6. Benefits for the host institution (international exposure, value-add, financial leveraging potential) (10%)
7. Staffing plan commitment (30%)
8. Operating funding commitment (20%)
9. Additional supporting materials (optional, up to 4 pages)