



COMBINE, COORDINATE, COOPERATE

Be a part of the future EuroGEO
Project 101134335 — EuroGEOSec

A large circular graphic in the background. It features a central image of Earth from space, showing continents and oceans. This is surrounded by a ring of green lines and dots, resembling a network or data flow. The entire graphic is set against a light blue background with diagonal lines and dots.

D4.3 Sustainability strategy and action plan for EuroGEO

ABSTRACT

D4.3 elaborates on D2.1 “Updated proposal of the EuroGEO Implementation Plan - initial version”. D2.1 built on all outcomes of the EuroGEOsec project. It condenses the efforts performed by WP2 to build the EuroGEO ecosystem and activities; WP3 on the maximisation of research and innovation impacts; and WP5 to deliver 3-days of strategic discussions on EuroGEO during the EuroGEO Workshop, complemented by diagnosis reports of the EuroGEO Action Groups supported by the JRC-KCEO.

This effort was condensed into D2.1, 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.

D2.1 introduces 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.

While 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.

Based on the current level of knowledge within EuroGEOsec, this report attempts to categorize the activities between “core” Activities and “on demand” Services and distinguish fixed from variable costs. For the latter, characterized by a variable cost model, cost drivers are proposed, which can eventually help approximate the full cost of the EuroGEO initiative once the actual demand for the proposed services is better defined.

The Secretariat Activities (core budget) are estimated to 3 FTEs and EUR 150,000, equivalent to EUR 500,000 to 600,000 annually. Contributions to Secretariat Services (on demand, outsourced, supported by in- kind and external financing) could be valued up to 4 FTEs and EUR 100,000, equivalent to EUR 550,000.

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STATUS		DISSEMINATION LEVEL	
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1 A REVISED EUROGEO INITIATIVE

D2.1 “EuroGEO implementation plan” describes:

- the revised mandate for the EuroGEO initiative;
- proposes revised objectives;
- on this basis, proposes a governance structure including a EuroGEO Secretariat;
- details its functions and distinguishes between core Activities and Services.

2 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

2.1 A budget structure supporting the 3Cs

The proposed strategy aims to ensure sustainable funding for EuroGEO while maximizing the efficiency and impact of its resources. The proposal is designed to adapt to changing demands and resource constraints. It invites a broad participation from stakeholders, fostering a sense of shared ownership and engagement in EuroGEO.

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 make the most of European resources, create synergies and avoid duplication of efforts.

This concept is brought forward through the governance proposal of the initiative, and the establishment of a Coordination Board. The Coordination Board will oversee EuroGEO's European contribution to GEO. It will govern the Secretariat's 'Core' Activities and 'On-demand' Services, such as supporting Action Groups, national coordination, and interactions with Regional GEOs. The Coordination Board is the prime organ to mobilise resources supporting the EuroGEO Activities.

While 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,

The EuroGEO Secretariat would therefore effectively manage a variety of resources to support the initiative's activities. This includes managing diverse resource types, timeframes, and reporting needs; yet effectively supporting and monitoring the EuroGEO Implementation Plan.

Although this implies some level of operational complexity for the management of resources, distinguishing core activities from on-demand service delivery has positive consequences on the agility of the EuroGEO initiative. It allows separate elements requiring continuous financing, from “on demand” items.

A more detailed cost analysis is developed in the following sections to segregate Fixed and Variable costs; and for the latter to propose cost drivers for the Activities. This approach should eventually help approximate the full cost of the EuroGEO initiative once the actual demand for the proposed services is

better defined.

2.2 Operational approach

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 specialized 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.

2.3 Cost analysis

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.

The cost centres are introduced in D2.1 - *Updated proposal of the EuroGEO Implementation Plan - initial version*.

Table 1 is an initial cost breakdown for the EuroGEO Secretariat, with an attempt to qualify the cost centers between fixed and variable costs. This Table should be updated by M20 (D4.4), based on a detailed activity breakdown and cost estimates of the EuroGEO Secretariat activities.

The Secretariat Activities (core budget) are estimated to 3 FTEs and EUR 150,000, equivalent to EUR 500,000 to 600,000 annually. Contributions to Secretariat Services (on demand, outsourced, supported by in-kind and external financing) could be valued up to 4 FTEs and EUR 100,000, equivalent to EUR 550,000.

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 SRIA inputs.
EuroGEO Services	Innovation Support and Market Development. Includes:	Variable. Licence to the Observatory, cost per licence, maintenance and

Type	Activity	Cost driver
	Commercialisation Support Co-design Data/Infrastructure Guidance as a service Operational pipelines	development, content management, user management, performing analyses on the data. 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 (Workshops; Bilateral; Memorandums)	Fixed costs
EuroGEO Activities	Organizational support; Coordination Board ; Action Groups; National Coordination mechanisms; EuroGEO Workshop	Fixed costs
EuroGEO Activities	Planning and reporting Coordinates the delivery of the EuroGEO Implementation Plan with governing bodies and partners Coordinates and monitors the European contribution to GEO	Fixed costs

2.4 Initial cost assessment

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.

Table 2: Initial overview for specific cost items. Empty cells imply information to be developed for the review of this initial version

Type	Activity	Cost item	Expenses (EUR)	Operations (p.m.)
I - Variable costs (annual, per cost driver)				
EuroGEO Services	Cooperation, Coordination, Combination	Support to stakeholder engagement to Action Groups according to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. Production of SRIA inputs. Coordination of the EuroGEO Action Groups	20,000-30,000	2 p.m. per Group
		Communication plan per Action Group (incl. website)		3-5 p.m. (for 9 Groups currently)
EuroGEO Services	Innovation Support and Market Development	Observatory (licence and operations)	30,000-40,000 ¹	0,2 p.m. for operation
		Commercialisation Support		xx. per request
		Co-design		2-3 p.m. per request

- ¹ 9,000 licence, 10,000 for hosting, maintenance, 5-10k budgeted for optional development

Type	Activity	Cost item	Expenses (EUR)	Operations (p.m.)
		Data/Infrastructure Guidance as a service		xx per request
		Operational pipelines		xx. per pipeline
EuroGEO Services	Integration of in situ data	<i>tbd</i>		
EuroGEO Services	Building Capacities and promoting Best Practices	Oganisation of workshops Contribution to workshops or thematic events Best practices; case studies; templates and tools (e.g. DMP) Capacity building sessions / training modules	5,000-10,000 per workshop	est. 2 p.m. per thematic (e.g. climate, energy..)
II - Fixed Costs (annual)				
EuroGEO Activities	Institutional communication	Website maintenance	2,000	2-3 p.m
		Website content management		3-4 p.m.
		Website evolution	20,000-30,000	
		Communication plan design , implementation and monitoring, incl. social media		5-6 p.m.

Type	Activity	Cost item	Expenses (EUR)	Operations (p.m.)
		EuroGEO workshop identity and promotion	Depending on needs	
EuroGEO Activities	Stakeholder engagement and Youth	Stakeholder engagement plan; implementation; monitoring		8-10 p.m
EuroGEO Activities	Organizational support	Governing bodies and EuroGEO Workshop	100,000	6 p.m.
EuroGEO Activities	Planning and reporting	EuroGEO implementation plan, Coordination and monitoring of the European contribution to GEO		6 p.m.
		GEO Knowledge Hub		1 p.m. for 30 knowledge packages

2.5 Funding sources

While fixed costs Activities would need to be covered through direct funding; variable costs Services would be deployed either through sub-contracting, or through in-kind support.

The magnitude of the different components is to be determined, yet the legal structure supporting the EuroGEO Secretariat would need to be flexible to allow achieving its mandate and objectives.

D4.2 presents options for a legal structure. The eventual legal structure of the EuroGEO Secretariat would influence the eligible funding sources.

Legal structure	Type	Funding source
Secondment to GEO	Activities (internalized to GEO Secretariat)	Voluntary contributions to the GEO trust fund for specific activities.

Secondment to GEO	Services	In kind, with various supports: Service Level Agreements to Entrusted Entities; contribution to JRC KCEO ; competitive tenders (REA, RTD, DEFIS)
AISBL	Activities	General Assembly annual fee
AISBL	Services	Grants ; Donations ; Service fees ; Project funding ; Fundraising
ERIC	Not applicable at this stage (D4.2)	