

ODA funding request: New or increased bid (Form ODA1- Rev 3/19)

This form should be used for new or increased ODA funding requests that are NOT already covered in Defra's SR15 ODA allocation.

From:	Policy Area: Chief Scientific Advisers Office
To: ODA Team	Date: 29/03/19

Title: *One sentence giving the title/description of the proposed activity*

Capacity building and environmental initiatives in Earth observations through GEO (intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations)

Amount required and when:

2019/20	2020/21	Total
£100,000	£100,000	200,000

Purpose: A couple of paragraphs describing the purpose of the funding and what it aims to achieve and the implications/consequences if funding is not approved (recommended maximum 200 words)

To provide a financial contribution to the Intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) (see <http://www.earthobservations.org/index.php>). GEO provides the UK with opportunities to showcase and develop UK priorities, initiatives and strengths in the international community and influence global policy outcomes (e.g. data policy, standards, markets for downstream applications).

This contribution would support GEO in its work in capacity building and promotion of open data and data infrastructure for better policy making and decisions in global environmental programmes and its focus on three strategic priority areas (Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement on climate change, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction). This would be done through contributing to GEO's work on Capacity Building, and GEO initiatives such as its Global Forest Observation Initiative (GFOI), GEO Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON) and GEO Global Agricultural Monitoring (GEOGLAM) where they specifically support ODA eligible countries.

Through these initiatives GEO coordinates global efforts to make use Earth observation data and tools to inform decision makers. In particular the Capacity Building programme aims to assist ODA eligible countries and regions in increasing technical and human capacity to acquire, share, store, maintain and fully utilise Earth observation data and information in decision making; demonstrate solutions, disseminate best practices and promote the engagement of institutional users worldwide.

These programmes are funded through voluntary contributions from member states, without such they would not take place (see below)

The Strategic Case: *What is the strategic fit of the proposed funding in terms of current Ministerial priorities, the 25 year Environment Plan or other HMG policy goals? Does the activity support UK engagement with an international process? (recommended maximum 300 words)*

Defra has invested considerably in its EO and geospatial capability in recent years and is a global leader in integrating EO technologies into policy – this is an opportunity to increase our presentation of this on a global stage. UK membership of GEO enables peer-to-peer communication, collaboration, and exchange of information on Earth observation activities with both leading countries and agencies and with emerging economies keen to harness the greater supply and use of Earth observations

The work of GEO is aligned with our ambitions of the 25 YEP, increasing our international standing in environmental issues, cross government ambition on furthering our scientific reputation, and specifically:

- Providing international leadership and leading by example
- Helping developing nations protect and improve the environment
- Leaving a lighter footprint on the global environment

This proposal also supports delivering the Industrial Strategy with its recognition of Space and Satellite Technology as a major area for global growth.

The UK (via Defra CSAO) was on the Executive Committee of GEO 2016-2018 and is currently co-chair of the GEO Ministerial Working Group (2018-2019). However, the UK has not contributed directly to funding the GEO Secretariat. The Ordnance Survey has provided a virtual secondment to GEO since early 2018 and the European Commission pays a substantial contribution to GEO's work. (However, a number of active EU member states (e.g. Germany) contribute directly in addition to that of the Cion).

With the UK coming to an end some of its formal roles on GEO at the end of 2019, it is an opportune moment to demonstrate, on a world stage, the UK's and Defra's ambition in using Earth observation to improve environmental decision making across the world and underline our support for practical implementation of the Paris agreement, Sustainable Development Goals and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Additionally some of GEO's capacity building work is focusing on small island states, particularly vulnerable to climate change. A UK contribution could be seen to support Overseas Territories.

The timing of this investment would be strategic ahead of the GEO 2019 Ministerial Submit. This would be an ideal stage on which to announce this investment, in front of global audience of government ministers/officials, NGOs and companies involved in the Earth observations.

The Economic Case (Value for Money): *Outline how this funding represents good value-for-money (costs versus benefits) (recommended maximum 200 words)*

This represents excellent value for money as it adds our contributions to those of other nations, providing substantial leverage. However, over the last few years GEO has had a substantial short fall in its donations resulting in it not being able to deliver all its business plan.

As a result, new investment from the UK would be enable new additional work to be done by GEO. It would be possible to direct this a particular areas, for example capacity building.

In addition to ODA, this would also support the UK and Defra informing and learning from international developments and standards and considering them in our own work. For example, there is already evidence of return value to the UK with increased UK interest in Analysis Ready Data and Data Cubes as a result of GEO providing focus and a mechanism for international engagement. This has led to the development of the Defra EO Data Service due to 'go live' across the Defra group summer 2019.

The Commercial Case (procurement): *How was the funding recipient selected (open procurement process or a direct award to an organisation who is uniquely positioned to do the activity) and include the justification for choice of recipient? (recommended maximum 50 words)*

This would be a direct award to an Intergovernmental Organisation. GEO has unique global reach in Earth observation activities with 105 member countries and over 125 Participating Organisations. As such there is no comparable organisation, which brings together all the world's leading players in Earth observations and has such standing and influence in critical areas such as the governance and promotion of EO data.

The Financial Case: *Outline the nature of this funding request. Is it increasing or moving an existing ODA allocation or a new bid for funding? If it is a mixture of ODA and non-ODA funding confirm the non-ODA element can be covered by your own policy area.* (recommended maximum 50 words)

This is a new funding bid, the UK does not currently make any cash contributions to GEO (outside that made by the European Commission and the in-kind contribution from Ordnance Survey). The funding requested is all ODA work given the priorities of GEO in SDGs, Sendai and Paris Climate Agreement alongside its efforts on capacity building.

The Management Case (Methodology and project plan): *Is the expected outcome realistic and achievable within the given timeframe? How will you monitor and evaluate the activity and outcome? What are your delivery mechanisms? How do you plan to identify and manage delivery risk?* (recommended maximum 200 words)

The expected outcomes are achievable, as most of these will be delivered by the GEO Secretariat (hosted at the World Meteorological Organization's headquarters in Geneva) that is already in place to deliver and prioritise this work. It will be monitored through our on-going engagements with GEO, most notably through the GEO High Level Working Group attended by the G7 Earth Observation Policy Lead, within CSAO and GEO Plenary meetings attended by the Defra Deputy CSA (who is also the GEO Principle for the HMG). Additional specific monitoring and reporting would be added in discussion with the GEO Secretariat.

We will also monitor progress through UK representatives on GEO Programme Board and other Boards of GEO initiatives. The UK is represented on these bodies through academic representatives co-ordinated by the joint-Defra, UK Space Agency and NERC GEO/CEOS coordination office. This provides both a second layer of monitoring, but also adds independent challenge to the monitoring through the involvement of academic expertise.

ODA eligibility: Please identify the specific benefits that the outcomes of this funding will provide for developing countries. Guidance on ODA eligibility can be found on our SharePoint page here. (recommended maximum 300 words)

GEO leads a range of projects specifically aimed at ODA eligible countries. Projects include Earth observations combined with other agricultural data to contribute to crop monitoring to counter food insecurity, a commitment upheld by all states under Sustainable Development Goal 2, zero hunger. GEO is also leading work on the Africa Data Cube and capability building across ODA countries.

We would work with the secretariat to focus on key ODA countries and projects, initially focussing on capability building.

Timing (if applicable): Please note here any specific timing requirements in terms of announcing the funding (i.e. a specific meeting) or when the money must be spent by. Note Calendar year deadline for ODA spending is usually mid-December each year. (recommended maximum 50 words)

This would be a single payment made in each year. As a result it is possible to assure all money is spent by December.

Flexibility: Please include any opportunities to absorb any potential ODA underspend such as project scale-up, extra voluntary contributions etc. (keeping in mind HMT guidance on VfM). (recommended maximum 100 words)

There would be flexibility in each year to vary the amount provided to GEO. Additional resource could be used to fund specific 'add-on' events that further deliver these objectives.

Clearances: Please confirm who in your policy area has approved the proposed activity outlined in this bid form (minimum Deputy Director (DD) level approval required)

I approve this bid, deputy CSA (DD)

Other: This section is optional. Please include any further information that may be of interest here