

MarineGEO Executive Committee Charter

v 1.0

Overview

This document serves as the charter to establish the MarineGEO Executive Committee in 2020. The role of the Committee is to advise and provide governance support to the Director on strategy, priorities, coordination, and administration of the network. Its creation is a natural evolution in MarineGEO governance as the program grows and matures. The charter describes this history, outlines the purpose of the Committee, and establishes guidelines for membership and activity.

Background

The Tennenbaum Marine Observatories Network (TMON) Executive Committee was established in 2015 to advise the MarineGEO director on program strategy and implementation. Since its inception, MarineGEO has added nine non-Smithsonian-led observatories to the existing observatories in Smithsonian's TMON. The TMON Executive Committee charter called for membership from each of the participating Smithsonian units, including the TMON observatory PIs and any additionally desired experts. Terms of three years were renewable, and most members generously served past the three-year duration.

A major recommendation from 2019 strategic planning was to diversify the Executive Committee's representation of network partners by including non-Smithsonian partners. An additional outcome was the formation of six working groups as part of the MarineGEO governance structure. These working groups function to implement MarineGEO's goals as outlined in its strategic plan and to provide recommendations to MarineGEO Central. The working groups currently focus on five strategic goal areas (Data Service, Education and Outreach, Operations, Partnerships, and Science) and TMON coordination. Network members from across MarineGEO signed up to participate in and lead these working groups.

Evolution & Establishment

With gratitude for the guidance and many contributions of the TMON Executive Committee, it is hereby dissolved. The MarineGEO Executive Committee (EC) is hereby established. The governance structure chartered here is a natural evolution following the recommendation to include non-Smithsonian membership into the Executive Committee and the need for a platform to incorporate working group recommendations into decision-making processes. The new EC



structure and membership will facilitate communication between working groups, incentivize working group participation and leadership, and advance the strategic plan.

Roles & Responsibilities

The primary role of the EC is to advise and provide governance support to the Director on strategy, priorities, coordination, and administration of the network. The EC accomplishes this through the following major responsibilities:

- Ensure implementation of and progress toward MarineGEO's strategic goals, objectives, and milestones
- Coordinate governance and activities across MarineGEO Working Groups
- Provide consultation, support, and guidance to MarineGEO's Director and Central office
- Advise on budgetary and operations issues
- Identify and pursue opportunities for public and private funding
- Represent MarineGEO within and outside of the member's home institution
- Communicate EC activities back to home institutions, observatories, and working groups regularly.

Membership

The MarineGEO Director serves as the EC Chair. Members serve at the discretion of the Committee Chair. The EC shall have representation from both the Smithsonian and partner observatories and aims for broad representation from across research fields central to MarineGEO science.

Primary members

The following shall comprise primary Executive Committee membership:

- A single leader from each working group
- A single representative from each participating Smithsonian unit (NMNH, SCBI, SERC, SMS, and STRI)
- Two at-large members
- The Director, Program Manager, and Coordinating Scientist

Alternates

To maintain quorum representation at meetings, each primary member who is not MarineGEO Central staff shall be supported by an alternate. Alternates attend meetings and provide input in the absence of the primary member.

Member selection

Working Groups: The chair of each Working Group serves as an EC member. In cases where Working Groups are co-chaired, the co-chairs will determine which will be the primary and

alternate members. Working Group representation may be delegated to an actively contributing WG member.

Smithsonian's TMON: Each TMON unit shall nominate the staff member to serve on the Executive Committee. As default, the primary member will be the PI of the Smithsonian unit's corresponding observatory(ies). The unit's staff selects its alternate.

At-Large: At-large members are selected to fill identified disciplinary gaps. Primary and alternate EC members are responsible for nominating and voting on at-large member selections. Individuals from both Smithsonian and non-Smithsonian partner institutions are eligible to serve as at-large members.

Nominations for membership on the EC should be made to the Program Manager. Supporting materials for a nomination will include a brief justification and a copy of the nominee's CV for EC review.

Term of membership

Members minimally commit to a two-year term of active service, which is renewable. Continuation will be evaluated on a regular basis through discussions between the Chair and member. Repeated absence or lack of engagement without reasonable cause will be considered an act of resignation, in which case the committee will move to fill the vacancy.

Meetings

MarineGEO Central will schedule regular monthly meetings and provide a virtual meeting platform. Members should strive to participate actively in all meetings and prepare in advance. Committee members are welcome to provide suggestions for agenda items and edits to meeting minutes. All meeting materials will be shared with the EC through an online repository.

Central will circulate an agenda, any meeting materials, and meeting logistics in advance of each meeting. The Program Manager will organize and facilitate all meetings. After each meeting, MarineGEO Central will circulate a written report in a timely fashion. The report will include an attendance record, meeting minutes of the discussion, and a list of action items.