

Terms of Reference Working Group (WG)– Earth Observation

The Nature of the Working Group

The nature of the WG is operational. The WG will report annually to the Management Board. This Working Group will carry out policy-related research leading to practical recommendations using spatial technology in the Earth Observation (EO) sector, highlighting the regional dimension of the activity. Furthermore, the group will be a forum to encourage the uptake and development of new EO/Copernicus applications at the regional level.

The nature of the activities

The activities of the WG shall be determined by the needs of the regional stakeholder and the ongoing space trends in Europe. For this reason, the WG members must ensure that the WG activities meet the user needs at the local and regional levels.

The Mission of the Working Group

This relaunched Working Group on Earth observation aims at effectively sharing experiences, ideas, tools, methodologies between European regions and promoting an “open science” approach. With reference to the first Earth Observation WG, the new one will also share the principle of sustainable development at the local and regional levels.

This mission shall be achieved by the following objectives:

- Promoting the use of space and its benefits for European Regions and their citizens, and in particular highlighting the potential of Earth Observation;
- Sharing experiences, ideas, tools and methodologies on Earth observation and space technologies between European regions in an 'open science' approach and stimulating interregional best practice and knowledge exchange;
- Supporting local institutions, citizens, and companies in the use of space technologies and the development of new services based on Earth Observation;
- Inspiring positive policy responses to local institutions;
- Boosting the development of model projects in the domain;
- Creating synergies between members and other interested institutions, such as academia, local and regional authorities, and SMEs, with the objective of improving best practices;
- Organising an annual meeting, hosted by a participating region to identify joint interests, develop partnerships, and interregional co-operations;
- Promoting the work of the WG and providing experience/expertise in other project-related activities of the Network relevant to the uptake of Earth observation, such as EU/ESA funded projects in which NEREUS participates;
- Setting up periodical reports that will collect members' best practices on Earth observation. The publication shall be promoted within and outside NEREUS to inspire other regions.

Working Group Participants

According to article 22 of the NEREUS statutes, the group is open and addressed to representatives from all member regions and Associate Partners. Additionally, members of the WG are free to invite other regional experts who are considered an added value for the WG's operations (see [the 2020 NEREUS statutes](#)).

Decision Making

The decisions of the WG will be taken based on the majority rule and recorded in the minutes of each meeting.

The vision, policies, and priorities of the WG should always be in accordance with the roadmap and the decisions taken and approved by the General Assembly.

Working Group Chair

The WG Chair speaks on behalf of the WG. A WG chair has the overall responsibility for the WG and can be supported by co-chairs. The WG elects the WG Chair with the decision of the majority of the WG members and then proposes the Chair to the Management Board. According to article 22 of the NEREUS statutes, the Management Board will nominate the WG Chair. The Chair of the WG will take into account the proposals of the WG and will report to the Management Board (see [the 2020 NEREUS statutes](#)).

Furthermore, the WG Chair is expected to:

- Coordinate the activities of the WG and prepare the next meetings together with the NEREUS Secretariat (e.g. draft agenda and share it for approval with the rest of the WG);
- Chair and coordinate WG meetings. In case of absence, the Chair needs to appoint a co-chair to assist with the general WG support;
- Represent the WG in the Management Board meetings and the General Assemblies, if necessary (maximum 1 per year).

Frequency of Meetings

Once a year, the WG shall organize a preparatory meeting to define the concrete activities for next year focused on the use and promotion of earth observation-based technologies in regions.

Scheduling quarterly or bimonthly meetings within the NEREUS network. During these meetings, each member shall present and share their best practices. The meetings could be scheduled for specific macro-target or topics (e.g. land, agriculture, environment, emergency, etc...). The choice of topics should be defined according to the needs of the individual regions.

Reporting

The WG should report annually to the Management Board. In addition to that, the working group is invited to present the main outcomes or achievements to the General Assembly.

The minutes of each meeting will be prepared by the WG participants on a rotating basis.

NEREUS Secretariat will collect the documentation of each meeting (eg. PPTs), feature and promote the activities of the WG on the NEREUS website.