Dear Sir/Madam,

This circular letter is a follow up to the decision of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Global Ocean Observing System (I-GOOS) Board (I-GOOS Board V Final Report, GOOS-175, Action 8) to obtain up to date information from all Member States concerning the appropriate contact points in each Member State for affairs regarding the implementation of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) at national and global levels. The I-GOOS Board requests that all I-GOOS Member States evaluate the attached list of credentialed I-GOOS IX National Representatives and inform the GOOS Project Office of desired amendments and additions. Member States are requested to inform the secretariat by email, followed no later than 1 March 2010 by a hard copy letter signed by the relevant national representative to the IOC Assembly or permanent UNESCO delegation. The secretariat contact for all communications regarding designating national representatives to I-GOOS is Thomas Gross, t.gross@unesco.org, with copy to Ho Hien Lam, hh.lam@unesco.org.

*English version is being dispatched. Other versions will follow as soon as available.*
The Intergovernmental Committee for GOOS has repeatedly remarked on the need to enhance communications within the GOOS community. I-GOOS VIII recommended (I-GOOS VIII Report, GOOS-165, Action 4.1) and I-GOOS IX reaffirmed (I-GOOS IX Report, GOOS-176, Section 4.3) that nations could benefit by establishing National GOOS Committees within each country, whose role, amongst other things, would be to act as a relay between the GOOS Project Office and countries worldwide and to strengthen the relationship between national or/regional institutions and stakeholders working in the field of Operational Oceanography including Ocean Observations and Services and Ocean Science within each country. Not all countries have implemented the recommendation to form National GOOS Committees.

The first step toward improving communications would be to clarify the GOOS contact points in each country and allow the GOOS Project Office to enhance a high level of communications and information sharing with relevant national institutions and stakeholders. The list of credentialed attendees to the I-GOOS IX is attached as annex to this circular letter as a starting point. These formal national GOOS contact points help coordinate national responses to all GOOS activities, including arranging for representation at the I-GOOS meetings.

The recent proliferation of global earth observations systems, committees and groups has stretched some country's abilities to respond to all the demands for reporting. Identification of GOOS contact points and National GOOS Committees could simplify these demands, by consolidating responsibilities and facilitating a successful cooperation between the GOOS Project Office and national institutions and stakeholders involved in Ocean Observations, to aid in identifying and meeting appropriate needs.

The IOC Secretariat strongly welcomes comments and guidance from all Member States on additional steps which may be taken to strengthen communications within the GOOS communities. (by email to Thomas Gross, by March 1, 2010)

We look forward to receiving your feedbacks at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Wendy Watson-Wright
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
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Attachment: List of credentialed attendees to the I-GOOS IX meeting
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