About the SIF
Last Updated Monday, 12 October 2009

Mission

The GEO Architecture and Data
Committee (ADC) established a Standards and Interoperability Forum (SIF) to
facilitate the interchange of information and the development of
recommendations for standards and interoperability in GEOSS. The SIF also
oversees a key component of the GEOSS Common Infrastructure, the Standards and
Interoperability Registry. The purpose of the SIF is to provide advice,
expertise and impartial guidance on issues relating to standards and
interoperability for GEOSS. The goal of the SIF is to enable ever greater
degrees of interoperability among GEOSS-contributed resources through
facilitation, technical analysis, advocacy and education. The SIF is composed
of experts nominated by GEO Members and Participating Organizations, supported
by subject matter experts from around the globe.

The SIF is fulfilling its
mission, in part, through advocacy. The benefits of GEOSS will be fully
realized when users and providers of GEOSS resources can competently use the
GEOSS Common Infrastructure (GCI) to achieve fruitful data sharing and
integration for research and societal benefit applications. The SIF's advocacy
effort includes assistance with registration of components, services, and
standards, as well as assistance with questions and decisions regarding
interoperability with the GCI.

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Guidelines and Operations

The Terms of Reference and Operating Procedures are the governing documents for the SIF, and can be found under
the Operating Documents menu option.Â The SIF convenes biweekly for teleconferences where many issues are
discussed and decided.Â Depending on the need, ad-hoc working groups are formed to look more deeply into certain
issues or to execute upon some task.Â There is a general workflow that is applied to SIF business, and there is a
workflow system installed that is used to handle certain tasks.Â This workflow system operates in conjunction with the
Standards and Interoperability Registry (SIR), since many of the tasks are SIR-based.

The SIF also employs regional teams.Â These are groups of SIF contributors that are in similar time-zones.Â This makes it
easier for regional teams to meet, either on a teleconference or at a face-to-face meeting.Â Regional teams may involve
experts in certain areas of standards and interoperability, and help execute tasks of the SIF.Â Each regional team has a
lead role that interacts with the main SIF body.

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Operating Roles

The SIF has identified a set of key roles that possess responsibilities necessary for carrying out the mission of the SIF.Â These roles are:

 - Core Team - this is the main mangement role, involved with the fundamental issues of the SIF.Â This includes analysis, management, and oversight of all SIF duties, activities, and plans.Â Individuals in this role take part in bi-weekly teleconference meetings, and contribute to task execution, as necessary.

 - SIR Overseer - this role is responsible for reviewing the SIR entries as they are submitted.Â Each entry is reviewed for correctness of information provided, as well as appropriateness for inclusion in the registry.Â Individuals in this role are engaged in ongoing oversight of the SIR in order to maintain its integrity.

 - Tester - this role is responsible for the ongoing analysis and testing of the SIR and related GCI components.Â As changes are made to the evolving GCI, regression tests, as well as testing of new functionality and usability must be undertaken.Â This effort will result in periodic reports to the SIF Core Team regarding existing bugs with the GCI components, usability issues, and suggestions for new features or enhancements.Â There is a database maintained for test scripts and test results.

 - Interoperability Advocate - this role is responsible for the education of, and the outreach to, GEOSS providers and consumers regarding interoperability within GEOSS.Â Individuals in this role will gather information on interoperability activities from related GEO tasks, Work Groups, and Communities of Practice, and facilitate cross-communication between task groups.Â The information gathered will be used to generate appropriate documentation for dissemination in support of GEOSS interoperability.

 - Interoperability Advisor / Domain Expert - this role is responsible for technical assistance to GEOSS providers.Â Individuals in this role will act as consultants to organizations involved with making their data and services available to GEOSS.Â Activities include assistance with the registering of components, services, standards, and special arrangements, assistance with metadata, and assistance with the use of standards and special arrangements to offer a service to GEOSS.

Contributing to the SIF

The success of the SIF will be measured by how well
the interoperability requirements of the GEOSS community of providers and users
are met.Â If you have a desire to volunteer your time and expertise by joining
the SIF, click on the Register As SIF Contributor menu option.Â If you wish to look into volunteering for GEOSS in some other role, please click on the Volunteer Opportunities menu option.