SAC decision-making procedures

History of document

Proposed to the SAC by Stefano Salvi	*18 November 2014*
Commented by Falk Amelung	*20 November 2014*
Final remind for comments due by 28 November	*24 November2014*
Document approval following minor comments	*12 December 2014*

Premise

The procedure is a compromise between the need to ensure transparency and objectivity, and the need to avoid too complex procedures which could slow down the GSNL initiative.

1. Definitions

Normal decisions concern ordinary matters, as for instance: management of the website, dissemination of information, routine communications with GEO Secretariat or the CEOS DCT, etc.

Important decisions concern for instance: approval of Supersite and Natural Laboratory proposals, assessment of Supersite reports, changes to the GSNL objectives/governance, etc.

In case of doubt, the SAC can decide whether to rank the decision as important or ordinary, using a fast voting procedure (see below).

Consensus in this context means "without strong objection" by any meeting participant.

Non-exclusive decisions are decisions for which more than one option can be voted, for exclusive decisions only one option can be voted.

2. Majority and voters

Normal decisions are taken with a simple majority of the eligible voters participating in a meeting.

Important decisions are taken with a simple majority of all eligible voters, even if not present at the meeting.

For most decisions, the eligible voters are the active SAC members. For the election of the SAC Chair or of the SAC members, the eligible voters include the Supersite Points of Contact.

3. Voting procedure

At, or before any meeting, decisions to be taken are first identified as normal or important. In case of doubts, the type of decision is agreed by consensus at the meeting.

If consensus cannot be reached a vote is cast, and the type of decision is attributed according to the simple majority of the eligible voters participating in the meeting.

The normal decisions are then taken immediately at the meeting

The important decisions discussed at a meeting are itemized in written form (including possible variations as proposed in the meeting), and communicated immediately after the meeting to all the eligible voters by email.

Voters will cast one vote for each non-exclusive decision, replying by email to the GEO Secretariat, within a predetermined date decided at the originating meeting.

www.earthobservations.org/gsnl.php

After the end of the voting period the GEO Secretariat communicates the voting results, which are then published on the GSNL website.

All votes are public and must be associated to names of voters in a transparent manner.