



PROJECT PLAN

Global Expert Group on Sustainable Lunar Activities Operational Phase

Introduction

The near future will see a multitude of lunar missions through the efforts of both space agencies and commercial stakeholders. The current lack of coordination mechanisms for lunar activities presents a serious challenge to future missions and could lead to dangerous conflicts, especially in light of the increased global interest in specific areas like the lunar south pole. The need to preserve the peaceful uses of space, together with the desire to begin a new era of sustainable space exploration, urges the development of a common level playing field for upcoming lunar activities.

A number of issues must be addressed to ensure sustainable lunar exploration and settlement in and around the Moon, including, for example, mitigating the creation of debris in lunar orbit, defining standards to enable interoperability, and regulating access to natural resources.

In 2020, the Moon Village Association (MVA) took an initiative to address these critical issues with the goal of de-risking future lunar missions and increasing global cooperation for lunar exploration and settlement. Therefore, the MVA decided to promote the development of a neutral forum for multi-stakeholder discussions on lunar exploration: the *Global Expert Group on Sustainable Lunar Activities* or (GEGSLA). The Group was composed of members from Space Agencies, Government, Industry, International Organizations, NGOs, Universities and Research Centers. The public was also involved via a public consultation.

The activities of the Group started in February 2021 and were completed by the end 2022 with the publication of the report: "Recommended Framework and Key Elements for Peaceful and Sustainable Lunar Activities". This report also includes Annex-1 related to Guidelines for the implementation of the key elements and Annex-2 related to future issues.

The report will be distributed, at large, including at the UN COPUOS and all major international fora. MVA will foster discussion about Lunar Governance issues at the UN based on this report. This underlines the importance of preserving the existence of GEGSLA to support implementation of the Recommended Framework as well as discussions on lunar issues and exchange relevant information about the different lunar projects ongoing.

This Project Plan defines how to keep GEGSLA in operation, even if in a different way from the initial phase, for the foreseeable future and what would be its goals.

2. Terms of Reference

The goals of the GEGSLA operational phase is to promote consideration and implementation of the Recommended Framework produced by the Group, with special focus on discussions conducted within the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) as well as exchange information on the ongoing lunar missions. The support to these discussions is possible since MVA has permanent observer status within COPUOS.



In order to achieve its goals, the Group intends to:

- i. Engage with UNCOPUOS to present and support deliberation of the Recommended Framework and its evolution
- ii. Periodically gather its participants to exchange information about the implementation status of the Recommended Framework and its Annexes.
- iii. Support complementary activities aligned with the Recommended Framework and partner with relevant stakeholders conducting them within UNCOPUOS or other international fora (i.e. Summit of the future in 2024),
- iv. Act as a neutral platform to exchange information and views as well gather experience from ongoing lunar missions and relevant key issues between lunar stakeholders for the peaceful and sustainable conduct of lunar activities.
- v. Bring key issues identified by the Group to the attention of UNCOPUOS for further discussion and deliberation
- vi. Leverage contributions from major stakeholders of the space community, including space agencies, private companies, academia, and international organizations.
- vii. Involve the public by promoting outreach efforts regarding the activities of the Group through the involvement of local actors at the global level.

3. Participants

Participants of the Group will consist of major stakeholders in lunar activities including representatives from space agencies/government, industry, international organizations, academia, and civil society. Members of the Group will participate on a personal basis and any views expressed at the meetings or by the Group do not represent the position of organizations to which members may belong.

4. Platform for the Group

The activities of the Group will be hosted by the Moon Village Association, with the possibility of creating various *ad hoc* consortia at a later stage as the Group sees fit.

5. Management of the Group

The Expert Group will be serviced by a Secretariat embedded in the MVA. The Secretariat will consist of the Group's Chair, the three Vice-Chairs, the Executive Secretary, and relevant management support. One Vice-Chair will be drawn from each stakeholder group: government, industry, and academia. The Executive Secretary is the President of the Moon Village Association.

The Secretariat will liaise with the participants of the Group, maintain a dedicated webpage and social media, organize meetings, lead discussions, and prepare documents.

The Chair, the Vice-Chairs, or Executive Secretary will represent the Group in external events.



Most of the activities will be carried out through electronic means (email, conference calls, etc.).

With the agreement of the Group's participants, face-to-face meetings may be held during events, such as the IAC or MVA Annual Workshops or other major events.

6. Sub-Groups

In order to conduct more focused discussions and develop appropriate solutions for the different issues involved in lunar activities, the Group may decide to establish sub-groups. *Inter alia*, the sub-groups may address the following key topics: interoperability requirements, debris mitigation, registration of activities, heritage protection, establishment of safety zones, and access to scarce resources and unique locations. The decision to create these subgroups, including their mandate and structure, will be taken by the participants of the Group.

7. Interface with other organizations

The Committee on Space Research (COSPAR; <https://cosparhq.cnes.fr>) exists "to promote at an international level scientific research in space, with emphasis on the exchange of results, information and opinions, and to provide a forum, open to all scientists, for the discussion of problems that may affect scientific space research."

COSPAR Sub-Commission B3 exists specifically to promote international cooperation in all areas of lunar science (<https://cosparhq.cnes.fr/scientific-structure/scientific-commissions/scientific-commission-b-space-studies-of-the-earth-moon-system-planets-and-small-bodies-of-the-solar-system/#B3>), and it is proposed that during its operational phase GEGSLA will establish links with COSPAR Sub-Commission B3 in order to exchange information and facilitate joint activities related to lunar science and exploration. This should include, as well, the International Lunar Exploration Working Group (ILEWG).

8. Participants

Differently from the initial GEGSLA phase, there will be no difference between Members and Observers, all the participants are experts, confirmed by the secretariat.

It is proposed to:

- a) request confirmation to the present members and observers of their interest to remain in the GEGSLA group for the operational phase and act as participants
- b) open a Call for participants to increase the global reach and expertise of the group

To keep the total membership to a manageable number to hold calls/meetings a request for participation will be issued 3 weeks before the call/meeting. The secretariat will implement the required actions to hold a viable calls/meetings

The Chair, Executive Secretary and Management Support do not count as participants. Participants have the right to attend calls, to speak at calls, to submit proposals and to participate in decision-making.

9. Sponsors



Sponsors are individuals or organizations that financially contribute to the activities of the Group. The Sponsors will be recognized in all public events and may be invited to take part in a consortium created to coordinate global events to inform the public and decision-makers in their country about the progress and the results of the Group. A sponsor is participant of the Group by default.

The sponsors will be informed of the expenditures that will be duly documented and audited.

10. Schedule

The Group may hold 3 to 4 meetings per year online through Zoom or another teleconference service or face-to face meetings organized by participants. Meetings online will typically last for two hours maximum. The tentative schedule for the major milestones is the following:

- Kick-Off Meeting: **January 2023** to support UN STSC
- **3 more meetings in 2023, i.e. May** to support UN COPUOS

Please note that this schedule is provisional and will be adjusted by the Secretariat as appropriate depending on the activities of the Group or other circumstances.

11. Outcome

The Group will carry out the following activities:

- Operate the Group as a platform to maintain relationships among stakeholders interested in lunar activities and support the implementation of the Recommended Framework.
- Support the lunar related discussions at the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) and other relevant fora
- Organize outreach events such as webinars or workshops.
- Maintain the webpage of GEGSLA and publish agreed information by the Group using social media

12. Budget

The Expert Group operates mainly on the basis of contributions in kind from stakeholders, that is, they provide manpower and some limited financial contributions. Considering that the majority of the activities will be conducted in a virtual mode, it is expected that the participants of the Expert Group shall pay for their own expenses, if any. Any exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and specific sponsors will be sought

A preliminary estimate of the budget per year, required is 15,000 Euro, broken down as follows:

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|-----------------------|-------------|
| - Management Support: | 13,000 Euro |
| - Travel /Various: | 2,000 Euro |

This budget could cover a partially volunteer Implementation Support Officer. However, if more funds would be available, more activities could be organized especially in the outreach domain



13. Contributions

The financial resources required to carry out the project shall be provided by the sponsors. Sponsors will be sought via a standing Call every year.