Earthzine Strategic Plan: 2016-2020

**Mission**

To serve as a contribution of IEEE to the Group on Earth Observations ([GEO](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/geo-and-geoss-the-group-on-earth-observations-and-the-global-earth-observations-system-of-systems/)) and the Global Earth Observation System of Systems ([GEOSS](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/geo-and-geoss-the-group-on-earth-observations-and-the-global-earth-observations-system-of-systems/)) by providing up-to-date information on the science, technology and participants of Earth observation and information utilization.

**Objectives**

* To facilitate connections between Earth-observing professionals and the general public;
* To foster community among the diverse group of Earth observers and Earth-information users while providing a pathway that leads to a more informed public;
* To provide a means to understand the impact of Earth observation on societal issues;
* To enable cross-discipline and cross-regional sharing of knowledge and ideas.

**Philosophy**

Improve communication by sharing information between the international and interdisciplinary community of Earth observers and those who use the information for societal and business management. Provide content that:

* Is up-to-date and relevant;
* Informs the expert yet is accessible to the non-specialist;
* Appeals to and educates the general population;
* Attracts readers to visit on a regular basis;
* Makes a unique contribution through focused thematic content;
* Inspires and leads readers to further investigate and discover the wonders of Earth;
* Responds and adapts to reader feedback and usage;
* Includes core features such as Original Articles, Interviews, and Syndicated News;
* Supports GEO in its focus on the nine [Societal Benefit Areas](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/geo-and-geoss-the-group-on-earth-observations-and-the-global-earth-observations-system-of-systems/societal-benefit-areas/).

**Tactics**

* To publish articles covering each of the nine Societal Benefit Areas, EO technologies, applications of Earth information, and sustainability;
* To provide coverage of regional issues with increased focus on Africa, South America and Asia;
* To increase readership through partnering with complementary organizations that allow information exchange across disciplines (for example, between providers of Earth data and potential users within the project management community);
* To increase participation of volunteer staff in management and content development.

**Audience**

Earthzine primarily serves three sources of readership: (1) Professional and technical readers in IEEE and GEO communities; (2) users and potential users of Earth information in governments, industry and non-governmental organizations; and (3) the general public seeking reliable Earth information.

**Goals**

Content

* Publish a focused series on GEO projects and international programs entailing collaborations, with an emphasis on developing regions;
* Increase use and development of custom graphics, maps, and video to accompany and enrich published articles;
* Publish monthly “mini themes” focused on specific timely subjects;
* Expand coverage of “science as a human endeavor,” with personal stories on how Earth observations impact people on a social and personal level;
* Expand coverage of ocean-related news and research, Societal Benefit Areas, and climate and location-based stories centering around human impacts;
* Add new features to redesigned website, including daily images and near-real-time Earth information from other agencies and content providers;
* Continue to improve access to Earthzine’s content through, for example, search engine optimization and improvements to site speed and loading times;

Reader Engagement

* Increase traffic and newsletter subscribers;
* Increase visibility through the use of social media, advertisements, and announcements in Earthzine and other media;
* Complete an updated survey of readers; document and respond to feedback;

Student Involvement

* Establish a “writing club” as an extension of annual essay contests that Earthzine has run in the past; Earthzine’s Associate Editor for Education will guide students and young professionals in preparing original articles for publication;
* Continue to increase student participation through focused content and competitions;

Volunteers and Staffing

* Engage additional volunteers through new features including the writing club and continued publication of Virtual Poster Sessions (VPSes) by NASA DEVELOP and other programs;
* Establish guidelines and criteria for volunteer positions;
* Utilize newly added staff and volunteers to assist with outreach and communications.

Funding, Sponsorship, and IEEE Relations

* Expand the resource base through grants and sponsorship from new organizations;
* Improve alignment with IEEE by more effectively leveraging its membership and society resources;
* Acquire Digital Object Identifier (DOI) registration through IEEE.

**Earthzine Content**

Earthzine aims to publish positive, respectful, informative and thought-provoking content about the benefits of using Earth information in our daily lives. For additional information refer to [Writer Guidelines](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/writers-guidelines/), and [Editorial Policy](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/editorial-policy/).

Original Articles: General interest and theme-based articles from contributions written or collected by the editorial staff. Original articles comprise the unique contextual contribution of Earthzine and serve to bridge the technical, expert and non-specialist in identified areas of societal needs.

Syndicated articles: Environmental news that spans the nine Societal Benefit Areas found on a cadre of online sources.

Quick Looks and multimedia: Brief descriptions and videos of Earth and Earth observing activities.

GEO/GEOSS News: Updates of the latest developments from GEO and GEOSS.

Student Opportunities: [Virtual Poster Sessions](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/students-compete-in-third-develop-virtual-poster-session/), [Essay](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/sustainability-from-around-the-world-third-annual-essay-and-blogging-contest/) and Video competitions.

People: Interviews, biographies, and brief notes about Earth observers.

Reviews: Reviews of the latest books, websites, and multimedia related to the geosciences.

Op-Ed: Columns from the Editor-in-Chief and Guest Editors, along with opinion pieces from readers and contributors.

Image of the Day: Provided by NASA.

Events: Updated continuously with the latest in conferences, workshops, experiments, and Earth events.

Resources: Extensive list of websites with brief descriptions that are grouped and cross-referenced by theme.  
 **Publication Schedule**

As a Web-based publication, there is continuous updating that occurs on different temporal scales:  
[Syndicated Articles](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/syndicated/) from around the world are posted daily;

Original Articles are published weekly;

[Quarterly Themes](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/themes-page/) timed with the seasons comprise articles, reprints, editorials, opinions and resources centered about a common theme;

Newsletters are sent to [Earthzine subscribers](https://web.archive.org/web/20140110063110/http:/www.earthzine.org/subscribe-to-our-newsletter/" \t "_blank) on the full moon and to contributors and stakeholders on the new moon.

**Organizational Structure**

Board of Directors  
Provides direction and guidance in all aspects of Earthzine;

Elects Editor-in-Chief;

Comprised of representatives from the IEEE, External Advisors and Editor-in-Chief.

Editor-in-Chief  
Responsible for overall management of the site, staff and volunteers;

Responsible for Earthzine content, design and publication;

Recruits and coordinates contributions and participation of volunteer staff;

Works with Associate Editors to select and plan thematic content for upcoming publications;

Establishes teams to develop content for quarterly themes.

Managing Editor  
Works with the Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors and staff to plan, develop and market Earthzine’s content;

Manages the site’s content and daily updates;

Markets Earthzine to individuals and organizations.  
  
Content Manager  
Responsible for managing content on site and posting new content.

Acts as Syndication Editor, posting articles daily from a variety of sources.  
  
Updates Resources and Events pages;  
  
Posts original articles;  
  
Special assignments on request.

Science Writers  
Work with Earthzine’s Managing Editor to monitor Earth observation (EO) news, issues and related items from EO organizations in the U.S. and abroad;  
  
Write articles and Quick Looks on various subjects, announcements, and other posts to populate Earthzine.org with up-to-date and interesting information on EO activities;  
  
Assist in coordinating volunteer activities   
  
Help edit articles from other writers and contributors as necessary.

Associate Editors  
Responsible for subject topic content;

Coordinate contributions for thematic content to upcoming publications;

Form teams (Associate Editors and contributors) to develop content;

Coordinate participation of contributing editors;

Contribute to all aspects of web content.

Regional Coordinators in Africa, South America and Asia  
Stimulate content for articles across disciplines from a regional perspective.

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