



## **GEOAQUAWATCH SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **March 31, 2018 (updated May 2023 to reflect Code of Conduct)**

#### **WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA MEANS TO US**

Conversations take place online about water quality and GEO initiatives, and we want our GEOAquaWatch's global community in more than 100 countries to join those conversations, help promote GEOAquaWatch, and share the optimistic and positive spirits of our efforts.

These *Social Media Principles* should guide your participation in social media, both personally as well as when you are acting in an official capacity on behalf of the GEOAquaWatch. It is critical we always remember who we are –the premier international, science-based organization dedicated to global earth observation of water quality for the benefit of society – and what our GEOAquaWatch's role is in the social media community – to share best practices and information, and meetings/announcements/events relevant to the global water quality community. The same considerations that apply to our messaging and communications in traditional media still apply in the online social media space, including on what you might consider “internal” platforms.

Online principles: Have fun, but be smart and timely. Use sound judgment and common sense, adhere to the GEOAquaWatch's goal, mission and objectives, and follow the same GEOAquaWatch policies that you follow in the offline world.

#### **GEOAQUAWATCH COMMITMENTS**

The GEOAquaWatch makes certain commitments concerning how we interact with the public and each other, and these commitments apply to interactions that occur on social media platforms as well. We expect the same commitments from all GEOAquaWatch representatives, including GEOAquaWatch associates and associates of our agencies, vendors and suppliers:

1. GEOAquaWatch will be **transparent** in every social media engagement.
2. GEOAquaWatch will **protect** our consumers' privacy in compliance with applicable Privacy Policies, IT Security Policies, and laws, rules, and regulations.
3. GEOAquaWatch will **respect** copyrights, trademarks, rights of publicity, and other third-party rights.
4. GEOAquaWatch will be **responsible** for our use of technology and will not knowingly align our GEOAquaWatch with any organizations or Web sites that use excessive tracking software, adware, malware or spyware.
5. GEOAquaWatch will reasonably **monitor** our behavior in the social media space, establish appropriate protocols for establishing our social media presence, and keep appropriate records of our participation as dictated by law and/or industry best practices.

#### **GEOAQUAWATCH AND AGENCY ASSOCIATES' SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES**

The GEOAquaWatch respects the rights of its associates to use blogs and other social media tools not only as a form of self-expression, but also to further GEOAquaWatch's business. It is important our associates are aware of the implications of engaging in social media and online conversations that reference GEOAquaWatch, its products, or the GEO Secretariat, and that they recognize when the GEOAquaWatch might be held responsible for their behavior. Our expectations for personal and professional/official use of social media are set forth separately below.

#### ***PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: OUR EXPECTATIONS***

Whether you are an authorized GEOAquaWatch spokesperson or not, when you're talking about our GEOAquaWatch, our products, or GEO Secretariat on your personal social networks, keep in mind that:

1. GEOAquaWatch's Code of Conduct, DEIA, 'approved for web posting' and other policies still apply.



2. You are responsible for your actions. We encourage you to get online and have fun, but use sound judgment and common sense.
3. You are an important ambassador for GEOAquaWatch's products, and you're encouraged to promote them as long as you make sure you disclose that you are affiliated with the GEOAquaWatch. How you disclose can depend on the platform, but the disclosure should be clear and in proximity to the message itself.
4. When you see posts or commentary on topics that require subject matter expertise, such as organizational policy or practices, governmental or international policy or law, or scientific research, avoid the temptation to respond to these directly or 'in reply'. Please do bring these posts to the attention of the GEO AquaWatch Scientific Coordinator or Director for them to respond, as deemed appropriate.
5. Be conscientious when mixing your business and personal lives; be sure to know your employer's policies regarding personal use of social media at work.

### ***GEOAQUAWATCH SPOKESPEOPLE: OUR EXPECTATIONS***

When acting as an official GEOAquaWatch spokesperson, we expect you to:

1. Be trained. All authorized GEOAquaWatch spokespersons must be approved by the GEOAquaWatch co-chairs (Director) before speaking on behalf of the GEOAquaWatch.
2. Follow all applicable GEOAquaWatch policies and Code of Conduct.
3. Disclose your affiliation with the GEOAquaWatch. All associates who are speaking for the GEOAquaWatch must be transparent and disclose their affiliation with the GEOAquaWatch. How exactly you make this disclosure may vary depending on the circumstances and the platform, but the important thing is to make sure people reading your statement will be able to immediately identify that you are affiliated with the GEOAquaWatch. These disclosure requirements are equally important for any agency/vendor/partner/third party who is representing the GEOAquaWatch online.
4. When in doubt, do not post.
5. In posts, give credit where credit is due and don't violate others' rights. DO NOT claim authorship of something that is not yours in posts. If you are using another party's content, make certain they are credited for it in your post and they approve of you utilizing their content. In posts, do not use the copyrighted material, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the rightsholder(s).
6. Remember that your local posts can have global significance. The way that you answer an online question might be accurate in some parts of the world, but inaccurate (or even illegal) in others. Keep that "world view" in mind when you are participating in online conversations.
7. Remember the Internet is permanent.