

Distinguished

- Mr. Maria Germenchuk, First Deputy Head of Belhydromet
- Mr. Svetlana Kuzmich, Deputy Head of Belhydromet
- Mr. Ercan Büyükbaş, Leader of the RA VI Task Team on WIGOS

- Respectable representatives of the WMO Secretariat

- Dear representatives of the RA II and RA VI Member countries

Dear colleagues

I would like to express my great honour and pleasure to welcome you on the behalf of Regional Association VI (Europe) and also on the behalf of the WMO Inter-Commission Coordination Group on WIGOS. I am very grateful to the Belhydromet of Belarus on the support and hosting of this important Joint Inter-regional Workshop on the implementation of the WMO Integrated Global Observing System - WIGOS. This time again, my special gratitude goes to the WMO Secretariat, particularly Office for Europe and the Department for Observing and Information System.

I am truly pleased to be here in this handsome town Minsk, now for the second time, and participate at the Workshop. As a matter of fact, my first visit, two years ago, is connected with this second one - because it was also related to the interregional collaboration between RA VI and RA II, following the decision of the 17th Congress, regarding process of establishment of Euro-Asian Office here in Minsk with a mission to support interregional activities, events and joint ventures like, for example, this workshop.

The same 17th Congress decided that additional emphasis should be given to regional and national activities in the WIGOS Pre-Operational Phase (2016-2019).

Fundamental role of defining WIGOS concept, then WIGOS development and implementation, have the Commission of Basic System and the Commission for Instruments and Methods of Observation of the WMO. Additional vital contribution to WIGOS was accomplished by the Meteo-Swiss that invested in development of, so-called, OSCAR/Surface, the Observing Systems Capability Analysis and Review Tool. It is also important to recall that all the processes of WIGOS development and implementation at the five identified priority areas is still strongly steering by the WMO Inter-Commission Coordination Group on WIGOS - ICG-WIGOS.

We can easily address this Workshop as the successful follow up of the series of regional WIGOS Workshops both in RA VI and RA II. In RA VI past efforts have concentrated on the involvement of the EUMETNET members, while Region II have involved the ASEAN members in Southeast Asia and the Members in the Gulf region. Up to now, we did not have significant engagement from the Members in the Eurasian Region.

This Workshop makes a difference and because of that I am truly delighted to witness up to ... participants from 13 countries, what is, not only the success of the organizational efforts, but also significant indication of the need of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to understand and utilize the new WMO Integrated Global Observing System for their better performance.

This Workshop is vital for understanding and utilising the essential elements for WIGOS implementation enabling thus joint effort in WIGOS planning, building up and functioning by tracing Regional WIGOS Implementation Plans both in RA VI and RA II. Up to my perspective, this activity is one of the strongest contributions to the technical backbone of all meteorological, hydrological, oceanographic and related activities, not only on the regional but also on the global level. I am delighted to indicate this kind of collaboration as one of the best practices in the WMO community.

This is the reason what brings me here to join you and express my strong support not only on behalf of the RA VI but also on behalf of the Inter-Commission Coordination Group on WIGOS.

For sure, WIGOS is bringing mechanism that integrates, harmonises, interoperates, standardises and coordinates comprehensive observing system including co-sponsored systems of the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services partner organizations. This is particularly relevant for optimisation of their infrastructure and performance and raises their efficiency and cost-effectiveness, particularly in providing improved information and products to support decision-making at all levels.

We should recognize that we are dealing with the progress of the system that comprises:

surface-based and space-based observing components of the Global Observing System, Global Atmospheric Watch, Global Cryosphere Watch and World Hydrological Cycle Observing System, together with all WMO contributions to Global Climate Observing System, Global Ocean Observing System, Global Terrestrial Observing System and Global Earth Observation System of Systems.

We should bear in mind that the full power of WIGOS could be optimally achieved through synergetic interaction with the WMO Information System – WIS that is enabling exchange of information (data and products and associated metadata) at significantly higher operational level. Critical point for the success of the WIGOS implementation is in the active engagement of the NMHSs, particularly through their designated Focal Points both on WIS and WIGOS.

From the perspective of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, WIGOS is the unique opportunity to bring together - for the first time - their own disunited observation networks such as: meteorological, hydrological, air quality or marine network.

More than that, WIGOS enables to join the same kind of observation networks of partner organizations and is offering numerous possibilities of collaboration and cooperation between National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and partner organizations. On the top of that, WIGOS is offering numerous possibilities of collaboration and cooperation of partners within the framework of the Global Observing Systems of Systems - GEOSS. As a matter of fact WIGOS is caring GEOSS substance.

Let me thank again the WMO Secretariat on the support of this Workshop that is facilitating realisation of the Regional WIGOS Implementation Plans for the RA II and RA VI and highly contributing to the successful performance and accomplishment of the current WMO Operation Plan.

Dear colleagues, it is truly my pleasure to share with you the spirit of our collaboration and partnership under the umbrella of WMO. I am relying with high confidence on our Belorussian host organizers along with the facilitators of the Workshop and wish you all a fruitful three working days as well as the full success of the Workshop. I am sure that one of the best gifts that we will bring to our home will certainly be pleasant remembrance of Minsk and Belarus.

Thank you

MSc Ivan Cacic, President RA VI - Europe
PR of Croatia with WMO