

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

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COMMISSION FOR BASIC SYSTEMS
OPEN PROGRAMME AREA GROUP ON
INTEGRATED OBSERVING SYSTEMS

ITEM: 6.2

**INTER PROGRAMME EXPERT TEAM ON
OBSERVING SYSTEM DESIGN AND EVOLUTION
(IPET-OSDE)
*First Session***

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GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 31 MARCH – 3 APRIL 2014

REVIEW OF OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO IPET-OSDE AND OPAG-IOS

UPDATE ON GFCS ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO OBSERVING SYSTEMS

(Submitted by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

The document provides information on latest developments regarding the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS).

ACTION PROPOSED

The Meeting is invited to note the information contained in this document when discussing how it organises its work and formulates its recommendations.

DISCUSSION

1. The Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) was established with the aim to enable society to manage better the risks and opportunities arising from climate variability and change, especially for those who are most vulnerable to climate-related hazards. Effective climate services will facilitate climate-smart decisions that will reduce the impact of climate-related disasters, improve food security and health outcomes, and enhance water resource management, among other societal benefits. All countries will benefit, but in the initial stages priority shall go to building the capacity of developing countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate variability and change. The GFCS aims to bridge the gap between those that need to know the climate and those that have such knowledge, thus empowering, in particular, the vulnerable.

2. The GFCS identified four initial priority areas; agriculture and food security, water, health and disaster risk reduction. To ensure that the entire value chain for the production and application of climate services is effectively addressed in support of effective decision-making in the four priority areas the GFCS is built on five interrelated components or pillars:

- *The User Interface Platform* — to provide ways for climate services users and providers to interact to identify needs and capacities and improve the effectiveness of the Framework and its climate services;
- *The Climate Services Information System* — to produce and distribute climate data, products and information according to the needs of users and to agreed standards;
- *Observations and Monitoring* – to generate the necessary data for climate services according to agreed standards;
- *Research, Modelling and Prediction* — to harness science capabilities and results and develop appropriate tools to meet the needs of climate services;
- *Capacity Development* — to support the systematic development of the institutions, infrastructure and human resources needed for effective climate services.

3. The first session of the Intergovernmental Board on Climate Services (IBCS-1) was held in Geneva from 1-5 July 2013. As part of the session, a one-day workshop on “*Operational Climate Services: a dialogue on practical action*” was held on the 1st of July (see details at: <http://gfcs.wmo.int/content/operational-climate-services-dialogue-practical-action>). The workshop demonstrated the value of an organized and coordinated system to maximize synergies in developing and applying climate services and provided examples of concrete activities from the global to the national levels. IBCS-1 took important decisions as follows (see Abridged Final Report with Resolutions at http://library.wmo.int/opac/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=15878):

- (a) Approved the Implementation Plan of the GFCS and a Compendium of initial GFCS projects for immediate implementation;
- (c) Established a stakeholder engagement mechanisms, and;
- (d) Elected Dr Anton Eliassen (Norway) as the Chair, Dr Linda Makuleni (South Africa) and Dr Laxman Singh Rathore (India) as the Co-Vice-Chair. It also

selected the Members forming the Management Committee of the Board as follows:

- RA I (Africa): Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea Bissau, South Africa (Co-Vice-Chair), United Republic of Tanzania;
- RA II (Asia): China, India (Co-Vice-Chair), Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea;
- RA III (South America) : Argentina, Brazil, Peru;
- RA IV (North and Central America): British Caribbean Territories, Canada, Costa Rica, United States of America;
- RA V (South West Pacific): Australia, Fiji, Indonesia, Philippines;
- RA VI (Europe): Germany, Italy, Norway (Chair), Russian Federation, Switzerland, Turkey.

4. With the approval of the Implementation Plan and its governance structure the GFCS has entered into an implementation phase. A number of countries are conducting their national consultations intended to identify gaps and needs and to establish the internal coordination mechanisms needed to ensure effective implementation of the Framework (see <http://gfcs.wmo.int/events>). These consultations are allowing the identification of key gaps in the various components of the GFCS that need to be addressed to support the development and application of climate services. They are also facilitating the identification of critical elements that are supporting the development of guidelines for the establishment of frameworks for climate services at national level.

5. With respect to observations, major gaps identified through extensive consultations that preceded the development of the GFCS relate to inadequate systematic gathering of high quality data with the required spatial density and temporal frequency using standardized, well maintained instruments with standardized and sustained observing practices and the exchange and sharing of as much of this data as is needed for the development of effective climate services. In addition, the use of Quality Management Framework approach based on standards and agreed regulation at national level, particularly in developing countries where capacities are limited was seen as a major gap. The specific gaps identified through the consultative process that underpinned the development of the Implementation Plan of the GFCS and its Annex on Observations and Monitoring are discussed in Doc 7.3.4.

6. To improve data access and application, data rescue activities are underway in five countries in West Africa as part of the West Africa Climate Assessment and Data Rescue (WACA-DARE) and in the Pacific Islands as part of a project supported by Australia.

7. GCOC organized in February 2013 a workshop on Observations for Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change, which considered observation requirements for adaptation, linking these with the needs of the GFCS. The workshop was aligned with the implementation plan of the GFCS in that it addressed the requirements of the priority areas of the GFCS (agriculture and food security, water, health and disaster risk reduction) as well as data rescue, data management and observations for research, modelling and assessment that are highly relevant to the User Interface Platform and the Research, Modelling and Prediction pillars of the GFCS.