### WMO Regional WIGOS Centres

Adopting Decision 30 (EC-68), the Council recognized that Regional WIGOS Centres (RWCs) will play the critical role in advancing operation of WIGOS and providing regional coordination, technical guidance, assistance and advice to Members and regional associations.

It further recognized that the Regions differ and that such differences will need to be taken into account in establishing and operating RWCs that address the specific Members’ needs and circumstances of the respective Region.

EC-68 endorsed the Concept Note on establishment of WMO Regional WIGOS Centres (thereafter referred to as “RWC Concept”) as provided in the [Annex](#_Annex_to_Draft) to this document as general guidance to regional associations outlining the basic principles and providing a clear specification of mandatory and optional functions and urged WMO Members to actively participate in the implementation of the RWC.

It also requested regional associations and Members should consider, wherever possible, building RWC functions into existing WMO centres as an alternative to establishing new centres.

It further requested presidents of regional associations to consider specific solutions for establishing and operating RWCs in their respective Region and to invite them to share their findings with ICG-WIGOS-6 (2017).

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[Annex: 1](#_Annex_to_Draft)

#### Concept note on establishment of WMO Regional WIGOS Centres

**Background**

Many WMO Members are already now requesting guidance and support for their WIGOS implementation efforts. It is clear that such support can be provided more efficiently and effectively via a regional support structure rather than through direct interaction between the WMO Secretariat and individual Members. A network of Regional WIGOS Centres (RWCs) is needed to assist WMO Members in their endeavour to successfully implement WIGOS at the national and regional levels.

There is a clear understanding that the Regions differ and that the generic concept described below will have to be adjusted further in order to address specific needs, priorities, challenges and available technical and human resources of the respective Region.

**Purpose**

Under the governance and guidance of the management group of the respective regional association and with the support of relevant regional working bodies, the overall purpose of the RWCs is to provide support and assistance to WMO Members and Regions for their national and regional WIGOS implementation efforts.

**Basic Principles**

WMO should, wherever possible, encourage the existing WMO regional centres to carry out the new activities, thus ensuring optimization of technical and human resources. Already existing structures and mechanisms should be considered when implementing WIGOS at the regional and national levels, including their potential roles in RWCs. Every effort must be made to avoid any duplication with responsibilities and functionalities of already existing WMO Regional Centres; instead, possible synergies with them must be exploited.

Existing geographic, cultural and linguistic differences within each WMO Region must be taken into account in determining the appropriate establishment and models of operation of RWCs. Therefore, the respective regional association must decide on its own mechanism for how to establish its RWCs with clearly specified Terms of Reference in line with guidance by ICG-WIGOS, reflecting its needs, priorities and existing capabilities and facilities. The relevant WIGOS working body in the Region (generally the Regional Task Team on WIGOS) should be involved in the process of establishing the RWC and have general oversight once it has become operational.

**Links to other WMO entities**

The RWCs will work closely both with the WMO Secretariat (including Regional Offices) and with their respective regional working bodies to ensure efficient and effective implementation of WIGOS. The RWCs will liaise with relevant existing WMO Centres, in particular with the Regional Instrument Centres (RICs), Regional Climate Centres (RCCs) and Regional Training Centres (RTCs) regarding all WIGOS related activities in the Region.

**Functionalities**

Basic functions of the RWC must be regional coordination, guidance, oversight and support of WIGOS implementation and operational activities at the regional and national levels (day-to-day level of activities). A number of mandatory and optional functions are specified.

**Mandatory functions**

The proposed mandatory functions are directly linked with two of the priority areas of the WIGOS Pre-operational Phase (2016-2019):

1. Regional WIGOS metadata management (work with data providers to facilitate collecting, updating and providing quality control of WIGOS metadata in OSCAR/Surface);

2. Regional WIGOS performance monitoring and incident management (WIGOS Data Quality Monitoring System) and follow-up with data providers in case of data availability or data quality issues.

**Optional functions**

Depending on available resources and regional needs, one or more optional functions may be adopted, e.g.: (a) assistance with the coordination of regional/sub-regional and national WIGOS projects; (b) assistance with regional and national observing network management; and (c) support for regional capacity development activities.

**Implementation options and roadmap**

In principle, each Member of any given Region should be covered by an RWC which will be responsible for providing WIGOS support. The RWCs may be implemented either centrally, at an overall regional level where a Member or a consortium of Members provide support for the entire Region, or at sub-regional level, e.g. aligned with the natural geographic or linguistic boundaries existing within the Region.

RWCs may be implemented either as monolithic entities, with a single Member taking on the responsibility for the entire set of required functionalities, or as virtual Centres, in which a consortium of Members share these responsibilities between them under the overall coordination of a lead organization.

The following key items with milestones are proposed in the Plan for the WIGOS Preoperational Phase:

(a) Establishment of one or more Regional WIGOS Centres in pilot mode from 2017,

(b) Operational phase of initial Regional WIGOS Centres beginning mid-2018,

(c) Establishment of Regional WIGOS Centres covering all WMO Regions by 2019.

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