
**GCOS STEERING COMMITTEE
TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION**

GCOS SC-27, 28–31 October 2019
Paris, France

Regional Workshops

(Submitted by the GCOS Secretariat)

Summary and Purpose of Document:

The document gives a brief progress report on the planning of regional workshops and is asking for a decision to continue.

Action Proposed:

Adopt the draft Decision 8.6.

DRAFT DECISIONS

Draft Decision 8.6 (SC-27)

1. Noting key messages and plans from the 1st and 2nd regional workshops, support the key messages from the 3rd workshop (Annex 1).
2. Agree on the further planning of additional regional workshops.
3. GCOS should jointly with WIGOS continue to hold regional workshop to explore regional implementation issues and identify important observations, subject to available funding.

Background

1. The 2016 GCOS Implementation Plan¹, endorsed by the WMO² and UNFCCC³, in action G8, asked GCOS to hold regional workshops. The plan states that to improve the global climate observations, particularly in light of the importance of adaptation, there should be a focus on those areas identified as most in need: Africa, Asia, South America and Small Island States. GCOS will hold regional workshops to identify needs and potential regional cooperation. These workshops will result in regional plans that will highlight the greatest needs and benefits of the proposed observational improvements. Donors would be encouraged to address these needs, either through the GCOS Cooperation Mechanism, other actors or directly. These regional workshops will include representatives of countries in the region, potential donors and technical experts.
 2. The first joint GCOS/WIGOS Regional Workshop, held in Fiji (October 2017), planned how to establish and maintain a regional network of upper air stations that will lead to regional and global improvements in weather forecast and climate modelling in a regional with limited resources.
 3. The second joint GCOS – Copernicus – WIGOS – Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) Regional Workshop, held in Uganda (October 2018), focused on improving the value chain from observations to climate services to support climate policy, adaptation and mitigation in East Africa.
 4. The third WMO GCOS/WIGOS Caribbean Regional Workshop on Observations of Climate and Meteorology in association with the UNFCCC was held in Belize City, Belize on 10-12 July 2019.
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¹ The Global Observing System for Climate: Implementation Needs, 2016, GCOS-200

² Decision 14 (EC-69) WMO 2017

³ FCCC/SBSTA/2015/L.18 Research and Systematic Observation and Decision 19/CP.22 Implementation of the global observing system for climate.

Annex 1: Key messages from Belize Workshop

OBSERVATION

- The value of basic observation systems cannot be over-emphasized - Terrestrial and radiosonde observations (e.g. WIGOS/GBON) are an important part of the GCOS Implementation Plan. Putting the data into international systems leads to increased accuracy of weather and climate models which, in turn, leads to improved forecasting and climate services
- Sustainability of observations, following the GCOS monitoring principles, is required to support climate monitoring and climate-change decision making. The most important need is to support unbroken long-term data acquisition not new systems. Maintaining, strengthening, upgrading, and improving existing systems is needed (e.g. through support for maintenance, calibration, repair and supply of spare parts): Mostly items that are relatively low cost.

TRAINING

- Needed for staff to interpret the meteorological information to provide climate services, e.g. on agriculture, extreme events. Training is also needed to support the underlying observations especially covering GBON and the associated IT.
- Year-long fellowships have been successful and should be supported and encouraged.

WIGOS

- WMO is developing GBON as part of the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS) to meet the global monitoring needs for climate and weather. Regional WIGOS centres are needed to support the regional development of WIGOS and GBON. In the Caribbean region the regional WIGOS Centre will need to be setup, with appropriate funding, to support GBON site identification, data entry, calibration, training, procurement, IT etc.

FUNDING

- From all three GCOS regional workshops held so far (S. Pacific, E. Africa and Caribbean) the same message has been clearly articulated: Short-term project funding from international donors does not lead to sustainable, systematic observation of the climate. Piecemeal funding has caused a range of issues for effective operation and has not established sustainable long-term operation.
 - There is a need for alternative models of funding, one good example in the Caribbean is the long-term funding of large parts of the radiosonde network by the US.
 - Observations made within any region in the World supports national weather and climate predictions for all countries worldwide. The funding mechanisms should recognize and facilitate this contribution to the global common good for those countries that do not have the national resources to meet the observational data requirements on their own.
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