Fourth Funders' Forum for the Systematic Observations Financing Facility

Virtual Meeting
28 October 2021

Summary of the Chairperson

Date: 23 November 2021

WMO OMM
World Meteorological Organization
Organisation météorologique mondiale

UNDP

UN environment programme

Fourth Funders' Forum for the
Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF)

28 October 2021

Summary of the Chairperson

I. Introduction

1. The fourth meeting of the forum of potential funders for the SOFF was convened virtually by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) on 28 October 2021, 12:00-14:00h CEST.

2. Delegations from 27 potential funders attended the meeting. In addition, fourteen delegations from SOFF stakeholder organizations participated, including from beneficiary countries, members of the Alliance for Hydromet Development, the CSO community and scientific and technical SOFF partners. WMO, UNDP and UNEP leadership and staff joined the meeting. Johannes Linn, SOFF Global Facilitator, chaired the event. (See the list of participants in Annex I).

3. WMO Secretary-General Prof Petteri Taalas, UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen and UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner welcomed the participants, thanked them for their engagement with SOFF and exhorted potential funders to finance SOFF as a foundational initiative in support of resilient development and climate action. The Chair reminded participants of the many strong voices of support which they had heard over the first three forums from many leaders representing stakeholders, including from recipient countries, from multilateral partners, from the private sector and from the CSO community.

4. The purpose of the meeting was to brief the participants on recent decisions taken by the World Meteorological Congress; present the final SOFF Terms of Reference Report; give potential funders an opportunity to make indicative statements about their intention to contribute to SOFF; and to address the way forward to a high-level SOFF announcement event at COP26 on 3 November 2021 and for the subsequent start-up of SOFF. The agenda for the meeting was structured accordingly (See Annex II).

II. Presentations

5. Anthony Rea, Director of the WMO Infrastructure Department, and Lars Peter Riishojgaard, Director of the WMO Earth Science Branch, explained the significance of the three interlinked decisions taken by the World Meteorological Congress in October 2021. The main aspects highlighted in their presentations included the following (see links to all slide presentations and the final Terms of Reference in Annex III):

    i. The three decisions were on (a) WMO unified data policy, with a commitment of national governments to exchange certain data for certain purpose(s); (b) the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON), with regulatory material on the specifics of data exchange (what, when, where, how); and (c) the SOFF, requesting WMO in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP to pursue the creation of SOFF as a UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UN MPTF) as a matter of urgency as well as urging developed countries Members to financially contribute to the SOFF UN MPTF, to provide peer-to-peer support for the implementation of SOFF, or to provide any other form of support.

    ii. These three decisions together represent a historic step by WMO towards global exchange of observations. They are critical to ensure that the upstream elements of the hydromet value chain support the downstream provision of reliable information for effective decision making and action on early warning and resilient development.

6. Lorena Santamaria from the WMO Development Partnerships Office presented the final SOFF Terms of Reference. She thanked delegations for their active engagement in shaping the design of the Facility over the preceding two years. The Terms of Reference will be appended to the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by WMO, UNDP, UNEP and UNMPTF. They thus represent the basis for the

creation of SOFF. The Terms of Reference also serve to inform countries, potential funders and stakeholders about the core elements of the Facility. Ms Santamaria explained the principal changes from the draft presented at the Third Funders' Forum, including advancements in (i) governance and complementarities, (ii) approaches to gender, and work with CSOs and the private sector; and (iii) the SOFF First Implementation Period.

7. Markus Repnik, Director of WMO Development Partnerships, informed participants about the next steps to get SOFF off the ground. He noted that at the COP26 SOFF announcement event on 3 November 2021, there will be an opportunity for high-level officials from funder countries and organizations to make a public announcement of their pledges or statements of support. It will also be the occasion of the formal signing of the Memorandum of Understanding legally creating SOFF. He reminded participants of the ambitious action program for the six-month SOFF Start Up Period, which includes the creation of the SOFF Secretariat and leads up to the first meeting of the SOFF Steering Committee planned for June 2022. He noted that funders who pledge financial support to SOFF before the first Steering Committee meeting will be able to jointly decide the final governance and operational modalities to be agreed at that meeting. Subsequent to the first Steering Committee meeting, SOFF operations will begin.

III. Discussion and Statements

8. Delegates congratulated WMO for the outcome of the World Meteorological Congress. They welcomed the quality of the SOFF Terms of Reference report and of the presentations, which indicate that SOFF represents an important, innovative and well-articulated initiative. Some delegates endorsed the inclusion of a gender action plan in the Terms of Reference, others noted the importance of ensuring sustainability of the SOFF mechanism, while yet others stressed the importance of complementarity with other initiatives such as REAP and CREWS.

9. The representative of the Least Developed Countries Group (LDCs) noted his group's strong support for SOFF. The LDCs reiterated the importance of having voice and vote at the Steering Committee. The SOFF team noted that management practices for global UN Multi-Partner Trust Funds call for only funders and the founding UN organization (in the case of SOFF, one of the three founding organizations, WMO) to have a vote on the Steering Committee, but the participation of the LDC Group and AOSIS as Steering Committee Members with voice will ensure that the views of LDCs and SIDS are properly reflected in SOFF decisions.

10. The Chairperson invited potential funder delegations to indicate their authorities' support for SOFF in various ways, from firm or conditional pledges to more general statements of support. He noted that authorities of potential funder countries and organizations are at different stages in the consideration of their possible support for SOFF. He also reminded delegations that the fourth funders' forum and the indicative statements are not the end of the process of resource mobilization for SOFF. Since the aim is to raise USD 200 million for the first three years of SOFF operations, it will be necessary to establish a broad base of funders willing to provide SOFF with the necessary means to achieve its ambitious and essential goal.

11. Seventeen potential funder delegations expressed their strong support for SOFF. They stated that their authorities are preparing to pledge, are considering ways of supporting SOFF, and/or endorsing the establishment of the SOFF while exploring possible future financial engagement. Some indicated their readiness to announce their intention to contribute financially to SOFF at the COP26 SOFF event on 3 November 2021.

IV. Closing

12. In his closing statement, the WMO Secretary-General Prof Petteri Taalas thanked all participants for their interest and statements of support, and for their very helpful inputs throughout the SOFF preparation process. He emphasized again that WMO is fully committed to make SOFF a success and that it is working hard, in collaboration with UNDP, UNDP and the UNMPTF Office, to put in place all

the arrangements needed so that SOFF can be established as speedily as possible. The Chairperson delivered a provisional summary of the event. He closed the meeting by thanking especially the delegates for their engagement in the SOFF process and for the statements indicating expected pledges and other support. He thanked the SOFF team at WMO, UNDP and UNEP, and all those who made this event possible working behind the scenes, including the interpreters.

Annex I. Participant list

Petteri Taalas	WMO	Secretary-General
Achim Steiner	UNDP	Administrator
Inger Andersen	UNEP	Executive Director
Johannes Linn	WMO/SOFF Global Facilitator	Chairman
Laura Tuck	WMO/SOFF Global Facilitator	SOFF Global Facilitator
Anthony Rea	WMO	Presenter
Lars Peter Riishojgaard	WMO	Presenter
Markus Repnik	WMO	Presenter
Lorena Santamaria-Rojas	WMO	Presenter
Anna Walch	Austria	Potential Funder
Brigitte Gerstmann	Austria	Potential Funder
Christoph Wieland	Austria	Potential Funder
Franz Breitwieser	Austria	Potential Funder
Johannes Pokieser	Austria	Potential Funder
Michael Staudinger	Austria	Potential Funder
Rudolf Schatz	Austria	Potential Funder
Wolfgang Lapuh	Austria	Potential Funder
Heather Aucoin	Canada	Potential Funder
Jenifer Collette	Canada	Potential Funder
Xianghua Xu	China	Potential Funder
Xiaoping Hu	China	Potential Funder
Zhang Wei	China	Potential Funder
Kreso Pandzic	Croatia	Potential Funder
Mads Staerk	Denmark	Potential Funder
Simon Svith	Denmark	Potential Funder
Valentina Villoria	European Commission	Potential Funder
Maria Hurtola	Finland	Potential Funder
Outi Myatt-Hirvonen	Finland	Potential Funder
Isabelle Bénet Borretti	France	Potential Funder
Marie-Pierre Meganck	France	Potential Funder
Paul Schilling	France	Potential Funder
Britta Horstmann	Germany	Potential Funder
Hannes Bräuer	Germany	Potential Funder
Malte Uphoff	Germany	Potential Funder
Philipp von Carnap	Germany	Potential Funder
Adriano Raspanti	Italy	Potential Funder
Annalisa Micheletti	Italy	Potential Funder
Cristina Biino	Italy	Potential Funder
Akira Okagaki	Japan	Potential Funder
Salah Alansari	Kuwait	Potential Funder
Andrew Ferrone	Luxembourg	Potential Funder
Cathy Wiseler	Luxembourg	Potential Funder
Ge Verver	Netherlands	Potential Funder
Rubert Konijn	Netherlands	Potential Funder
Aage Jorgensen	Nordic Development Fund	Potential Funder
Henrik Franklin	Nordic Development Fund	Potential Funder
Julie Louise Aaserud	Norway	Potential Funder
Roar Skålin	Norway	Potential Funder

Inês Moura Martins	Portugal	Potential Funder
Qatar Embassy	Qatar	Potential Funder
Elena Mateescu	Romania	Potential Funder
Iuliana Munteanu	Romania	Potential Funder
Anwar Mohammed Almatrafi	Saudi Arabia	Potential Funder
Ayman Ghulam	Saudi Arabia	Potential Funder
Fernando Belda	Spain	Potential Funder
Ilmar Karro	Sweden	Potential Funder
Fabio Fontana	Switzerland	Potential Funder
Isabelle Werner	Switzerland	Potential Funder
Emre Yuksek	Turkey	Potential Funder
Murat Altınyollar	Turkey	Potential Funder
Ozan Çakır	Turkey	Potential Funder
Abdulla Al Mandous	United Arab Emirates	Potential Funder
Monikumar Ramakrishnan	United Arab Emirates	Potential Funder
Helen Bye	United Kingdom	Potential Funder
Fred Branski	United States of America	Potential Funder
Al Hamndou Dorsouma	AfDB*	Stakeholder
H.E. Aubrey Webson	AOSIS	Stakeholder
Xianfu Lu	CIF*	Stakeholder
Amir Habchi	EBRD*	Stakeholder
Erik Andersson	ECMWF	Stakeholder
Umberto Modigliani	ECMWF	Stakeholder
Steven Ramage	GEO	Stakeholder
Valeria Drigo	GNDR	Stakeholder
Habib Abubakar	IsDB*	Stakeholder
Moustapha Diallo	IsDB*	Stakeholder
Phento Tshering	LDC Group	Stakeholder
Benjamin Larroquette	UNDP*	SOFF co-founder
Richard Bailey	UNDRR	Stakeholder
Sarah Houghton	UNDRR	Stakeholder
Brennan Van Dyke	UNEP*	SOFF co-founder
Jian Liu	UNEP*	SOFF co-founder
Jochem Zoetelief	UNEP*	SOFF co-founder
Montserrat Barroso	WFP*	Stakeholder
Vladimir Tsirkunov	World Bank*	Stakeholder
Yolanda González – President South America		WMO
Laura Sofia Heredia		WMO
Alain Rofes-Gonzales		WMO
Amos Makarau		WMO
Andrew Tupper		WMO
Bing Liu		WMO
Bernard Edward GOMEZ		WMO
Christophe Jacob		WMO
Ernest Afiesimama		WMO
Georgina Kahama		WMO
Kosmos E. Akande-Alasoka		WMO
Joseph Mukabana		WMO
Filipe Lúcio		WMO
Karolin Eichler		WMO

Mario Peiró Espí	WMO
Mark Majodina	WMO
Mary Power	WMO
Roseline Devillier	WMO
Roland Abah	WMO
Rodney Martinez	WMO
Serena Odianose	WMO

* **Members of the Alliance for Hydromet Development**

Annex II. Agenda of Fourth Potential Funders' Forum

Systematic Observations Financing Facility - SOFF

Agenda
SOFF Fourth Potential Funders' Forum

28 Otober 2021, 12:00-14:00h CET

Time	Agenda Item	Description
12:00	**Opening**	• Welcoming remarks Prof. Petteri Taalas, WMO Secretary-General Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director • Discussion and adoption of the agenda
12:15	**World Meteorological Congress decisions and SOFF**	• Presentation • Discussion
12:35	**SOFF Terms of Reference**	• Presentation • Discussion
12:55	**Indications of pledges and support**	• Statements of planned pledges and support
13:35	**Next steps: COP26 SOFF announcement and pledging event and beyond**	• Presentation • Discussion
13:50	**Closing**	• Closing remarks Prof. Petteri Taalas, WMO Secretary-General • Summation by Chair

Annex III – Background information for Third Funders' Forum

- Terms of Reference for the SOFF: SOFF-Terms-of-Reference.pdf (alliancehydromet.org)
- Fourth Funders' Forum slide presentations: https://alliancehydromet.org/soff-funders-forum/
- More information on SOFF can be found at: https://alliancehydromet.org/systematic-observations-financing-facility/