

15 June 2022

SOFF Secretariat work plan and budget
SOFF First Implementation Period
July 2022 to June 2025
(Project document)

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



1. Background

In 2021, WMO, UNDP and UNEP co-created the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). SOFF is a United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UNMPTF) administered by the UNMPTF Office as Trustee and supported by a Secretariat hosted by WMO in Geneva, Switzerland.

2. Objective and scope of the SOFF UNMPTF

Objective. The objective of SOFF is to support Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through the provision of grant financing and technical assistance for the sustained collection and international exchange of surface-based weather and climate observations according to the GBON regulations. SOFF also provides Readiness phase support to all OECD ODA-eligible countries.¹

Scope. SOFF funding and technical assistance cover activities related to establishing, operating, and maintaining national observing networks to meet the requirements of the GBON regulations.

3. Governance

The governance structure consists of the following bodies: a Steering Committee that guides the SOFF as its decision-making body; a multi-partner Advisory Board that advises the Steering Committee; the UNMPTF Office that acts as the Trustee; a SOFF Secretariat that coordinates SOFF operations. The different bodies and their roles are briefly described below. The full terms of references are provided in the SOFF Operational Manual.

SOFF Secretariat: The Secretariat is hosted by WMO in Geneva and follows WMO financial and staff regulations and rules with respect to all administrative policies and procedures. It comprises a team of professional and administrative staff and operates under the overall guidance of the Steering Committee and is accountable to it. It administratively reports to the Director of the Infrastructure Department of WMO. Its Terms of Reference are described in section 5.

SOFF Steering Committee: The Steering Committee provides strategic direction to SOFF. It endorses SOFF strategic documents, adopts the Operational Manual taking into account recommendations of the SOFF Advisory Board, and approves the programming priorities, funding requests, and the budget for the operation of the SOFF Secretariat. The Steering Committee endorses financial and programmatic reports from the SOFF Secretariat and the Trustee and commissions regular independent external evaluations.

SOFF Advisory Board: SOFF is advised by a multi-stakeholder Advisory Board. Its main functions are to provide strategic advice on programming and operations, contribute to assessing and maximizing SOFF results, ensure that SOFF maximize synergies between SOFF and the Advisory Board Members' and other relevant stakeholders' activities across the meteorological value chain, and to provide insights and foster learning and innovation.

4. Operational partners

Beneficiary countries. National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) from the SOFF beneficiary countries are the focal points for SOFF support. SOFF prioritizes support to SIDS and LDCs. All other OECD ODA-eligible developing countries are eligible for SOFF support under the Readiness phase only.

Implementing Entities (IEs). Major multilateral development partners that play an important role in supporting countries' hydromet development are eligible to serve as SOFF IE. These include Multilateral Development Banks, initially: Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, the World Bank; and UN organizations: initially, UNDP, UNEP, World Food Programme. All Implementing Entities are expected to be members of the Alliance for Hydromet Development.

SOFF peer advisors: NMHSs that are members of WMO² are eligible to serve as peer advisors for SOFF. NMHSs interested in becoming SOFF peer advisors must demonstrate (i) substantial expertise in the areas of

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>

² See list of WMO Membership at: <https://public.wmo.int/en/about-us/members>

advisory services required for SOFF, (ii) a track record in partnering with and supporting other NMHSs, and (iii) a commitment to make available adequate human resources.

WMO as SOFF Technical Authority. The World Meteorological Congress is responsible for setting and approving the GBON regulations and updating them. The Commission for Observation, Infrastructure and Information Systems (INFCOM) is in charge of overseeing and coordinating the development of technical guidelines, processes and procedures for the implementation and compliance monitoring of GBON. The WMO secretariat provides basic technical support to the peer advisors, IEs and beneficiary countries on GBON regulations. The WMO secretariat is also responsible for the technical screening of the GBON Gap Analysis and the National Contribution Plan against the GBON regulations and the independent verification of the status of beneficiary countries' stations against the GBON regulations.

5. SOFF Secretariat Terms of Reference

Service SOFF governing bodies

- Liaise with SOFF Steering Committee co-chairs and members, organize meetings and prepare all relevant documentation
- Liaise with SOFF Advisory Board co-chairs and members, organize meetings and prepare all relevant documentation
- Support the SOFF co-creators – WMO, UNEP, UNDP – in the implementation of their different roles

Coordinate SOFF operations and programming

- Coordinate the preparation of the SOFF Operational Manual and SOFF Operational Guidance Handbook and, as needed, their updates
- Coordinate and support the operational work between beneficiary countries, SOFF IEs, SOFF peer advisors and WMO Technical Authority
- Coordinate the preparation of the SOFF work programme
- Facilitate the preparation of funding requests and review them for completeness
- Keep portfolio overview
- Facilitate the provision of SOFF peer advisory services
- Liaise with the WMO Technical Authority to ensure streamlined delivery of the WMO Technical Authority functions

Finance

- Liaise with the UNMPTF Office as SOFF Trustee to ensure the Steering Committee is informed about the SOFF UNMPTF administration and fiduciary oversight
- Support the Trustee activities, including the disbursement of funds to and legal arrangements with SOFF IEs, peer advisors, and countries
- Collaborate with the Trustee to ensure that the Trustee has all the information necessary to carry out its responsibilities, including notification to the Trustee of allocations approved by the Steering Committee

Monitor, report and learn

In collaboration and coordination with the SOFF Advisory Board, IEs, SOFF peer advisors and WMO Technical Authority:

- Develop and monitor the SOFF results framework based on progress reports from the IEs, peer advisors and WMO for submission to and review by the Steering Committee
- Coordinate the development and monitor the implementation of the gender action plan

- Hold consultations with SOFF stakeholders to capture lessons learned, good practices and innovative solutions, including those related to the private sector and civil society engagement in SOFF implementation
- Coordinate preparation of SOFF annual reports to be publicly disseminated, in collaboration with the WMO Technical Authority and the Trustee
- Commission evaluations as decided by the Steering Committee

Manage communications and knowledge sharing

- Develop a SOFF communication strategy and monitor its implementation
- Liaise with relevant stakeholders, including SOFF Advisory Board Members, SOFF IEs, funders, civil society and private sector organizations, to promote knowledge and information sharing and identify opportunities to strengthen SOFF visibility and reach
- Keep track of all relevant documentation and manage SOFF public communication, including SOFF website

Mobilize partnerships and resources

- Manage SOFF relationships with beneficiary countries, potential multilateral and bilateral funders and other relevant stakeholders, including preparation of meetings, briefings, and the mobilization of political support for SOFF
- Develop a resource mobilization and outreach strategy and monitor its implementation

6. Structure of the Secretariat

The SOFF Secretariat was established by WMO in January 2022 as part of the SOFF Start-up phase that lasts until 30 June 2022. In the current set-up, the Secretariat includes four staff members that have spearheaded and coordinated SOFF development since 2019.

WMO has been covering the costs of the SOFF Secretariat during the Start-up phase, with support from Switzerland, Italy and the Republic of Korea. In addition to the current four staff members, two additional core positions are required to strengthen the SOFF Secretariat. They will be filled either by secondments from UNEP and UNDP or through competitive hiring.

The core staffing positions of the Secretariat are described below.

- **Director of the SOFF Secretariat (D1)** manages and provides strategic direction to the SOFF Secretariat operations; oversees SOFF programming, operations, monitoring, reporting and learning; manages SOFF relationships with stakeholders; leads SOFF communications and outreach; represents SOFF; and provides leadership on fundraising.
- **Programme Management Officer (P4)** under the guidance of the Director, coordinates all SOFF operational arrangements and processes; serves as the interface between SOFF Secretariat and WMO Technical Authority; facilitates SOFF peer advisory services.
- **Programme Officer (P3)** engages with SOFF beneficiary countries and SOFF IEs; facilitates the preparation of funding proposals; keeps track and receives progress reports from IEs; liaises with SOFF operational partners to capture lessons learned; facilitates consultations with private sector and civil society.
- **Programme Officer (P3)** coordinates SOFF programming; keeps portfolio overview; monitors SOFF results framework; monitors the implementation of the Gender Action Plan.
- **Partnerships Officer (P3)** supports Steering Committee and Advisory Board activities; coordinates the development and monitors the implementation of the SOFF resource mobilization and outreach strategy; supports the development of and monitors the implementation of the SOFF communication strategy.
- **Coordination Officer (P3)** supports organization of SOFF meetings and events, including Steering Committee and Advisory Board meetings; coordinates SOFF administrative arrangements with SOFF IEs,

peer advisors and WMO; liaises with trustee on the disbursement of funds and all administrative aspects and reporting.

During years 2 and 3, it is expected that an additional Programme Officer will be required to support the activities of the SOFF Secretariat. The cost of this additional position is reflected in the budget (Table 2).

SOFF Global Facilitators and consultants

SOFF requires continuous support from SOFF Global Facilitators, renowned international experts, who provided and will continue to provide critical support for fundraising and outreach, leveraging their extensive experience and network.

Additional consultants with specific expertise in relevant areas will also be contracted to support SOFF Secretariat functions, including for the production of the SOFF Annual Report.

Internships

The SOFF Secretariat will offer time-bound internship opportunities.

WMO support to the SOFF Secretariat

The WMO Secretariat will provide support to the SOFF Secretariat in the following areas:

- **Administrative support** through standardized procedures and streamlined arrangements to ensure effective and smooth operations of the SOFF Secretariat.
- **Facilities and IT**, including the provision of office space and IT equipment for all personnel and associated connectivity costs, and general supplies to support the functioning of the SOFF Secretariat.
- **Humans resources** to ensure adequate staffing and benefits and entitlement administration for the SOFF Secretariat.
- **Legal and procurement support** to handle contractual processes of the SOFF Secretariat.
- **Financial management** to process payments and contracts.

Financial and Human Resources Authority

Staff members of the SOFF Secretariat are appointed by the Secretary-General of WMO and are subject to his authority. Their basic rights and obligations are governed by the Staff Regulations and Rules of WMO. The SOFF Director has the authority to implement the SOFF budget in accordance with the Financial Regulations of WMO and the associated delegation granted by the Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General of WMO.

7. Secretariat workplan and expected results

The expected results of the SOFF Secretariat are outlined in the workplan in Table 1 in the form of activities. Such activities will enable the Secretariat to support the implementation of the SOFF 2022-2025 work programme in line with the SOFF results framework presented in the SOFF Operational Manual.

Table 1 lists the core activities to be conducted by the SOFF Secretariat for the 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025 period. The workplan will be updated on an annual basis for approval by the Steering Committee. The workplan includes activities across six workstreams.

1. Governance
2. Operations and programming
3. Financing
4. Monitoring and evaluation
5. Communications and outreach
6. Partnerships and resource mobilization

Table 1. SOFF Secretariat workplan 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025

Ref.: 18208/2022-1.1.1

Activity	Timeline
Governance	
Organize 2 – 3 Steering Committee meetings per year and prepare all necessary documents	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Organize 2 – 3 Advisory Board meetings per year and prepare all necessary documents	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
In collaboration with the UNMPTF Office, ensure that the Steering Committee has all the required information about the administration of the Fund	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Operations and Programming	
Coordinate the preparation of the SOFF Operational Manual and the SOFF Operational Guidance Handbook and updates as needed	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Prepare SOFF work programme	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Facilitate the preparation and review of funding requests, and keep a portfolio overview	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Facilitate the provision of SOFF peer advisory services	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Facilitate communication and coordination among SOFF IEs, peer advisors, WMO Technical Authority and beneficiary countries and related activities	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Liaise with the WMO Technical Authority	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Financing	
Provide all required information to the Trustee to trigger payments and carry out its responsibilities	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Notify the Trustee of allocations approved by the Steering Committee	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Monitoring, reporting and learning	
Monitor the SOFF results framework	1 January 2023 – 30 June 2025
Compile reports from the beneficiary countries, IEs and peer advisors and capture lessons learned and inform the Steering Committee	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2025
Monitor the implementation of the gender action plan and regularly update it	1 January 2023 – 30 June 2025
Organize consultations with SOFF stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society	1 January 2023 – 30 June 2025
Compile lessons learned, good practices and innovative solutions for SOFF implementation	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2025
Coordinate the production of the SOFF Annual Reports	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2025
Commission external independent evaluation upon request of the Steering Committee	1 October 2024 – 30 June 2025
Informs the Steering Committee of any official complaint filed to the IEs	1 January 2023 – 30 June 2025
Communications and outreach	
Develop a SOFF communication strategy and monitor its implementation	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025

Promote knowledge and information sharing among relevant stakeholders, including the SOFF Advisory Board Members, IEs, funders, civil society and private sector	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Identify and tap into opportunities to strengthen SOFF visibility	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Implement a document management system, including operation and management of the SOFF website	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Partnerships and resource mobilization	
Manage relationships with SOFF beneficiary countries, potential multilateral and bilateral funders and other relevant stakeholders, including preparation of meetings, briefings	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025
Regularly update resource mobilization and outreach strategy and monitor its implementation	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025

8. Budget

The budget provided in Table 2 is in US dollars and covers a period of three years. It will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Steering Committee.

Table 2. SOFF Secretariat budget the 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2025

Budget Class	Year 1 (July 22 – June 2023)	Year 2 (July 2023 – June 2024)	Year 3 (July 2024 – June 2025)	Total (2022 – 2025)
1. Staff and other personnel costs	1,215,000	1,386,000	1,400,000	4,001,000
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	0	0	0	0
3. Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
4. Contractual Services	175,000	200,000	200,000	575,000
5. Travel	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	0	0	0	0
7. General Operating and Other Direct Costs	0	0	0	0
Total Programme Costs	1,450,000	1,646,000	1,660,000	4,756,000
Indirect Support Costs (7%)	101,500	115,220	116,200	332,920
TOTAL AMOUNT	1,551,500	1,761,220	1,776,200	5,088,920

- **Staff and personnel costs.** The budget line includes the costs of the core staffing positions. It is based on the WMO Standard Staff Costs for 2022, calculated in CHF. The conversion rate used is 1 USD: 0.96 CHF based on the UN Operational Rate (UNORE) of Exchange for June 2022. For year 2 and year 3 an additional P3 position is foreseen. The SOFF Secretariat aims at filling this position through a secondment from a donor. Therefore, staff and other personnel costs for year 2 and year 3 could be lower.
- **Supplies, Commodities, Materials.** This budget line includes specific IT equipment for the Secretariat Staff, relevant material, printing and general supplies.
- **Contractual services.** This budget line will fund the work of the SOFF Global Facilitators and other consultancies where expert support is needed, including for the production for the SOFF Annual Report.
- **Travel.** Travel costs for the SOFF Secretariat staff.
- **Indirect Support Costs.** This budget line includes the indirect support costs for WMO's provision of services such as premises or meeting space and operations management and support costs in finance, legal, HR, IT and procurement related to hosting of the SOFF Secretariat.