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Prepared by WMO
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WORKPLAN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF USERS OF SATELLITE DATA TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Following the decision from the WMO Sixteenth Congress (Cg-XVI, Geneva, Switzerland, 16 May – 3 June 2011) regarding establishment of an International Forum of Users of Satellite Data Telecommunication Systems together with IOC and FAO partner international organizations, the Management Group of the Commission for Basic Systems (CBS) has proposed draft Terms of Reference and a workplan leading in principle to the formal adoption of such a forum in 2013.

The CGMS is invited to :

- take note of this proposal,
- make recommendations as appropriate regarding the proposed workplan,
- possibly nominate a representative for participating in the organizing committee,
- and participate in the *ad hoc* workshop and forum once established.

Recommendation proposed:

CGMS Members are encouraged to participate in the ad-hoc workshop and subsequent activities of the future International Forum of Users of Satellite Data Telecommunication Systems.

Workplan for the Establishment of an International Forum of Users of Satellite Data Telecommunication Systems

1 INTRODUCTION

The WMO Sixteenth Congress (Cg-XVI, Geneva, Switzerland, 16 May – 3 June 2011) supported the establishment of an International Forum of Users of Satellite Data Telecommunication Systems (Forum) covering a wide user basis, and to address remote data communication requirements - including tariff negotiations as needed - for automatic environment observing systems coordinated through WMO and partner organizations such as IOC and FAO.

2 PROPOSAL

WMO Congress decisions

Cg-XVI requested the WMO Secretariat to approach the partner organizations, and coordinate with the Argos Joint Tariff Agreement (JTA) with the view to establish such a Forum during the next intersessional period.

Cg-XVI emphasized that such a forum should not only consider tariff negotiations but should take a very broad view of available technologies, options and prices as well as cooperative mechanisms through the Data Collection Platform (DCP) services of meteorological satellites.

In particular, there was concern during Cg-XVI that data from many Antarctic stations funded by research agencies are not available in real-time and, therefore, are not available to NWP systems. Cg-XVI noted that the high communication cost involved in using Iridium satellites is also a limiting factor. Cg-XVI requested the Executive Council, and the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Commission for Basic Systems (CBS) and the Joint WMO-IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) to investigate possible ways to reduce such costs through an international forum of users of satellite data telecommunication systems. It was also recognized that the WMO Information System (WIS) would provide a suitable environment for collection and dissemination of data from research observing stations.

Governance

It should be noted that, once established the Forum shall report to the executive bodies of the co-sponsor Organizations through mechanisms defined by each Organization.

WMO Governance

Regarding the WMO side of the governance, it was proposed to place the Forum under the responsibility of the CBS who shall coordinate closely on related issues with JCOMM.

The Forum will be reporting to the WMO Executive Council through the CBS.

The twelfth session of the CBS Management Group (CBS-MG-XII) considered the proposed road map leading to the establishment of the International Forum of Users of Satellite Data Telecommunication Systems. It endorsed the Preliminary Draft Terms of Reference (Appendix I) for a WMO-IOC-FAO International Forum of Users of Satellite Data

Telecommunication Systems and requested the Open Programme Area Group on Information Systems and Services (OPAG-ISS) to take the responsibility for the establishment of the Forum and coordinate closely this activity with the Open Programme Area Group on Integrated Observing Systems (OPAG-IOS).

IOC and FAO Governance

The Forum governance by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is still to be discussed with these two International Organizations respectively.

Proposed workplan

CBS-MG-XII reviewed and endorsed the proposed workplan leading in principle to the formal adoption of the Forum in 2013 (Appendix II). To realize this, the Secretariats of the co-sponsor Organizations will work together in the view to set up an organizing committee, refine the draft terms of reference for the forum, and organize an *ad hoc* workshop in late 2012. The *ad hoc* workshop will be tasked to:

- Propose operating principles, including Terms of Reference of the Forum's Executive Committee
- Adjust the draft Terms of Reference proposed by the Secretariats,
- Elect an interim Executive Committee,
- Review current satellite data telecommunication issues,
- Identify areas where progress/proposals can be made
- Refine the workplan for formal adoption of the Forum by the Executive Bodies of the co-sponsor Organizations

3 CONCLUSIONS

The CGMS is invited to take note of this proposal, make recommendations as appropriate regarding the proposed workplan, possibly nominate a representative for participating in the organizing committee, and participate in the *ad hoc* workshop and in the Forum once established.

APPENDIX I

PRELIMINARY DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN WMO-IOC-FAO INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF USERS OF SATELLITE DATA TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The International forum of users of satellite data telecommunication systems is an entirely self-funded body jointly sponsored by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in the view to address the requirements of the three Organizations for the collection in real-time of environment data from remote observing platforms. It ensures proper coordination amongst the users of satellite data telecommunication systems in order to represent their collective interests with the satellite operators.

The forum shall:

1. Review available technologies, share experiences, and address the following requirements in the view to document capabilities, and identify strengths and weaknesses of the different satellite data telecommunication systems to address the requirements of specific uses.

- Global and regional coverage;

- Network services and data access technology;

- Data transmitter technology, including radio-frequencies, interface programming, and electric power consumption;

- Data transmission rates;

- Data transmission quality;

- Real-time capability and data timeliness;

- Location capability;

- One-way vs. two-way data communication;

- Ground segment data processing, quality control, and distribution requirements;

- Data collection, and ground segment data processing pricing;

- Etc.

2. If appropriate, propose common approaches for specific user needs, and identify the best and more cost-effective satellite data telecommunication systems options to be used for the relevant observing platforms;
3. Make proposals for establishing cooperative mechanisms through the Data Collection Platform (DCP) services of meteorological satellites;
4. Engage negotiations with satellite data telecommunication system operators for
 - Inclusion of specific user requirements in their respective development programmes;
 - Pricing of data telecommunication services. In particular, specific tariff negotiating schemes such as the existing Argos Joint Tariff Agreement (JTA) will be managed through the forum as sub-programmes;
5. Engage negotiations with the manufacturers of platform transmitters for the inclusion of specific user requirements in future models of the transmitters;
6. Review and agree on its operating principles. The operating principles define the aims and principles of the forum; the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders and the

Secretariats of the co-sponsors; the Terms of Reference of the Executive Committee; the structure and frequency of meetings; and their desired outcome; as well as the reporting procedure of the forum;

7. Elect a Chairperson, and vice-Chairperson from its participants;
8. Elect an Executive Committee, chaired by the forum's Chairperson, and including the vice-Chairperson, and stakeholder representatives;
9. Report through the Chairperson to the Executive Bodies of the Co-Sponsor Organizations, and submit its recommendations as appropriate for their agreement;

Decisions shall be agreed unanimously by the Forum. If decisions cannot be agreed unanimously, they will be deferred to the Executive Committee for further discussion and decision.

Membership:

Membership is open to all representatives of the co-sponsors stakeholders. Invitations to participate in the forum are issued by the Secretariats of the co-sponsors to their respective Members/Member States, as well as to their relevant programmes and bodies. Representatives of the satellite data telecommunication providers, and the platform transmitter manufacturers can participate in the forum as observers. Representatives of the Secretariats of the co-sponsors participate as ex-officio members of the forum.

These Terms of Reference are agreed upon by the Executive Bodies of the Co-sponsors.

APPENDIX II

PROPOSED WORKPLAN LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FORUM

Step	Action	Date/Deadline	By
1	Approach Co-sponsors in the view to agree on the draft Terms of Reference for the forum; and plan/organize an <i>ad hoc</i> workshop for the establishment of the informal forum.	Aug.-Dec. 2011	IOC, WMO Secretariats
2	Approach operators of satellite data telecommunication systems and platform transmitter terminal, identify contact points, and discuss/negotiate the level of their contributions/participation	Aug.-Dec. 2011	Secretariats ¹
3	Approach users of satellite data telecommunication, inform them about the forum, and seek their participation in the forum and the <i>ad hoc</i> workshop	July-Dec. 2011	Secretariats ¹
4	Setup an organizing committee of the <i>ad hoc</i> workshop with Terms of Reference	Jan. 2012	Secretariats ¹
5	Negotiate with potential hosts, and propose a venue for the <i>ad hoc</i> workshop	Mar. 2012	Organizing Committee
6	Propose agenda and documentation plan for the <i>ad hoc</i> workshop	Apr. 2012	Organizing Committee
7	Inform the joint WMO-IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) about developments regarding the forum, and seek further guidance	May 2012	Secretariats of WMO and IOC
8	Issue invitation letters for the <i>ad hoc</i> workshop	June 2012	Secretariats ¹
9	Coordinate documentation plan with contributors	June-Sep. 2012	Secretariats ¹
10	Inform the WMO Commission for Basic Systems (CBS) about developments regarding the forum, and seek further guidance	Sep./Oct. 2012	WMO Secretariat
11	<i>ad hoc</i> workshop tasked to: Propose operating principles, including Terms of Reference of the forum's Executive Committee Adjust draft Terms of Reference, Elect an interim Executive Committee, Review current satellite data telecommunication issues, Identify areas where progress/proposals can be made Refine the workplan for formal adoption of the forum by the Executive Bodies of the co-sponsor Organizations	Nov. 2012	Organizing Committee and the Secretariats ¹
12	Terms of Reference of the forum submitted to the parent Organizations Executive Bodies for approval and formal establishment of the forum	2013	Executive Bodies of WMO,IOC,FAO

¹: Secretariats of WMO, IOC, FAO

13	Plan for the first meeting of the forum	2013/2014	Interim Executive Committee, and the Secretariats ¹
14	First official meeting of the forum	2014	Interim Executive Committee, and the Secretariats ¹