

4 October 2022

Decision item 2.3

Endorsement of the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy

Second Steering Committee meeting

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



Decision item 2.3: Endorsement of the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy

The Steering Committee:

- Acknowledges that the Resource Mobilization and Outreach strategy has been updated following the consultation process as requested by Steering Committee decision 1.8;
- Endorses the Resource Mobilization and Outreach strategy, as submitted to the Steering Committee on 20th September;
- Requests the SOFF Secretariat to make the strategy public.
- Requests SOFF Secretariat to provide regular updates to the Steering Committee on engagement with private sector

Second Steering Committee
4 October 2022

SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
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About this document

This Strategy document summarizes the SOFF targets adopted by the first SOFF Steering Committee meeting and the corresponding funding needs and identifies opportunities to expand SOFF financing and positioning within the global climate agenda.

It identifies four goals and the priorities that guide SOFF governing bodies' and partners' resource mobilization and outreach efforts. The strategy is expected to be operationalized by short-term actions, to be decided by the Steering Committee at its regular meetings.

The draft strategy was presented at the first SOFF Steering Committee on 30 June 2022 for its consideration and feedback. The Steering Committee in [Decision 1.8](#) requested the Secretariat to seek feedback on the strategy and submit an updated strategy for consideration and endorsement to the second Steering Committee.

The updated strategy has taken into consideration:

- feedback from Steering Committee members provided to the SOFF Secretariat by 29 August 2022;
- feedback from SOFF Implementing Entities and SOFF peer advisors, including at the joint workshop held on 30 August – 2 September 2022; and
- the recommendations from the first SOFF Advisory Board meeting held on 7 September 2022.

It is expected that the strategy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

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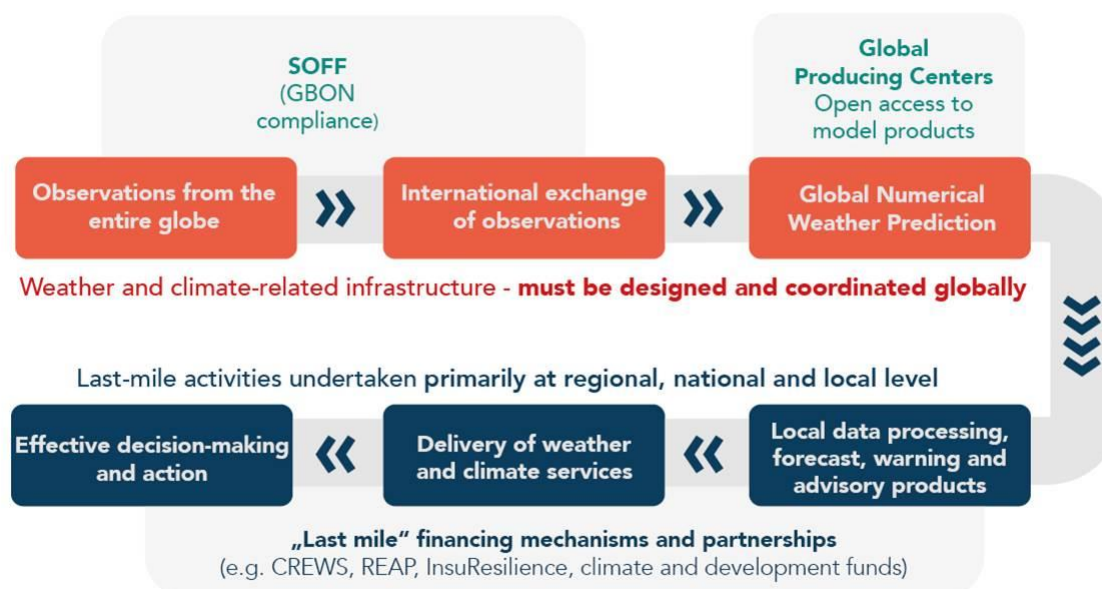
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1. SOFF strengthening the foundation for climate action

Observations as the basis

All monitoring and prediction of weather and climate start from observations. These data provide the only source of knowledge about the atmosphere and the climate system. Constant near-real-time access to observational data from all areas of the globe is a prerequisite for high-quality forecasts and climate analysis. On the basis of these observations global forecast centers run Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) models, which are then used by regional centers, national meteorological services, and the private sector. The forecast products derived from these models are designed and disseminated in different forms for a variety of public and private sector users, who are then able to take preventive measures - from the short term in case of extreme weather events to the long term to plan and adapt to the rapidly changing climate.

The significant lack of observational data at the very beginning of this value chain affects all other elements on a global, regional and local level. The chain can only be as strong as its first element.



The recognition of the significant data gaps in many parts of the world has led to increasing efforts from national governments and the international community in improving surface-based weather and climate observations and to the creation of the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF).

Numerous global agreements recognize that successful action on climate mitigation, adaptation, resilience and poverty reduction depends on high-quality weather and climate services, and on the capacity to make informed decisions and take appropriate steps in light of that information. The same agreements recognize that the quality of forecasts and services depends on sound science, underpinned by robust earth observations, monitoring and analytics and that without reliable observations the foundation for sustainable development and effective climate action is weak.

SOFF will strengthen climate adaptation and resilient development by improving weather and climate observations that in turn support better weather forecasts, early warning systems and climate information services to save lives and livelihoods and protect property. SOFF funding is a foundational investment that underpins the effectiveness and sustainability of the investments of other development and climate funds along the value chain.

2. SOFF targets and funding needs

SOFF First Implementation Period

The First Implementation Period started 1 July 2022, following the first SOFF Steering Committee meeting and the adoption of the SOFF governance structure. It will end three years later. The SOFF targets for the First Implementation Period and its funding needs were adopted by the First Steering Committee in its [decision 1.6](#).

The resource mobilization target for the First Implementation Period is USD 200 million. Any uncommitted resources at the end of the First Implementation Period will be carried over into the Expansion and Sustaining Period.

The First Implementation Period is expected to deliver on the following:

- 55 countries with SOFF readiness support
- 35 countries with SOFF investment support initiated
- Results-based financing provided for up to 150 GBON compliant stations and on-demand compliance phase advisory services provided to up to 10 countries

SOFF Expansion and Sustaining Period

An Expansion and Sustaining Period follows the First Implementation Period for the remainder of the current 10-year horizon of SOFF. After the 10 years, continued SOFF engagement will likely be needed to sustain GBON compliance in many SOFF eligible countries.

A tentative estimate of the total cost of SOFF implementation over 10 years is USD 650 million (in 2022 prices). With this scale of support, at the end of the SOFF Expansion and Sustaining Period all SIDS and LDCs would have demonstrated sustained GBON compliance and all developing countries that demand readiness support would have received such support.

The specific parameters of the programmatic and resource mobilization approach for the Expansion and Sustaining Period will be designed in the third year of the First Implementation Period, building on the experience during that period. An independent external evaluation will take place in the third year of SOFF operations. This evaluation will inform the design and targets of the subsequent Expansion and Sustaining Period, based on approximately two years of implementation experience.

The new UN Early Warning Systems Initiative sets a time horizon of five years to ensure that everybody is protected by Early Warning Systems. SOFF is a building block of this initiative as it will provide essential data underpinning for the provision of early warning systems against increasingly extreme weather and climate change. Therefore, at the end of its 5th year, SOFF aims to have committed sufficient funding to ensure that all SIDS and LDCs have progressed toward GBON compliance. The additional resource mobilization target for the Early Warning Systems Initiative time horizon (SOFF implementation years 4-5) is expected to be on the order of USD 200 million.

During the period from the sixth to the tenth year of SOFF implementation, SOFF will focus on delivering on the commitments made during the first five years and on supporting sustained GBON compliance. The resource mobilization target for the sixth to the tenth years of SOFF implementation is estimated to amount to 250 USD million, with a focus on supporting operations and maintenance of GBON observing networks.

A potential expansion of the scope of GBON that requires a decision by the World Meteorological Congress and/or of the SOFF beneficiary countries could be considered by the Steering Committee and would imply additional financial needs for SOFF.

3. Goal 1: Expanding SOFF funding base

Funders and Prospective Funders

To become a contributor to the SOFF UNMPTF, a bilateral or multilateral partner enters into a Standard Administrative Agreement (SAA) for contributions with the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UNMPTF) Office, which acts as the SOFF Trustee. Other types of entities, such as philanthropic foundations, can contribute to the SOFF UNMPTF upon agreement by the Steering Committee and with the consent of the Trustee.

All funders of the SOFF UNMPTF are decision-making Members of the Steering Committee. This includes funders with a firm pledge (publicly announced political commitment to contribute a specific amount of financing to the SOFF UNMPTF). Funders have one year from the announcement of the pledge to transfer the funds to the Trustee. WMO is also a decision-making Member representing the co-founders, UNEP and UNDP.

Prospective Funders are those that are considering a pledge and have notified the SOFF Secretariat accordingly. A Prospective Funder can be a non-decision-making Member of the Steering Committee for one year from its first participation in a Steering Committee meeting. The Funder has to materialize its pledge within a year to become a decision-making Member. An extension could be considered by the Steering Committee.

Expanding the Funding Base

In order to meet its funding needs, SOFF needs to expand its Funding Base, while ensuring the continuity of funding from its existing Funders. The three priorities listed below will contribute to the achievement of the Goal 1 and ensure the expansion and continuity of funding for the SOFF:

- **Supporting Funders and Prospective Funders to mobilize contributions.** The SOFF Secretariat and SOFF Funders will advocate for SOFF with other governments that are exploring a pledge to the SOFF UNMPTF, aiming to finalize their entrance into the group of Funders. Additionally, the SOFF Secretariat will work with SOFF Funders in order to mobilize additional pledges in subsequent years.
- **Bringing the remaining top bilateral climate funders into the group of SOFF Funders.** The SOFF Secretariat and SOFF Funders will reach out to the top bilateral climate financiers, aiming to bring them on board as SOFF Funders.
- **Exploring the possibility of potential contributions from multilateral organizations and mechanisms.** SOFF will not only ensure sustainability of their previous investments from multilateral organizations and mechanisms into basic observations but also take care of GBON investments in LDCs and SIDS, hence freeing up resources of multilateral partners. SOFF will firm up collaboration with the major multilateral climate and development funds and mechanisms and explore opportunities for their potential financial contribution to the SOFF UNMPTF.

4. Goal 2: Fostering Partnerships

The priorities listed below will contribute to fostering SOFF partnerships, maximizing SOFF outreach efforts while ensuring coordination and impact across the meteorological value chain:

- **Tapping high-level political advocacy opportunities:** The SOFF Secretariat will promote the participation of Steering Committee members in high-level events when they provide an opportunity to create further SOFF momentum and support. Similarly, the SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP will seek to further promote understanding of SOFF at events and in their reports and publications.

- **Showcasing SOFF impact by SOFF Advisory Board members:** The Advisory Board is expected to maximize the impact SOFF by linking SOFF operations with their activities, as well as those of other initiatives across the meteorological value chain to ensure “last mile” impact. SOFF Advisory Board members are encouraged to showcase good practice examples.
- **Consultations with civil society and the private sector:** Consultations will continue in order to ensure that local perspectives are voiced and incorporated into the design of SOFF operations. The representatives of the civil society and the private sector in the Advisory Board are expected to identify opportunities to promote SOFF among their constituencies.

5. Goal 3: Positioning SOFF within UNFCCC and COP

The [Paris Agreement](#) recognizes the need for an effective and progressive response to climate change on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge. The Agreement identifies the need to enhance and strengthen systematic observation, climate services and knowledge sharing (Article 7) and postulates that systematic observation and early warning systems are areas of cooperation and facilitation to enhance understanding, action and support.

SOFF supports particularly SIDS and LDCs in delivering on the systematic observation goal of the Paris Agreement and the Global Target F and G of the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#).

The two recent reports of [IPCC Working Group I](#) and [Working Group II](#) showcase the progress in monitoring and understanding the climate. However, the lack of observational data – both in terms of the ongoing exchange of observations and access to long-term records – reduces the reliability of weather and climate predictions worldwide, and in particular limits the ability of the developing countries to monitor and forecast their local weather and climate, to understand risk (including the risk of extreme weather and compounding events), and to design meaningful adaptation measures.

The creation of SOFF represents an unprecedented global effort to accelerate the achievement of worldwide systematic observation aimed for under the Paris Agreement. At COP26 in 2021, SBSTA encouraged Parties and relevant organizations to support SOFF to enhance and sustain GBON implementation in developing countries, in particular the SIDS and LDCs.

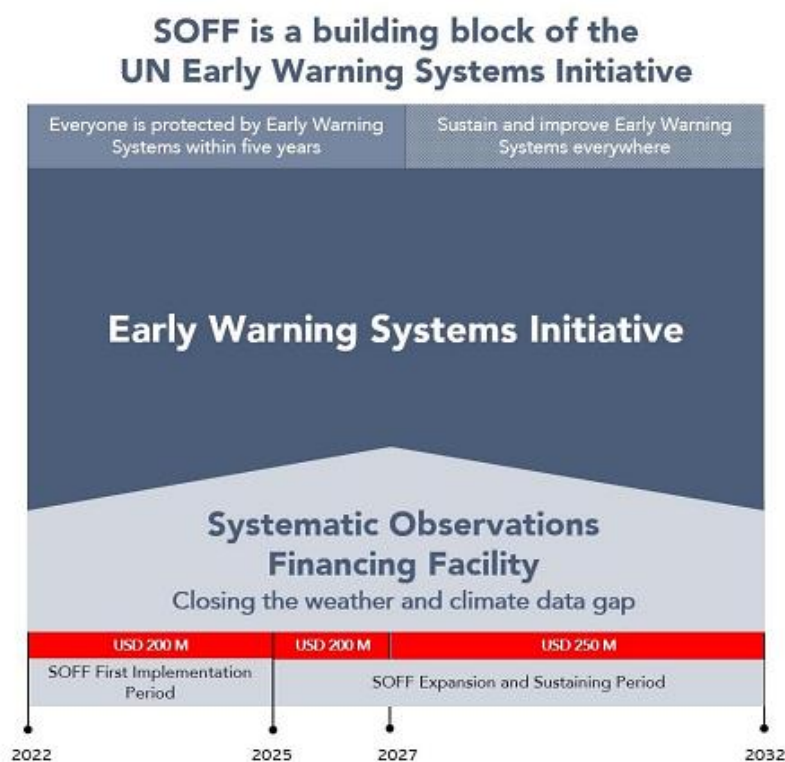
- **Positioning SOFF within UNFCCC and COP:** SOFF Steering Committee members, including the LDC Group and AOSIS, are encouraged to promote SOFF within the UNFCCC process, aiming at ensuring that COP decisions reflect the need for SOFF and closing the systematic observations gap. The SOFF Secretariat will engage in the UNFCCC process, including through SOFF submissions, in support of these efforts.

6. Goal 4: Bolstering the UN Early Warning Systems initiative

In March 2022, UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, announce the United Nations would spearhead new action to ensure every person on Earth is protected by early warning systems within five years. SOFF is a building block of the UN [Early Warning Systems Initiative](#).

Early Warning Systems are a proven, effective, and feasible climate adaptation measure that save lives, and provide a tenfold return on investment. The IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report on Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability recognized early warning systems, climate services and disaster risk management

activities as key cross-cutting adaptation options, that enhance the benefits of other adaptation measures when combined. G7 Ministers recently emphasized their support for early warning systems, in the context of strengthening anticipatory action in humanitarian assistance.



- **SOFF providing support to the achievement of the Early Warning Systems Initiative goal:** As a foundational element of this initiative, SOFF will deliver critical observation data on which Early Warning Systems are built upon. The SOFF Secretariat under the guidance of the Steering Committee will work with WMO to ensure that SOFF as integral part of the initiative fully supports the achievement of its goal.

7. Jointly implementing the Strategy

The implementation of the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy requires cooperation among the SOFF governing bodies and SOFF partners. The most important are highlighted below.

Steering Committee

SOFF Steering Committee members, supported by the SOFF Secretariat, will aim at expanding the SOFF funding base and are expected to engage in outreach and advocacy efforts. This could imply the participation in high-level events; supporting submissions to UNFCCC bodies and relevant COP decisions; advocating for the transition of Prospective Funders into the Funders group; and promoting SOFF among potential funders.

Additionally, the SOFF Steering Committee is encouraged to position SOFF in high-level resolutions and strategic documents related to systematic observation and climate adaptation.

The LDC Group and AOSIS representatives in the Steering Committee are expected to alert the SOFF Secretariat about outreach opportunities and SOFF advocacy support among beneficiary countries.

Advisory Board

In coordination with the SOFF Secretariat, the Advisory Board members are expected to identify areas in which they can showcase how their activities benefit from SOFF operations and explore options to communicate to funders the impacts of SOFF implementation and its last mile benefits.

Furthermore, the Advisory Board members are encouraged to continuously seek opportunities to advocate and promote SOFF through their respective network.

SOFF Secretariat

The SOFF Secretariat will spearhead the resource mobilization and outreach efforts guided and supported by the Steering Committee and supported by the Advisory Board and SOFF partners.

The SOFF Secretariat will provide support to Prospective Funders in order to firm up their pledges, while engaging with potential funders; it will identify and coordinate with the Steering Committee and the Advisory Board on opportunities where SOFF could be promoted; it will assist SOFF co-founders in promoting SOFF among their respective partners and constituencies; and will work alongside the Steering Committee in order to contribute to high-level resolutions, including COP decisions.

Implementing Entities

The SOFF Implementing Entities are expected to promote SOFF among beneficiary countries within their portfolios, as well as to the donors supporting their climate adaptation activities.

Peer advisors

The SOFF peer advisors are expected to promote SOFF among WMO Members, taking advantage of their participation in WMO constituent body meetings and WMO-related events. The SOFF peer advisors are encouraged to promote SOFF among their national institutions with funding capacity, seeking to support SOFF resource mobilization efforts.