



SOFF Readiness Funding Request Template

Version 2.0

April 2023

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



SOFF Readiness Funding Request

The funding request should be prepared by the SOFF beneficiary country in collaboration with the SOFF peer advisor in coordination with the prospective SOFF Implementing Entity. In case of questions on how to complete this template, please contact the SOFF Secretariat at: soffsecretariat@wmo.int.

The SOFF Readiness Funding Request template includes the following sections:

1. **Basic information**
2. **SOFF Programming criteria**
3. **Readiness phase outputs, timeline and budget**
4. **Monitoring**
5. **Readiness Phase Risk Management Framework**

The **Assignment Terms of Reference** are included in **Annex 1**.

General recommendations to fill in in the template

Section 2. Programming criteria: Please make sure that you provide clear but succinct information to relevant to the programming criteria. This is an essential requirement for the submission of the funding request to the Steering Committee.

- **GBON gap and easy fixes:** Please be aware of the limitations of SOFF scope of support. SOFF only supports GBON standard density and surface and upper-air stations over land. However, SOFF does encourage peers and beneficiary countries to during the Readiness phase look at the situation of GBON high-density networks (for those countries that already have them) and marine stations for potential easy fixes opportunities via SOFF support or other future support. We encourage beneficiary countries and peer advisors to ensure that the readiness funding request focuses on the areas of work related to SOFF scope of support to avoid misinterpretations and wrong expectations for the Investment and Compliance phase. For more guidance and details on SOFF scope of support, please see the GBON National Gap Analysis and the GBON National Contribution Plan technical guidance documents.

The information provided on the GBON Gap, and the easy fixes should be high-level, as the details are expected to be scoped out during the Readiness phase. Please avoid excessively detailed information on how many stations to rehabilitate/install.

- **Maximize delivery capacity:** Please clearly state any ongoing or planned activities in the country for which the peer advisor receives funding from other sources. This is a mandatory requirement, as per Assignment Agreement 5.4. If there are none, please explicitly state so.

Section 3. Budget: The budget is expected to reflect a strict and careful assessment of the costs for the provision of the advisory services, following a cost-recovery approach and abiding to the eligible expenditure categories according to the Umbrella Agreement. While a budget breakdown is not required in the funding request, the SOFF peer advisor must be in a position to provide copies of all the documents, including budget and costing breakdown, including for audit purposes.

Section 6: Risk management framework needs to be carefully developed indicating discrete risks and strong mitigation measures.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference. The delivery process needs to be described, including indicative timeline of planned activities, workshops, missions, delivery of the outputs and delivery team. Without this, the funding request cannot be submitted to the SOFF Steering Committee.

1. Basic information

SOFF Beneficiary Country	Republic of Marshall Islands
Country Focal Point	Reginald White
Peer advisor	Met Office, UK
Peer advisor Focal Point	Tim Donovan
Prospective Implementing Entity	United Nations Environment Programme
Prospective Implementing Entity Focal Point	Jochem Zoetelief
Total budget USD	\$154,309
Delivery timeframe	6 months from 1st October 2023 to 31st March 2024
Date of approval	
Signature SOFF Steering Committee co-chairs (after Steering Committee approval of the funding request)	

1. SOFF Programming criteria

Please provide below an initial short description of the application of the **SOFF programming criteria** in the country.

Table 1: Programming criteria

<p>Close the most significant data gaps</p>	<p><i>Based on the WMO Global GBON Gap Analysis for the country, please provide a brief summary and initial indications regarding the GBON gap in the country.</i></p> <p>The 2022 WMO global gap analysis indicated a requirement for 9 surface stations in the Marshall islands, of which 7 are categorised as existing stations requiring improvement to meet GBON requirements for reporting cycle or data availability. As such an additional 2 surface stations will be required. In order to meet the target for upper air stations of 3, the installation of 1 additional upper air station is indicated to supplement the existing stations.</p>
<p>Target easy fixes</p>	<p><i>Based on the WMO Global GBON Gap Analysis, please provide initial indications on the opportunities for rehabilitation and improvement of potential GBON stations in the country.</i></p> <p>In addition to two weather stations, the RMI NWSO currently operates five Synoptic stations within the country. These manned (manual) stations also serve as climate stations reporting 24hrs temperatures and rainfall measurements. These are in need of aneroid barometers to replace defective units and could be upgraded to meet GBON requirements.</p>
<p>Maximize delivery capacity</p>	<p>The Implementing Entity is very active in RMI. UNEP is currently working on implementing a GCF-funded 5-year programme, "Enhancing Climate Information and Knowledge Services for resilience in 5 island countries of the Pacific Ocean" (FP147) where strengthening observational capacity is one of the key components. RMI is one of the five beneficiary countries of this programme, and the SOFF will complement the ongoing activities and ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme.</p> <p>The UNEP Programme Management Unit (PMU) for the above programme is co-located with SPREP and the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) in Samoa. The PCCC is supporting capacity building</p>

	<p>within national meteorological services through delivery of the training mode of the WMO Pacific Regional Climate Centre. The regional presence of UNEP in the Pacific Islands region will be useful in the implementation of SOFF activities in the region.</p> <p>UNEP is also an Implementing Partner under Early Warnings for All Initiative and a participant of EW4All technical working groups for Pillar 1 (Disaster Risk Knowledge) and Pillar 2 (Observations & Forecasting).</p> <p>The Peer Advisor (PA) has experience in managing and sustaining its own nation's surface and upper air networks in line with GBON requirements. The PA collaborates with WMO in developing observations network and data management policies, guidelines and procedures and also (through the UK contribution to the WMO Voluntary Cooperation Programme) helps support upper air observations in remote locations across the world including Seychelles, St. Helena, Tuvalu and Kiribati. The PA also works with NMHSs in several countries supporting development activities.</p> <p>The PA has no ongoing or planned work in the beneficiary country.</p>
<p>Create leverage</p>	<p><i>Provide initial indications on opportunities for complementarity of SOFF with previous, ongoing and planned operations by the SOFF Implementing Entities and other funds.</i></p> <p>UNEP is currently working on strengthening observational capacity in RMI within a GCF-funded 5-year programme "Enhancing Climate Information and Knowledge Services for resilience in 5 island countries of the Pacific Ocean". The GCF-funded programme will expand the surface-based observation network in RMI in compliance with the expected GBON requirements. All observational data from the new AWS installations will be integrated into the RMI Meteorological Service climate data base (for example, CliDE) to support climate resilience and advisory services.</p> <p>SOFF Readiness support would enable validation of GBON network requirements. The SOFF investment phase funding will complement the ongoing activities by investing in the upper-air observation network, which is not covered under the GCF project, enabling further strengthening of observational capacity in RMI. The SOFF Compliance phase will also support long-term sustainability of the GCF programme outcomes.</p>

Sub-regional gains	<p><i>Provide initial indications on opportunities to create economies of scale and optimize the design of the observing networks through multi-country/sub-regional SOFF implementation e.g. existing sub-regional cooperation or opportunities for sub-regional procurement and operations and maintenance.</i></p> <p>Given the unique geographical character of Marshall Islands and the Pacific Islands region, there is significant potential to approach the design of observing networks and the implementation of SOFF recommendations on a regional basis. There are several items that are anticipated to appear in the National Contribution Plan that lend themselves to taking a regional approach for Islands in the Pacific, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional coordination to provide support, training and advice for the implementation of WIS 2.0 as well as the potential for development and regional deployment of CDMS and data management systems could create economies of scale in the implementation of data management and transmission systems in the region. • Staff training on routine maintenance and calibration of observation equipment could be organised and coordinated on a regional basis. • Training key NMHS staff on gender, equality and social inclusion understanding and activity. • Other training including management training which could be delivered regionally.
Ensure country balance	<p><i>Indicate if the country is a Small Island Developing State, a Least Developed Country, an ODA-recipient country, a Fragile and Conflict-affected State.</i></p> <p>Marshall Islands is designated as a Small Island Developing State</p>

2. Readiness phase outputs, timeline and budget

The Terms of Reference for the development of the SOFF Readiness phase outputs (see Annex I) provide more detailed information. They also summarize the roles and responsibilities, as stated in the [SOFF Operational Manual](#), of the beneficiary country, the peer advisor, the prospective Implementing Entity and WMO Technical Authority for the delivery of the Readiness phase outputs.

The budget for the development of the SOFF Readiness phase outputs by the SOFF peer advisor shall be a lump-sum, fixed cost amount. It shall be calculated using a cost-recovery approach based on the peer advisors' standard cost recovery rates.

Table 2: outputs, timeline and budget

Outputs	Timeline					
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6 ¹
National GBON Gap Analysis						
GBON National Contribution Plan						
Country Hydromet Diagnostic (on demand)						
Total budget USD²	\$154,309					

3. Monitoring

The beneficiary country and peer advisor shall notify the SOFF Secretariat on any delays that may impede the timely delivery of the Readiness phase outputs. If the assignment takes more than six months, the SOFF peer advisor shall submit semi-annual progress reports to the SOFF Secretariat (form to be provided by the SOFF Secretariat) stating the delivery status of the outputs.

The Readiness phase completion will be monitored by the peer advisor and the SOFF Secretariat using the following country-level Results Framework for the Readiness phase.

¹ It is expected that the assignment is completed within six months. If more time is required for exceptional circumstances, please add additional months to the table.

² Eligible expenditures are limited to: Staff and consultants; Consultations, national technical workshops, and communications; Travel and transportation costs; Other incidental expenditures.

Table 3: Result framework

Outputs	Indicator	Target
1. GBON National Gap Analysis	GBON gap established and reviewed (Y/N)	GBON gap analysed and reviewed by WMO Technical Authority
2. GBON National Contribution Plan	GBON national contribution plan developed (Y/N)	GBON national contribution plan developed and reviewed by WMO Technical Authority
	GBON National Contribution Plan includes gender considerations (Y/N)	GBON National Contribution Plan includes gender considerations
3. Country Hydromet Diagnostic (on demand)	Country Hydromet Diagnostic developed (Y/N)	Country Hydromet Diagnostic developed

4. Evaluation

An evaluation from both, the beneficiary country and the prospective Implementing Entity on the quality of support received by the peer advisor will be conducted at the end of the Readiness phase and the peer advisor's assignment (form to be provided upon completion of the Readiness phase by the SOFF Secretariat).

5. Readiness Phase Risk Management Framework

Table 3: Risk Management Framework

Risk category	Description	Probability	Mitigation action
Contextual risks Risks related to conflicts, safety and political insecurity jeopardizing the delivery of the Readiness phase outputs	Resurgence of covid or other health related issue.	Low	Remain vigilant to advice from relevant agencies. Work remotely, if necessary.



	High-impact tropical cyclone.	Moderate – El Nino year will increase possibility	Remain vigilant to guidance from relevant agencies. Work remotely, if necessary. Buildings designed for impact, and support and warnings from NMS
	Personal safety from violent incident.	Low	Maintain low profile, maintain vigilance, and monitor relevant news and other channels for risks information. Work remotely, if necessary.
Institutional risks Risks related to the beneficiary country's institutions participation in the Readiness phase activities	Suitable resource availability from the NHMS, other relevant government agencies and NGOs to commit to the activity timetable.	Low	Effective planning and communication with all relevant agencies, and ensure the benefits of engagement are clearly stated. That is ensure buy-in to the project from all relevant agencies by actively engaging them from the onset. Seek additional support from the appropriate ministry – Office of the President.
Programmatic risks Risks related to country ownership of the Readiness phase outputs	Lack of understanding and cooperation to this initiative from government departments and other relevant agencies.	Low	Effective communication with all relevant agencies, and ensure the benefits of engagement are clearly stated. That is ensure buy-in to the project from all relevant agencies by actively engaging them from the onset. Seek additional support from the appropriate ministry – Office of the President

Annex 1. Assignment Terms of Reference for the development of the SOFF Readiness phase outputs

1. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Assignment is to provide SOFF peer advisory services by United Kingdom Met Office to the Republic of Marshall Islands to develop the outputs of the SOFF Readiness phase as described in section 3 of these Terms of Reference.

The provisions defined in the Terms of Reference are based on the [SOFF Operational Manual](#), in particular Section 4.4 on Operational Partners and Section 4.5.1 on the Readiness phase.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Beneficiary country National Meteorological and Hydrological Service

- Is responsible for implementing the activities of the Readiness phase with the support from the peer advisor and the prospective Implementing Entity.
- Prepares the Assignment Terms of Reference following the standard Terms of Reference provided by the SOFF Secretariat, in collaboration with the peer advisor and in coordination with the prospective Implementing Entity.
- Submits the funding request for the SOFF Readiness phase support using the standardized template provided by the SOFF Secretariat.
- Is responsible for collaborating with the peer advisor to provide all the necessary information and participate in and facilitate the national activities the peer advisor needs to conduct in order to develop the Readiness phase outputs.
- Confirms receipt of the peer advisors' report with the Readiness phase outputs and provides comments on the outputs as needed.

Peer advisor

- Is accountable to the beneficiary country.
- In dialogue with the beneficiary country, provides independent technical advice, analysis and recommendations to support the beneficiary country in implementing the activities of the Readiness phase.
- Develops the Readiness phase outputs and is responsible for their quality and timely delivery. Communicates regularly with the beneficiary country and the Implementing Entity.
- Engages with the civil society, including on the identification of stakeholders of relevance for GBON implementation.
- Submits the final report with the Readiness phase outputs to the country for comments and to the prospective Implementing Entity for feedback.
- Submits the final report including the beneficiary country's comments and the prospective Implementing Entity's feedback to the SOFF Secretariat.

- Notifies the SOFF Secretariat and the prospective Implementing Entity of any delays that may impede the timely delivery of the outputs, and for assignments for which the delivery takes more than six months submits a semi-annual progress report.

Implementing Entity

- Participates in the Readiness phase activities and collaborates with the beneficiary country and the peer advisor to ensure a common understanding of the Readiness phase outputs and that they address the technical needs for the design and implementation of the Investment phase.
- Contributes to the definition of the Terms of Reference and provides feedback on the outputs delivered by the peer advisor.
- Based on its experience in the beneficiary country, supports the work of the peer advisor, e.g. by sharing its knowledge and facilitating access to the network of relevant stakeholders.

WMO Technical Authority

- Provides basic technical support to the beneficiary country, peer advisor, and prospective Implementing Entity on GBON regulations.
- Is responsible for the technical screening of the draft GBON National Gap Analysis and the draft GBON National Contribution Plan against the GBON regulations.
- Is responsible for establishing and administering the pass-through mechanism for contracting and funding of the technical assistance provided by the peer advisors.

SOFF Secretariat

- Facilitates communication, coordination and collaboration between the beneficiary country, the peer advisor, the prospective Implementing Entity and WMO Technical Authority.
- Reviews the Readiness funding request, including the Terms of Reference, for compliance and consistency with the information requirements in the template and provides feedback as needed. Transmits the funding request to the SOFF Steering Committee for its decision.
- Confirms receipt of the peer advisors' report with the Readiness phase outputs.
- Organizes exchange of knowledge and experiences and captures lessons learned.

3. Readiness phase outputs

The peer advisor should perform the following tasks following the technical guidance and using the templates provided in the [operational guidance documents](#) for each one of the outputs. A summary of the key steps and modules to be conducted for each output is presented below.

3.1 GBON National Gap Analysis

The GBON National Gap Analysis defines the gap between the mandatory requirements of the GBON regulations and the existing country surface and upper-air networks. In other words, it serves as the basis for identifying the number of observing stations that need to be installed or rehabilitated to comply with the mandatory requirements of the GBON regulations.

To develop the GBON National Gap Analysis, the following steps should be followed

- **Step 1** – Country information from the GBON Global Gap Analysis
- **Step 2** – Analysis of existing GBON stations and their status against GBON requirements
- **Step 3** – GBON Gap Analysis results
- **Step 4** – Country endorsement for integration of the GBON National Gap Analysis into the GBON National Contribution Plan

3.2 GBON National Contribution Plan

The GBON National Contribution Plan identifies the infrastructure, human and institutional capacity needed to achieve a progressive target toward GBON compliance, including the sustained operation and maintenance of the national GBON observing network.

To develop the GBON National Contribution Plan, the following modules should be completed

- **Module 1. National target toward GBON compliance:** Establishment of a progressive national target toward GBON compliance
- **Module 2. GBON business model and institutional development:** public-private business model as appropriate; partnerships, institutional and financial arrangements needed to operate and maintain the observing network
- **Module 3. GBON infrastructure development:** Appropriate investments needed to increase or improve the observing network and its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure
- **Module 4. GBON human capacity development:** Human technical and managerial capacities required to operate and maintain the observing network
- **Module 5. Risk Management:** Operational risks of the observing network and required mitigation measures
- **Module 6. Transition to SOFF Investment phase:** Support the beneficiary country and the Implementing Entity in preparing the Investment phase funding request (template provided by the SOFF Secretariat).

3.3 Country Hydromet Diagnostics

The Country Hydromet Diagnostic (CHD) complements the GBON National Gap Analysis and the GBON National Contribution Plan. It is a standardized, integrated and operational tool and approach for diagnosing National Meteorological Services across the meteorological value chain, their operating environment, and their contribution to high-quality weather,

climate, hydrological and environmental information services and warnings. Its assessment serves as a basis for investments beyond SOFF, across the whole value chain, by the SOFF Implementing Entity and other development partners.

The peer advisor should **assess the 10 CHD elements** with its respective indicators following the matrix provided in the CHD guidance document.

- Governance and institutional setting
- Effective partnerships to improve service delivery
- Observational infrastructure
- Data and product management and sharing policies
- Numerical model and forecasting tool application
- Warning and advisory services
- Contribution to climate services
- Contribution to hydrological services
- Product dissemination and outreach
- Use and national value of products and services

To develop the Country Hydromet Diagnostic, the following **steps** should be completed.

- Stage 1 – Information gathering. As input, the WMO Monitoring Evaluation Risk and Performance unit will provide available country data structured along the CHD elements and their indicators (performed remotely)
- Stage 2 – Validation and analysis (performed in-country if feasible)
- Stage 3 – Closure

4. Delivery process

The peer advisor in collaboration with the beneficiary country and in coordination with the prospective Implementing Entity should establish the specific activities and consultations needed to complete the outputs. The development of the outputs should include the following:

- Close collaboration between the beneficiary country and the peer advisor is essential to the success of the readiness phase. The organisations will adopt a standard project management approach to the project. This will include routine meetings/correspondence to discuss activity plans (this may include linking with the regular monthly Micronesia Managers Meeting), resource and time allocation, and risks. Initially, remote desk-based activity will co-develop the outputs. Given the unique geographical character of the Marshall Islands and the Pacific Islands region, it is recommended to adopt a regional approach to this phase. This regional approach will include at least one regional event, where the beneficiary country, eligible neighboring islands, other relevant partners (particularly the USA and regarding the COFA relationship), and the peer advisor will meet in region to co-develop the gap analysis, national contribution plan and country hydromet diagnostic. Further remote activity will be taken to complete the national contribution plan and country hydromet diagnostic.

- Coordination arrangements with the prospective Implementing Entity. Representatives from the prospective implementing entity will be involved in the regular progress meetings and have access to the deliverable documents as they are being developed in order to provide input throughout the process. In addition, in person meetings will include representatives from the implementing entity where possible.
- Virtual consultation meetings or questionnaires with relevant national and international stakeholders and partners. Key national and international stakeholders and partners will be identified in the initial remote research in order to ensure that due consideration is made throughout the project. Initial engagement with partners and stakeholders will be remote desk-based research, questionnaires and online interviews
- Delivery partners that support the peer advisor in the delivery of the outputs, as applicable. Whilst the Met Office will lead on the Peer Advisor readiness phase assessment, in close partnership with the Marshall Islands, we anticipate this will include liaison with other significant stakeholders including BoM, MetService, NIWA and NWS USA as applicable and to ensure alignment with existing and recent activities as well as close working relationship between RMI and the USA
- Peer advisor delivery team and focal point. Tim Donovan will act as focal point for the readiness phase and will call upon expert colleagues from the Observations and International Development teams for support, as required.
- Timeline for the development of the outputs
 - Project initiation and inception – October 2023
 - GBON Gap Analysis – months 1 and 2.
 - GBON National Contribution Plan – months 3 to 6.
 - Country Hydromet Diagnostic – months 3 to 6.

5. Reporting and completion

Reporting. For assignments for which the delivery of advisory services takes more than six months, the SOFF peer advisor shall submit a semi-annual progress report to the SOFF Secretariat (form to be provided by the SOFF Secretariat).

Completion

- **Step 1.** The peer advisor submits the draft GBON National Gap Analysis and the GBON National Contribution Plan reports to WMO Technical Authority and, as applicable, the draft Country Hydromet Diagnostics to the Monitoring Evaluation Risk and Performance unit of the WMO Secretariat. The draft reports have to follow the templates provided in the SOFF operational guidance documents.
- **Step 2.** WMO Technical Authority screens the draft GBON National Gap Analysis and the draft GBON National Contribution Plan to ensure consistency with the GBON regulations. The WMO Monitoring Evaluation Risk and Performance unit screens the draft Country Hydromet Diagnostics and provides feedback for revisions as needed.
- **Step 3.** The peer advisor submits the report with the Readiness phase outputs for beneficiary country and prospective Implementing Entity feedback.
- **Step 4.** The peer advisor finalizes the report for confirmation of receipt by the beneficiary country and, as needed, beneficiary country comments. Following beneficiary country

receipt of the report, the peer advisor submits the report, including beneficiary country's comments and the prospective Implementing Entity's feedback, to the SOFF Secretariat.

- **Step 5.** The SOFF Secretariat confirms the satisfactory receipt of the report and informs the country and the prospective Implementing Entity accordingly. The SOFF Secretariat authorizes WMO to proceed with the release of the final payment and informs the SOFF Steering Committee of the completion of the SOFF readiness phase.

6. Signatures

By signing this document, the beneficiary country, peer advisor and the prospective Implementing Entity agree with the provisions stated in this Terms of Reference.

Beneficiary country

Peer advisor

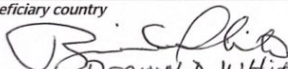


Prospective Implementing Entity

6. Signatures

By signing this document, the beneficiary country, peer advisor and the prospective Implementing Entity agree with the provisions stated in this Terms of Reference.

Beneficiary country


REGINALD WHITE

Director/meteorologist in charge, Weather Service, RMI

re Implementing Entity



Jochem Zoetelief, UNEP, 16.08.2023