Ninth Steering Committee
22 October 2024

Update on the role of the World Meteorological Organization in SOFF

Decision 9.3

Systematic Observations Financing Facility

Weather and climate data for resilience

Decision 9.3: Adoption of Update on the role of the World Meteorological Organization in SOFF

The SOFF Steering Committee

Appreciates the foundational roles of WMO Members, WMO constituent bodies, and the WMO Secretariat that are essential for the success of SOFF and sustained international exchange of Global Basic Observing Network data.

Welcomes

- the further stepped-up SOFF leadership of WMO Executive Management.
- WMO Secretariat efforts to maximize leverage between WMO Secretariat core support functions provided to WMO Members and its SOFF support function.
- the proposed updated WMO role as SOFF Technical Authority as outlined in this document.

Notes

- that the administrative reporting of the SOFF Secretariat is changing from the WMO Infrastructure Department, as outlined in the Operational Manual, to report directly to the WMO Assistant Secretary-General, levelling-up and aligning reporting lines of the CREWS and SOFF Secretariats and the WMO development partnerships office.
- that the further expanded role of WMO as SOFF Technical Authority contributes to the sound development of GBON, in line with the decision of the World Meteorological Congress of 2021 that requested the WMO Secretary General to ensure WMO participation in SOFF as the Technical Authority.
- that according to the SOFF Operational Manual, WMO covers the costs associated with its Technical Authority role through its own resources, and any changes to this would require a Steering Committee decision and corresponding update of the SOFF Operational Manual.

Requests

- the SOFF Secretariat to reflect WMO's stepped-up role in the Operational Manual and present the updated Operational Manual and any associated resource implications to the Steering Committee for its consideration and adoption.

Purpose of this Document

Following a decision of the 193 Member states and territories of the World Meteorological Congress, SOFF was co-created by WMO, UNDP and UNEP as a UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund. WMO plays multiple roles in SOFF, as stated in the SOFF Operational Manual adopted by the 2nd SOFF Steering Committee in October 2022.

Since opening its doors for business in July 2022, SOFF has been operating at speed and scale. This document reflects on WMO's evolving role during this period, and based on SOFF early implementation experience proposes an enhanced role of WMO serving as SOFF Technical Authority.

The document has been prepared by the WMO Secretariat in collaboration with the SOFF Secretariat.

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Update on the role of the World Meteorological Organization in SOFF

1. Context

SOFF was co-created by WMO, UNDP and UNEP as a UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund, based on breakthrough decisions taken by the World Meteorological Congress in 2021. WMO plays multiple roles in SOFF, as stated in the SOFF Operational Manual adopted by the 2nd SOFF Steering Committee in October 2022.

Since opening its doors for business in July 2022, SOFF has been operating at speed and scale. This document reflects on WMO's role during this period and based on SOFF early implementation experience proposes an enhanced role of WMO serving as SOFF Technical Authority. It has been prepared by the WMO Secretariat in collaboration with the SOFF Secretariat.

2. SOFF contributes to the core purpose of the World Meteorological Organization

The Convention of the World Meteorological Organization, states the purpose of WMO, with a particular emphasis

(i) *to facilitate worldwide cooperation in the establishment of network of stations for the making of meteorological observations (…) and to promote the establishment and maintenance of centres charged with the provision of meteorological and related services*;

(ii) *to promote the establishment and maintenance of systems for the rapid exchange of meteorological and related information*; and

(iii) *to promote standardization of meteorological and related observations and to ensure the uniform publication of observations*.

SOFF, supporting countries in substantially increasing the generation and international exchange of basic weather and climate observations in the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON), plays an essential role for WMO Members to deliver on their core mandate.

3. The normative function of WMO constituent bodies

3.1. World Meteorological Congress

The World Meteorological Congress, comprised of 193 Member countries and territories, is the general assembly and supreme governing body of WMO. In October 2021, the Congress made a series of landmark resolutions to dramatically strengthen the world's weather and climate services through a systematic increase in exchange of observational data and data products. SOFF was an integral part of these resolutions, concretely

Resolution 3 (Cg-Ext (2021)) endorsed the establishment of SOFF, alongside Resolutions 1 and 2 on the WMO Unified Data Policy and the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON), respectively. These placed obligations on Members to take and share basic observations for global public good, with the support of SOFF.

Since SOFF became operational in July 2022, Congress took an additional decision related to SOFF, namely the Resolution 21 (Cg-19, 2023), which requested the SOFF Steering Committee to explore opportunities to provide SOFF financial and technical support to Middle Income Countries in need while continue prioritizing Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. Additionally, the WMO Secretary-General was requested to call on bilateral and multilateral development partners for their cooperation and funding in closing GBON gaps.

Looking ahead, the World Meteorological Congress in 2025 is expected to consider a GBON expansion road map. Congress in 2027 could then consider the amended Technical Regulations for GBON expansion. These considerations and potential GBON decisions would create the foundation for a potential SOFF expansion into other earth observation domains, as well as making SOFF even more relevant for climate action.

3.2. WMO Executive Council

The Executive Council is the executive body of WMO and is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Congress. It coordinates programmes, manages the budget, considers, and acts on resolutions and recommendations from the regional associations and technical commissions, and studies and makes recommendations on matters affecting international meteorology and related activities.

After SOFF opened its doors for business in July 2022, the WMO Executive Council has approved a decision of relevance to the SOFF in its Seventy-eighth session of the Executive Council (EC-78) in 2024, namely Resolution 14 (EC-78) on Global Basic Observing Network Implementation and the Systematic Observations Financing Facility, which

- Urges Members to consider financial contributions to the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund to close critical GBON gaps;
- Requests the Secretary-General to invite the SOFF Steering Committee to consider an expansion of the present scope of SOFF, as resources permit, to cover surface marine GBON stations/platforms stations in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs);
- Requests further the Secretary-General to invite the SOFF Steering Committee to work with INFCOM in developing appropriate mechanisms to bring Member feedback for their joint consideration.

3.3. WMO Commission for Observation, Infrastructure, and Information Systems

The Commission for Observation, Infrastructure, and Information Systems (Infrastructure Commission) contributes to the development and implementation of globally coordinated systems for acquiring, processing, transmitting, and disseminating Earth system observations, and related standards. INFCOM oversees and coordinates the development of technical guidelines, processes and procedures for the implementation and compliance monitoring of GBON.

As part of INFCOM, the Standing Committee on Earth Observing Systems and Monitoring Networks is responsible for developing and maintaining WMO regulatory and guidance material related to Earth observing networks, as specified in the WMO Technical Regulations (WMO No. 49), in particular in Volume I and III, and the Manual on the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WMO-No. 1160); where the Member obligations to implement GBON are written.

In April 2024, INFCOM approved a decision on the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) Implementation, providing guidance for surface marine stations in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), urging members to consider contributing to SOFF, requesting SOFF via the WMO Secretary-General to consider expansion of its support to cover surface marine GBON stations in EEZ, and laying out the adopted principles for a GBON expansion (parts of this decision involving bodies outside of INFCOM became Resolution 14 (EC-78) referenced above).

INFCOM will oversee the correct and standardized implementation of GBON after its potential expansion, by developing technical guidelines, processes and procedures.

3.4. Regional Associations

WMO's six Regional Associations are responsible for the coordination of meteorological, hydrological, and related activities within their respective Regions, promoting the regional execution of decisions of Congress and the Executive Council. Regional Associations govern regional support centres for infrastructure, including in observations, calibration, data exchange, and regional prediction products, where the standards for these regional centres are collectively set by INFCOM. The Regional Association sessions conclude with decisions and requests on a variety of topics, including related to SOFF Implementation. Several decisions from Regional Associations have been significant to SOFF:

Regional Association I (Africa) at its Eighteenth Session in 2023, Decision 4.1:

Decides to request the WMO Secretary-General to contact the SOFF Steering Committee to consider a comprehensive African regional SOFF program that includes regional centers to be implemented with urgency in order to close Africa's major Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) gaps;

Further decides to request the WMO Secretary-General to approach the SOFF Steering Committee to consider the conclusion of the fifty-seventh session of the Subsidiary Body for

Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA-57) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to continue to prioritize the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States and to explore opportunities to provide support to other developing countries;

In May 2024, the Regional Association I in its Decision 4.3/3 requested the WMO Secretary-General to communicate with the SOFF Steering Committee the importance and urgency of considering: (i) approving SOFF readiness phase support for the remaining African countries; (ii) approving investment funding requests from African countries when submitted to the Steering Committee for consideration; (iii) Supporting a phased expansion of SOFF support to middle-income countries including those in Africa; and (iv) stepping up SOFF resource mobilization efforts to enable all African countries to close their GBON gaps in sustained manner.

In September 2021, the Regional Association V (South-West Pacific) at its Eighteenth Session, Decision 9, decided:

To invite RA V Members to join the Secretary-General in advocating and mobilizing resources for the creation of the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF), including by securing highest level political support and voicing the urgency of SOFF creation through various stakeholders and funding partners and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process;

To urge RA V Members to commit to contribute to the further development and prompt implementation of the SOFF and the supporting Country Support Initiative (CSI) and Country Hydromet Diagnostics (CHD).

Additionally, and following a Regional Association V SOFF Programming Workshop in October 2022, the Regional Association V President submitted to the SOFF Secretariat a request for support for a SOFF Pacific SIDS regional program.

Along the same lines, in April 2023, the President of the WMO Regional Association IV (North America and the Caribbean) submitted a request to the SOFF Steering Committee to consider a full SOFF Caribbean regional programme, as well as to consider the inclusion of SOFF support of Middle-Income Countries in Central America.

At the workshop on Observations, Data Exchange and Processing of the Regional Association III (Americas) in July 2022, participants agreed to recall WMO, as member of the SOFF Steering Committee, to propose and discuss the possibility of considering the provision of support for the improvement of observations in the region, beyond its "readiness" phase, in light of their concerns to maintain its infrastructure network compliant with GBON.

4. WMO Members' commitment to SOFF

WMO Members are the sovereign countries and territories that participate in the WMO, contributing to international meteorological efforts and benefiting from global data and prediction exchange and collaborative projects.

Each Member operates a National Meteorological and/or Hydrological Service (NMHS), which serves as the national authority responsible for weather, climate and hydrological services. NMHSs collect and disseminate essential meteorological and hydrological data, contributing to the global network when that data is shared in a standardized way.

4.1. WMO Members as SOFF beneficiaries

149 countries and territories are eligible for SOFF Readiness support, of which 76 SIDS and LDCs are eligible for full support, i.e. Readiness, Investment and Compliance support. The World Meteorological Congress 2023 requested the SOFF Steering Committee to explore opportunities to provide SOFF financial and technical support to Middle Income Countries in need.

Beneficiary countries are highly committed to their compliance with GBON with SOFF support. So far, 101 countries have requested SOFF support of which 66 countries have been programmed. Countries receiving Readiness support are speedily moving towards the Investment phase with the submission of funding requests. So far, 18 Investment phase funding requests have been approved by the SOFF Steering Committee, of which 5 were conditionally approved provided resource availability.

4.2. WMO Members as SOFF contributors

So far, eleven WMO Members have been contributing to the SOFF UN Fund.[1]

Members are not only providing financial support but also technical assistance. The long-term, open-ended peer-to-peer technical assistance approach is a defining element and success factor of SOFF. Following a request from the WMO Secretary General to all Members asking them to consider serving as SOFF peer advisors, 28 WMO Members have committed to serve as peer advisor, with 20 of them currently active.

5. WMO Secretariat roles within SOFF

In the development of SOFF, essential roles of the WMO Secretariat were defined according to the SOFF Terms of Reference and the SOFF Operational Manual, namely serving as the co-chair of the SOFF Steering Committee; administrative host of the SOFF Secretariat; administering the SOFF peer advisor pass-through mechanism; and serving as the Technical Authority to SOFF.

[1] Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and the United States of America.

While originally these roles were largely hosted under one department (WMO Infrastructure Department), WMO's new Executive Management decided to create a clear delineation between these roles.

5.1. Co-chairing SOFF Steering Committee and representing SOFF

WMO is co-chair of the SOFF Steering Committee. Jointly with UNDP and UNEP as SOFF co-founders and in collaboration with the Steering Committee co-chair representing the funders, the WMO Secretariat internationally represents SOFF.

The new Executive Management of WMO has given highest priority to SOFF, making it one of the three corporate priorities (jointly with the UN Early Warnings for All initiative and the Global Greenhouse Gas Watch G3W). As of the June 2024 Steering Committee meeting, the WMO Secretary-General acts as the co-chair of the SOFF Steering Committee.

5.2. Administratively hosting SOFF Secretariat

The SOFF Secretariat is hosted by the WMO Secretariat. WMO is responsible for providing administrative support for the operation of the SOFF Secretariat, which follows WMO administrative rules and procedures. SOFF Secretariat staff are appointed and administratively managed as WMO employees and according to WMO human resource policies.

While previously the SOFF Secretariat was administratively hosted by the WMO Infrastructure Department, the new WMO Executive Management took the decision to align reporting of the SOFF Secretariat, the CREWS Secretariat and the WMO Development Partnerships unit, all of them now reporting to the WMO Assistant Secretary-General.

5.3. Administering the SOFF peer advisor mechanism

WMO is responsible for establishing and administering the pass-through mechanism for contracting technical assistance provided by the SOFF peer advisors. WMO has established standardized contractual arrangements, issues contracts, and makes payments to peer advisors based on Steering Committee decisions and upon request from the SOFF Secretariat and per WMO administrative rules and procedures.

5.4. WMO Technical Authority for SOFF

Guided by decisions of the WMO governing bodies, the WMO Secretariat provides the Technical Authority for SOFF as described in the following chapters.

6. WMO as SOFF Technical Authority role as described in the SOFF Operational Manual – and its evolution to date

6.1. The WMO role as SOFF Technical Authority as defined in the SOFF Operational Manual

The authority for the WMO Secretariat to act as the Technical Authority to SOFF stems from Resolution 3 (Cg-Ext(2021)) on the creation of SOFF, which "requests the Secretary-General…to ensure, through WMO's participation in SOFF as the technical authority, that SOFF contributes to the sound development of GBON."

In addition to the roles of Congress in approving GBON regulations, and INFCOM in developing technical guidance, processes and procedures for implementation and compliance, the WMO Secretariat component of the SOFF Technical Authority role is described in three roles[2]:

1. "Provides basic technical support to the peer advisors, Implementing Entities and beneficiary countries on GBON regulations…to ensure a common understanding of these outputs and their use".

In 2022 and 2023, INFCOM teams supported by the WMO Secretariat developed SOFF-tailored tender specifications as well as GBON guidance material considering the SOFF context.

Evolution of this role: As GBON technical regulations only cover the observing component, but full GBON compliance requires *taking* and *sharing* of *quality* observations, the required basic technical support has expanded to include elements on calibration, the implementation of the WMO Information System 2.0 (WIS 2.0) for global data sharing, and regional approaches to support observational quality. This involves a broader range of experts within the WMO Secretariat. Feedback from peer advisors led to changes in GBON technical regulations adopted by Congress in 2024 to improve clarity on the requirements for SIDS that have large land areas - a demonstration of an adaptive approach to implementation beneficial to WMO. Several webinars were organized in collaboration with the SOFF Secretariat to share technical guidance as well as share the experience of peer advisors and SOFF-supported countries. The SOFF Operational Guidance Handbook was co-developed by WMO and the SOFF Secretariat to support peer advisors in the readiness phase with standardized guidance and will soon be updated.

2. "Technical screening of the GBON National Gap Analysis and the GBON National Contribution Plan against the GBON regulations."

This was initially foreseen as a straightforward check against technical regulations, for these Readiness Phase products produced by the peer advisors with the SOFF countries.

[2] SOFF Operational Manual Section 4.4.4.1

Evolution of this role: the approach to screening was quickly adapted to be an iterative process aimed at success and bringing countries to the SOFF investment Phase with the support of peer advisors. Additional internal guidance was developed to screen elements of the approach to calibration and data sharing (WIS 2.0 implementation), as well as on ensuring peer advisors properly consider the human resource needs for GBON investment, operations and maintenance.

WMO's Planning, Foresight and Performance Office has taken responsibility for supporting and analysing the Country Hydromet Diagnostics (CHD) as part of the SOFF Readiness phase. While the National Contribution Plans (NCP) and National Gap Analyses (NGA) provide a baseline and plan for implementation of GBON, the CHD assesses the NMHS maturity along all elements of the hydrometeorological value chain (from governance and institutional setting to observations, warning services and contribution to hydrology and climate services). While the CHD was initially indicated as an optional output of the Readiness phase, it has proven to be an important resource for designing a SOFF investment. All 60 countries with approved Readiness funding opted to conduct a CHD, and feedback received from countries, peer advisors and Implementing Entities highlight the importance of the CHD that goes beyond SOFF. In the planned update of the SOFF Operational Manual, it is proposed to make the CHD a required output of the Readiness phase, which will further establish the baseline and identify needs for complementary investments to SOFF investments. Based on feedback from beneficiary countries and SOFF operational partners, it is further proposed to conduct a CHD update in the last year of the SOFF Investment phase to be able to report on overall improvements in NMHS maturity and to provide up-to-date information, supporting the calculation of the countries' contribution in the SOFF Compliance phase and informing upcoming Hydromet Gap Reports of the Alliance for Hydromet Development.

The review of investment funding requests is done by the SOFF Secretariat, but questions were raised by the SOFF Secretariat to the WMO Secretariat on the reasonableness of approaches and costs for technical elements, including for example calibration.

3. "Independent verification of the status of beneficiary countries' stations against the GBON regulations."

In this role the tools of the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS), supported by certain Members, will play an important independent role in verifying GBON compliance. Four WMO World Meteorological Centres provide availability and quality information for GBON stations.

6.2. Evolution of this role to accompany SOFF operations to date

To ensure successful implementation of GBON and efficiency of SOFF investments, the WMO Secretariat has been partnering with the SOFF Secretariat on additional support that has been identified as important for success of SOFF investments. This "stepped-up" support has included:

- Developing webinars supporting the sharing of best practice amongst peer advisors and SOFF countries in developing Readiness Phase outputs,
- Screening the calibration, data management and WIS 2.0 portions of the National Contribution Plans,
- Participating in the design of the Investment Phase Framework, notably in the development of the *commissioning period* that will test GBON compliance before a country exits to the Compliance Phase, and in the recognition that the results-based payments should be defined by the context encountered in the Investment Phase, rather than the originally-foreseen flat universal rate,
- Engaging in SOFF Regional Workshops to develop regional efficiencies in implementation,
- Supporting work to estimate impacts of GBON implementation under SOFF through experiments by ECMWF,
- Starting the co-design of the Compliance Phase framework with SOFF,
- Developing guidance for the surface marine GBON requirement already adopted by Cg-Ext (2021) including on the compliance method and tender specifications, making them ready for SOFF investment if the Steering Committee decides to do so,
- Considering the "two-way street" demanded by SOFF countries with possibilities for basic ongoing training in the global NWP outputs that will be improved through GBON implementation,
- Considering how ongoing WMO work with industry to build standards easing "first mile" of data flow from instruments to data sharing systems can support SOFF countries, and
- Considering how to link GBON and GCOS work: the Global Climate Observing system (GCOS) is the recognized system for systematic observations of the climate under the UNFCCC. An expansion of GBON to consider GCOS plans, foreseen as part of INFCOM's GBON expansion work, would strengthen SOFF positioning with the UNFCCC and ensure SOFF results are fully leveraged by climate information users. GCOS and SOFF Secretariats have identified priority actions including for example, prioritizing GCOS networks in the National Gap Analysis as part of observing network design principles.

This work represents a shift in emphasis for the WMO Infrastructure Department, from a focus on the Member participation in the global infrastructure needed for weather prediction, in large part implemented by the global north, to one that more directly supports action in the context of development with technical advice. This work builds on traditional small-scale and direct training activities performed by the Infrastructure Department, but the scale of SOFF implementation demands a different level of response.

7. Proposed updated and expanded role of WMO as SOFF Technical Authority

Upon review and lessons learned from early implementation of SOFF over the first two years, it has become evident that the role of the Technical Authority goes beyond the originally envisioned scope. It has also become evident that there are significant opportunities to create leverage between WMO Secretariat core business functions, in particular its Infrastructure Department functions, with its SOFF support function.

7.1. A proposed expanded role

To better support SOFF and GBON implementation, it is proposed that the Technical Authority role is expanded to:

i. Formalize and reinforce the capacity to deliver on the expanded actions identified in 6.2 above at each phase of SOFF implementation, namely:

   - Readiness phase: an iterative technical review and exchange with peer advisors in the review of the GBON National Gap Analysis, GBON National Contribution Plan, and Country Hydromet Diagnostics to ensure the assessments are sound from a regulatory perspective and that efficient options are identified for implementation, promote regional efficiencies within the constraints of WMO regional structures and the capacity of SOFF countries and Implementing Entities to work regionally, and preparing learning resources, coordinating across the technical divisions of the WMO Infrastructure Department.

   - Investment Phase: Supporting the SOFF Secretariat in technical review of the Investment Funding Requests against the approved GBON National Contribution Plans produced by the peer advisors, and supporting SOFF operational partners on technical questions that arise during implementation, including the coordinated roll-out of WIS 2.0 and updated CHDs.

   - Compliance Phase: co-development of the Compliance Phase framework, including through phased investments with the SOFF Secretariat, and ensuring the development of a "two-way street" mechanism to ensure SOFF-supported countries get benefit through ability to access and use improved numerical weather prediction products produced with GBON data.

ii. GBON compliance helpdesk: Together with the SOFF Secretariat, develop a GBON commissioning and compliance helpdesk tailored to SOFF – diagnosing problems in support of peer advisors and countries to help identify the source of gaps in compliance, whether the problem is with observations quality, communications, IT or the WIS 2.0. This work would be done to complement to WMO regional centres such as WIGOS Regional Centres, Regional Instrument

Centres and Global Information System Centres that may also cover SOFF countries.

iii. Role of INFCOM: Work on developing practical best practice, guidance, and training material with the SOFF countries, peer advisors and Implementing Entities and the appropriate INFCOM teams so these are codified in WMO guidance materials and available for all Members (as well as other development organizations) working in a developing country context, with consideration of the different maturity levels of NMHSs and the competencies and enabling environments necessary to sustainably operate GBON infrastructure. This could also include executing trainings or a train-the-trainers approach for the SOFF peer advisors. It would respond to Resolution 14 (EC-78) and its call on SOFF to work with INFCOM in developing appropriate mechanisms to bring Member feedback for their joint consideration.

iv. Other support:

- Supporting the technical aspects of SOFF Impacts work performed by ECMWF and in the future potentially by other global numerical weather prediction centres.
- Effectively linking GBON with the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) work.
- Maximizing synergies between the implementation of GBON through SOFF operational partners and any national projects that WMO Secretariat are directly involved (i.e., as implementer under CREWS) including through coordination and tracking, and avoidance of any conflict of interest.
- Feeding the CHD data and analysis in informing the Early Warnings for All Initiative as well as the Hydromet Gap Reports of the Alliance for Hydromet Development.

7.2. The benefit for SOFF

As SOFF operations advance, many practical questions will arise, which will need rapid and practical technical responses to respond and adapt. This requires appropriate support, moving from theory to practice and realizing the real-world challenges to be addressed. This effort should lift success by ensuring lessons are learnt and shared amongst the SOFF beneficiary countries, peer advisors, Implementing Entities and all SOFF partners, as implementation and compliance experience is gained.

7.3. The benefit for WMO

SOFF operations are working in a developing country context in a standardized way. Engaging the SOFF beneficiary countries, peer advisors and Implementing Entities and developing guidance from their experience will make WMO technical guidance more

relevant in any development context and for the national level where investments are made. This would create a framework of guidance material for other development efforts, including the work of multilateral and bilateral development partners.

The INFCOM Management Group, at its meeting 1-4 October 2024, took note of the proposed expanded role of the WMO Secretariat in its role as SOFF Technical Authority. Considering the constraints of INFCOM Terms of Reference, the request from the WMO Executive Council in Resolution 14 (EC-78), and the opportunity and demand provided by the EW4All initiative and SOFF support for GBON implementation, the Management Group agreed there was an opportunity to orient its work to have higher impact on both global infrastructure and the national infrastructure that contributes to it. The Management Group decided to create a Task Team to characterize the gap between INFCOM mechanisms and guidance and the needs of Members in the international development and climate finance context, to analyze the roles INFCOM could take, propose a vision for INFCOM engagement, and propose adjustments to existing INFCOM structures and work plan priorities within resource constraints, consistent with the approach of other WMO bodies. This team will provide its recommendation to the INFCOM Management Group by Q2 2025.

7.4. Codifying an expanded role of the WMO in its role as SOFF Technical Authority

The role of the WMO as SOFF Technical Authority has in fact already expanded from the more limited definition in the SOFF Operating Manual, based on the experience of two years of SOFF operations and with a view to bringing peer advisors, Implementing Entities, and SOFF countries to success in the implementation of GBON. The further expanded role identified above would enhance the ability of the WMO as SOFF Technical Authority to contribute to the sound development of GBON, and therefore to the success of Members implementing GBON through the support of SOFF. It is ultimately bound by resource constraints and the existing decisions of the World Meteorological Congress, Executive Council and INFCOM.