



Eleventh Steering Committee

19-21 May 2025

SOFF Readiness Funding Requests

INF 11.3

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



Purpose of this Document

This document contains SOFF Readiness funding requests of Cook Islands, Niue and Guinea. The SOFF Readiness phase provides technical assistance for the development of the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) National Gap Analysis, GBON National Contribution Plan, and the Country Hydromet Diagnostics.

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SOFF Readiness Funding Requests

1. Funding requests overview

The eighth Steering Committee meeting in June 2024 programmed four additional countries for SOFF support, namely Sierra Leone, Cook Islands, Niue and Guinea through [Decision 8.7](#). The Readiness funding request for Sierra Leone was submitted and approved by the 10th Steering Committee through [Decision 10.3](#).

The remaining three countries have submitted their Readiness funding requests for consideration at the 11th Steering Committee meeting. Table 1 presents an overview of these requests. Learning from the Readiness phase implementation of the previously approved countries, a delivery timeframe of 9-12 months is requested to allow sufficient time for the preparation of the three Readiness outputs¹.

Table 1: List of SOFF Readiness phase funding requests for 11th Steering Committee decision.

No	Country	Peer Advisor	Implementing Entity	Duration (months)	Budget (USD)
RPFR 062	Cook Islands	New Zealand	UNEP	9	75,415
RPFR 063	Niue	New Zealand	UNEP	9	60,645
RPFR 064	Guinea	Germany	UNDP	12	143,000
Subtotal					279,060
TOTAL ²					298,594.2

2. Process

Funding requests were prepared in accordance with the [SOFF Operational Manual](#). The SOFF Secretariat facilitated the matching of SOFF countries with peer advisors and Implementing Entities based on their expressed interests and preferences. Peer advisors supported countries in developing their Readiness funding requests in collaboration with prospective Implementing Entities.

3. SOFF Programming criteria

An overview of the three countries against the SOFF programming criteria ([SOFF Operational Manual](#)) is presented in Table 2 below.

¹ GBON National Gap Analysis; GBON National Contribution Plan; Country Hydromet Diagnostics

² This includes USD 19,534.2 as the 7% fee for WMO for administering the pass-through mechanism.

Table 2. Assessment of the three countries against the SOFF programming criteria.

SOFF Programming Criteria	Cook Islands	Niue	Guinea
Closing most significant data gaps	<i>See Table 3</i>		
Target "easy fixes"	Support will be provided for updating stations metadata in OSCAR/Surface, increasing data sharing frequency to hourly for selected AWS, as well as nominating and training the National Focal Points for OSCAR/Surface, WDQMS, and WIGOS. In-country data transfer systems will also be enhanced for WIS 2.0 connectivity.	Feasibility of upper air station at Hanan Airport will be assessed, stations metadata in OSCAR/Surface will be updated, and the National Focal Points for OSCAR/Surface, WDQMS, and WIGOS will be nominated and trained. In-country data transfer systems will also be enhanced for WIS 2.0 connectivity.	Existing operational stations not meeting GBON standards will be assessed for easy fix improvements, along with a review of marine stations. Stations metadata in OSCAR/Surface will be registered and updated, and National Focal Points for key meteorological systems will be nominated.
Maximize delivery capacity	New Zealand is supporting Cooks Islands to upgrade AWS and restore upper air station through GCF FP147 UNEP CIS-Pac5 project. Furthermore, it assessed the NMHS Hydromet capabilities as part of a regional gap assessment funded by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UNEP is supporting the country through GCF FP147 UNEP CIS-Pac5 project, which funds infrastructure for land, air, and	New Zealand supports Niue to maintain the Niue Airport AWS. Furthermore, it assessed the NMHS Hydromet capabilities as part of a regional gap assessment funded by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UNEP is supporting the country through the GCF FP147 CIS-Pac5 project in delivering infrastructure funding for two AWS, and a marine observing programme.	DWD will draw on its experience from its role as an active Peer Advisor for Madagascar and Sierra Leone (partnering with Geosphere Austria) while UNDP holds a strategic position in Guinea and is ideally positioned to facilitate critical interactions during the preparation and implementation SOFF.

	marine observations, along with technical staff salaries and capacity development.		
Create leverage	<p>Observational data from the AWS network will be integrated into the respective countries' CIMS climate database (CliDE) to support Early Warning Systems.</p> <p>SOFF will deliver to elements of the Weather Ready Pacific Decadal initiative coordinated by SPREP, and with oversight by the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC), ensuring the SOFF investment activities are not duplicated by other initiatives.</p> <p>Additionally, the UNEP is supporting investment activities to strengthen the multi-hazard warning system and is currently providing budget support operation to strengthen the country's disaster risk management systems and policies in both countries.</p>		<p>Key projects include UNDP-supported efforts to enhance climate resilience in Forested Guinea and advancement of National Adaptation Plans (NAP-GSP). Additionally, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) projects FP219 and FP092 with AfDB will be assessed to avoid overlaps and identify synergies. The Adaptation Fund project in the Senegal River Basin aims to build resilience through multi-hazard early warning systems. Furthermore, the CREWS Accelerated Support Window and the upcoming CLIMAGUI project (2024) will strengthen Guinea's meteorological services through legal, administrative, and technical support.</p>
Regional and sub-regional gains	The peer advisor will collaborate with regional SOFF peer advisors to coordinate SOFF implementation under PMC and Weather Ready Pacific guidance. Opportunities may arise to leverage the WMO Regional Training Centre (RTC), Regional Instrument Centre (RIC), and Regional WIGOS Centre		<p>Key partners include WMO's GISC Casablanca for WIS2 implementation, ACMAD for climate forecasting, and ECOWAS for</p>

	(RWC) in Fiji to support both countries' observing programs. Additionally, the advisor will explore the country's participation in a Pacific regional community of practice through the RIC/RTC.		regional climate resilience. Research and policy support come from WASCAL, the African Union's ACPC, and the AfDB's ClimDev-Africa initiative. Collaboration with the Mano River Union, the Gulf of Guinea Regional Network, and WMO regional centers (e.g., Casablanca, Abuja) will further enhance climate services. Additionally, the CCR-AOS-AGRHYMET center will support climate monitoring and food security efforts in West Africa.
Country balance	Cook Islands is a Small Island Developing State in the Pacific.	Niue is a Small Island Developing State in the Pacific.	Guinea is a Least Developed Country in Africa.

Table 3: Overview of the WMO GBON Global Gap Analysis (June 2023) in the three countries.

Country	Surface stations				Upper air stations			
	Target	Reporting	Gap New	Gap improve	Target	Reporting	Gap New	Gap improve
Cook Islands	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	1
Niue	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Guinea	7	0	0	7	1	0	0	1

4. Risks

Table 4 below provides an overview of the key risks identified by peer advisors in collaboration with the country, as outlined in the Risk Management Framework section of the funding requests. To mitigate those related to political instability and other external factors—such as natural hazards that could disrupt the programme’s objectives and delivery—strong alliances with local stakeholders, frequent and effective communication, and continuous monitoring are considered essential. To address institutional and programmatic risks, including limited participation, low capacity of the NMHS, and insufficient country ownership, a series of workshops and targeted capacity-building activities are proposed.

Table 4: Risks identified in the funding requests.

Risk category		Cook Islands	Niue	Guinea
Contextual risks Risks related to conflicts, safety and political insecurity jeopardizing the delivery of the Readiness phase outputs	<i>Health risks</i>	<i>Unlikely</i>	<i>Unlikely</i>	
	<i>Natural hazards</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Likely</i>
	<i>Political instability, economic crises</i>			<i>Likely</i>
Institutional risks Risks related to the beneficiary country's institutions participation in the Readiness phase activities		<i>Unlikely</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Possible</i>
Programmatic risks Risks related to country ownership of the Readiness phase outputs		<i>Unlikely</i>	<i>Unlikely</i>	<i>Likely</i>