

5 - 7 May 2025
Kingston, Jamaica

Closing the basic weather and climate data gaps the Caribbean:

SOFF regional implementation and creating synergies

co-hosted by the Climate Risks & Early Warning Systems
(CREWS), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and
Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) Secretariat

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1. Context

The Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) was created to fill the major gaps in global basic weather and climate data with a focus on the most vulnerable countries, namely Least Developed Countries (LDC) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The LDCs and SIDS are represented in the SOFF Steering Committee by the LDC Group on Climate Change and AOSIS.

The implementation of SOFF is guided by the [Global Basic Observing Network \(GBON\)](#), which sets requirements for the optimal design of the observing network and promotes regional implementation to take advantage of opportunities for enhanced efficiency, including related to instrument calibration, procurement, operations and maintenance, training, capacity development and sustainability mechanisms. Due to specific geographic characteristics, SIDS are well placed to particularly benefit from a regional approach. The objective of this workshop is to clearly define opportunities and actions for regional SOFF implementation in the Caribbean.

Following the SOFF Readiness phase, beneficiary countries can move into the SOFF Investment Phase, where they receive funding to install and/or rehabilitate infrastructure, as well as to develop human and institutional capacity to operate the GBON observing network. Moving to the Investment phase, it is essential that all SOFF partners, including beneficiary countries, peer advisors and implementing entities, come together to identify clear objectives and synergies with existing projects and programmes relevant for SOFF implementation.

SOFF is supporting 16 countries in the region, together with six peer advisors and three implementing Entities (see Annex 1). At present, only five surface stations in these countries meet GBON compliance standards.

2. Workshop objectives

SOFF seeks to bridge the gaps existing in the observational networks of these countries towards a full GBON low-resolution compliance. While the focus is on the national capacity of each respective country, still regional and sub-regional leveraging becomes more and more essential in today's interconnected world, especially when dealing with small island developing countries (SIDCs). Fostering synergies can lead to overall higher collective and independent gains and, very importantly, provide better sustainable approaches as well as a more standardized approach.

With this in mind, a workshop is proposed to bring together the representatives of the country national weather services, the Implementing Entities, the peer advisors and additional crucial actors, such as the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation (CMO), representatives of the CREWS Caribbean 2.0 project, UNDRR and WMO to:

1. **Identify common challenges** on observational infrastructure and fulfilment of the GBON compliance. Neighbouring countries often share similar challenges, especially when it relates to technical infrastructure, but also with the actual use of observational data.
2. **Share best practices.** Each country possesses unique strengths and solutions in various fields that may lead to a fruitful exchange for improving capacity also at the policy level.
3. **Identify synergies** across countries that could benefit the weather services operations and facilitate the achievement of the SOFF targets and projects implemented in the region through various partners.
4. Foster a **cooperative umbrella with regional actors like CMO** for SOFF activities in the countries that could boost activities at the policy and strategic level, specifically for the upcoming Investment Phase of SOFF.
5. Discuss joint **training programmes at CIMH** to work towards the enhancement of human capacity and the generation of a pool of resources and know-how transfer.
6. Discussion on additional **international support, leveraging** actions that could be performed.
7. Discussion on potential additional future collaboration between all the actors, especially under the much wider umbrella of the EW4All initiative.

3. Agenda

Day 1

Time	Session	Moderator	Speaker	Agenda Topic
8:30 – 9:00	Arrival and registration			
9:00 – 9:30	Opening session	Mr Evan Thompson, Director, Meteorological Service of Jamaica; Permanent Representative of Jamaica with WMO; President of RA IV	Mrs Arlene Williams, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Jamaica	1. Welcoming remarks from the host country
			Prof Celeste Saulo, Secretary General of WMO (video)	2. Welcoming remarks from SOFF co-chair
			Mr Gerard Alleng, IDB Group Country Representative, Jamaica	3. Welcoming remarks from IDB
			Mr John Harding, Head of Secretariat for the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS)	4. Welcoming remarks from CREWS
9:30 – 10:00	Introduction to the workshop	Mr Evan Thompson, Director, Meteorological Service of Jamaica; Permanent Representative of Jamaica with WMO; President of RA IV	Mr Rodney Martínez Güingla, WMO Representative for North America, Central America, and the Caribbean	1. Opening from WMO
			Dr Ana Heureux, Programme Management Officer, Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) Secretariat	2. Objectives and agenda for the Caribbean Regional approach
10:00 – 10:30	Group Photo, followed by coffee and tea break			

10:30 – 11:30	Session 1: Setting the scene of regional context and SOFF in the Caribbean	Mr Rodney Martínez Güingla, WMO Representative for North America, Central America, and the Caribbean	Mr Rodney Martínez Güingla, WMO Representative for North America, Central America, and the Caribbean	1. Main outcomes of RA IV Regional Conference
			Dr Arlene Laing, Coordinating Director of the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO)	2. Regional context in the Caribbean - hydromet updates
			Dr Nir Stav, Principal Director, Infrastructure Department, WMO	3. What is Global Basic Observation Network (GBON)? - including marine targets for Small Island states
			Mr Daniel Villa, Technical Coordinator, Infrastructure, WMO	4. GBON compliance in the region
			All participants	Q&A
11:30 – 12:30	Session 2: Lessons learned through SOFF implementation - opportunities and challenges	Ms Lina Sjaavik, Head, Project Development and Management Unit, WMO	Mr Mario Peiro Espi, Partnerships Officer, SOFF Secretariat	1. What is SOFF? 2. Status of SOFF implementation in the Caribbean 3. SOFF First Implementation Period, financial status, achievements, and challenges
			Mr Ronald Gordon, Chief Meteorologist, National Meteorological Service of Belize Mr Ali Price, Supercomputer Observations Lead, UK Met Office	4. Lessons learned from the Readiness phase and moving to Investment

			Mr Gerard P. Alleng , Climate Change Senior Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank All Peer Advisors and Country Representatives	5. Reflections on the Readiness Phase - open discussion, Q&A
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break			
13:30 – 15:00	Session 3: Country presentations	Mr Kenneth Kerr , Science and Technology Officer, CMO Headquarters	Country Representatives	1. Presentations from 15 Caribbean countries - Current observation capability, challenges in the GBON implementation in the Caribbean, and regional opportunities
15:00 - 15:15	Coffee and tea break			
15:15 – 17:00	Session 3 continued			
18:00 - 19:30	Cocktail Reception - Poolside, S Hotel			

Day 2

Time	Session	Moderator	Speaker	Agenda Topic
09:00 – 09:45	Session 4: Group discussion on SOFF expansion and marine observations	Mr Haley Anderson , Project Development Officer, Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO)	<p>Dr Nir Stav, Principal Director, Infrastructure Department, WMO</p> <p>Mr Rodney Martínez Güingla, WMO Representative for North America, Central America, and the Caribbean</p> <p>Ms Semelka Jackman, Senior Meteorologist, Barbados Meteorological Service</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on SOFF expansion and marine observations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current status in the region Regional importance, Hurricane Committee Ocean Panel recommendations Overview of marine observations in Barbados Lightning round
09:45 – 11:00	Session 5: Regional approaches and implementation opportunities in the Caribbean 1. Regional implementation	Dr Arlene Laing , Coordinating Director of the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO) Dr Andreas Schaffhauser , Scientific Director of GeoSphere Austria	Dr Arlene Laing , Coordinating Director of the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO)	1. Regional Network
			Mr Kenneth Kerr , Science and Technology Officer, CMO Headquarters	2. Data Sharing Infrastructure – WIS 2.0,
			Mr Daniel Villa , Technical Coordinator, Infrastructure, WMO	3. Data quality, monitoring and incident management – Regional WIGOS Centers (RWCs)
			Mr Orlando Osa Peralo (tbc) , Head of the Center for Instruments and Methods of Observation; Permanent Representative of Cuba with WMO	4. Calibration and O&M

			Mr Marvin Forde (tbc) , Chief Technical Officer, the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH)	
			Dr Garvin Cummings (tbc) , Chief Hydrometeorological Officer, Hydrometeorological Service, Guyana	5. Observational Data Management Systems
			Mr Dwayne Scott , National Meteorological Service, Belize	
			Mr Kenneth Kerr , Science and Technology Officer, CMO Headquarters	
			Mr Marvin Forde (tbc) , Chief Technical Officer, the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH)	
			Implementing Entities	6. Procurement Opportunities for Coordination
			Mr Marvin Forde (tbc)	7. GBON-Related Capacity Development
			Dr Nir Stav , Principal Director, Infrastructure Department, WMO	
			Mr Rodney Martínez Güingla , WMO Representative for North America, Central America, and the Caribbean	8. National Sustainability Strategies

11:00– 11:15	Coffee and tea break			
11:15 – 12:30	Session 5 continued	<p>Mr Ali Price, Supercomputer Observations Lead, UK Meteorological Office</p> <p>Ms Greta Aubke, Anticipatory Action Specialist, WFP</p>	All participants	<p>1. Group discussion how to move forward together for Regional GBON implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface network • Upper air network • Data sharing • Human and institutional capacity
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break			
13:30 – 15:00	Session 6: Sustaining SOFF Investments through Project Activities - CREWS Caribbean 2.0	<p>Ms Lina Sjaavik, Head, Project Development and Management Unit WMO</p> <p>Mr Haley Anderson, Project Coordination Officer, CMO</p>	<p>Ms Lina Sjaavik, Head, Project Development and Management Unit, WMO</p> <p>Mr Haley Anderson, Project Coordination Officer, CMO</p>	<p>1. Sustaining SOFF Investments through Project Activities - CREWS Caribbean 2.0 - Project Information, sharing of best practices from selected countries, discussion</p>
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee and tea break			
15:30 – 17:00	Session 7: Creating leverage with other		Projects/Programmes Leads	<p>1. Collaboration framework with multilateral climate funds</p>

	partners - achieving objectives of EW4All through partnership	Mr David Walters, Consultant, IDB	Implementing Entities	2. SOFF Implementing Entities investments
		Mr Mario Peiro Espi, Partnerships Officer, SOFF Secretariat	Ms Lina Sjaavik, Head, Project Development and Management Unit, WMO Mr Anwar Baksh, Regional Consultant-CREWS Caribbean, UNDRR	3. CREWS Project Representatives

Day 3

Time	Session	Moderator	Speaker	Agenda Topic
09:00 – 10:00	Session 8: SOFF stakeholder consultations advancing operations - SOFF	Mr Anwar Baksh, Regional Consultant-CREWS Caribbean UNDRR	Ms Ingrid Parchment, Executive Director, Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (C-CAM)	1. Gender and Civil Society Organizations
			Mr Yekini Wallen-Bryan, CEO and Founder of PreeLabs Limited	2. Private sector
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee and tea break			
10:15 – 11:30	Session 8 continued	Mr Anwar Baksh, Regional Consultant-CREWS Caribbean UNDRR	Dr Ana Heureux, SOFF Secretariat Dr Nir Stav, Principal Director, Infrastructure Department, WMO	3. Compliance phase design and consultation
11:30 -12:00	Session 9: Wrap-up and conclusions	Mr Evan Thompson, Director, Meteorological Service of Jamaica; Permanent Representative of Jamaica with WMO; President of RA IV	Mr Evan Thompson, Director, Meteorological Service of Jamaica; Permanent Representative of Jamaica with WMO; President of RA IV	1. Reflections from the region
			Dr Ana Heureux, Programme Management Officer, SOFF Secretariat	2. Key outcomes
12:00	Closing lunch			

4. Workshop logistical details

Dates	5 - 7 May 2025
Hosts	Co-hosted by IDB, CREWS and SOFF Secretariat
Venue	Kingston, Jamaica
Format	Interactive in-person workshop – limited virtual attendance Language – English, Spanish and French
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOFF countries • SOFF Implementing Entities • SOFF Peer advisors • CREWS • WMO • UNDRR • CIMH • CMO • Multilateral Climate funds
Travel	SOFF will cover the travel expenses of representatives of the beneficiary countries. Participants are responsible for securing their travel visa (including any transit visa), and insurance arrangements.

Annex I: SOFF Caribbean regional engagement to date

Country	Peer Advisor	Implementing Entity	Readiness Budget (USD)	Implementation Progress
Antigua and Barbuda	United Kingdom	UNDP	182,970	Readiness phase completed
Bahamas	Finland	IDB	131,653	Readiness phase completed
Barbados	Finland	IDB	129,943	Undergoing Readiness phase
Belize	United Kingdom	IDB	199,757	Investment Funding Request approved in Nov 2023 for USD 864, 543
Cuba	Spain	UNDP	160,000	Readiness phase completed
Dominica	Austria	WFP	135,650	Undergoing Readiness phase
Dominican Republic	Spain	WFP	160,000	Readiness phase completed
Grenada	Spain	N/A	120,000	Undergoing Readiness phase
Guyana	Austria	IDB	170,748	Readiness phase completed
Haiti	Switzerland	IDB	145,000	Undergoing Readiness phase
Jamaica	Finland	IDB	125,799	Undergoing Readiness phase
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Finland	IDB	128,463	Undergoing Readiness phase
Saint Lucia	Austria	WFP	135,650	Undergoing Readiness phase
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Austria	WFP	135,650	Undergoing Readiness phase
Suriname	Netherlands	UNDP	150,000	Readiness phase completed
Trinidad and Tobago	Finland	IDB	129,745	Undergoing Readiness phase