

5 - 7 May 2025  
Kingston, Jamaica

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**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 (SIDs). 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 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 policy and strategic level specifically for the upcoming Investment Phase of SOFF.
5. Discuss joint **training programmes at CIMH** to work towards enhancement of the 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 and speakers |
|-------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 8:30 - 9:00 | <b>Arrival and registration</b> |                        |

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|---------------|---|--|
| 9:00 – 9:30   | <p><b>Opening session:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcoming remarks from Jamaica Met office (TBC)</li> <li>2. Welcoming remarks from SOFF co-chair</li> <li>3. Welcoming remarks from IDB</li> <li>4. Welcoming remarks from CREWS</li> </ol>  | <p><b>Master of Ceremony:</b><br/>IDB</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b><br/>PR, Jamaica Met Office/President of RA IV (TBC), Celeste Saulo, WMO Secretary-General (Virtual/Video-TBC), SOFF Secretariat, Natacha Marzolf, IDB Representative, CREWS Representative (TBC)</p> |
| 9:30 – 10:00  | <p><b>Introduction to the workshop:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Objectives for the Caribbean Regional approach</li> <li>2. Intended outcome</li> </ol>  | <p><b>Moderator:</b> SOFF Secretariat</p>  |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | <p><b>Group Photo, followed by coffee and tea break</b></p>   |  |
| 10:30 – 11:30 | <p><b>Session 1: Setting the scene of regional context and SOFF in the Caribbean</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOFF video</li> <li>• SOFF as a specialized UN climate fund             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o What is SOFF? - governance, secretariat, phases of support and monitoring</li> <li>o SOFF operational partners and roles</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Global Basic Observation Network (GBON)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o What is GBON? - including marine targets for Small Island states</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><b>Moderator:</b> SOFF Peer Advisor</p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> SOFF Secretariat, WMO Technical Authority</p>  |

|               |   |  |
|---------------|---|--|
|               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o GBON compliance in the region</li> <li>• Main outcomes of RA IV Regional Conference</li> <li>• SOFF regional context in the Caribbean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Status of SOFF implementation in the Caribbean</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Q&amp;A</li> </ul>  |  |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | <p><b>Session 2: SOFF Status – Opportunities and challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOFF First Implementation Period, financial status, achievements and challenges</li> <li>• Introduction to the Readiness phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Lessons learned from the Readiness phase</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Introduction to Investment phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o How to access Investment Phase</li> <li>o Outputs, partners, roles</li> <li>o Q &amp; A</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Peer advisor round table and reflections</li> </ul> | <p><b>Moderator:</b> SOFF Implementing Entity</p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> SOFF Secretariat</p>        |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | <b>Lunch break</b>  |  |
| 13:30 – 15:00 | <p><b>Session 3: Country presentations - Current observation capability, challenges in the GBON implementation in the Caribbean and regional opportunities</b></p>  | <p><b>Moderator:</b> CMO/ WMO Regional Office</p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> Country representatives</p> |
| 15:00 - 15:15 | <b>Coffee and tea break</b>   |  |
| 15:15 – 17:00 | <b>Session 3 continued</b>  |  |
| 18:00         | <b>Dinner Reception</b>   |  |

## Day 2

| Time          | Session  | Moderator/speaker   |
|---------------|--|---|
| 09:00 – 9:30  | <b>Session 4:</b> SOFF expansion and marine observations   | <b>Moderator:</b> WMO TA<br><b>Speaker:</b> CMO                                     |
| 09:00 – 11:00 | <b>Session 5: Regional implementation opportunities in the Caribbean</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Regional network</li> <li>o Data sharing infrastructure – WIS 2.0</li> <li>o Data quality, monitoring and incident management – Regional WIGOS Centers (RWCs)</li> <li>o Calibration and O&amp;M</li> <li>o Procurement</li> <li>o GBON related capacity development (CIMH)</li> <li>o National sustainability strategies</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <b>Moderator:</b> IDB<br><br><b>Speaker:</b> WMO Technical Authority, CMO, CIMH     |
| 11:00– 11:15  | <b>Coffee and tea break</b>  |   |
| 11:15 – 12:30 | <b>Session 5 continued</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SOFF Group Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Group discussion on regional (and/or subregional) implementation opportunities in the Caribbean</li> <li>o Plenary presentation of group discussions</li> <li>o How to move towards a coordinated investment phase approach</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <b>Moderator:</b> SOFF Implementing Entity<br><br><b>Speaker:</b> Group discussions |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | <b>Lunch break</b>   |   |
| 13:30 – 15:00 | <b>Session 6:</b><br><b>From SOFF Investments to the Last Mile under CREWS Caribbean 2.0 - Engaging Schools and Communities in Lightning Safety”</b>   | <b>Moderator:</b> WMO/CMO<br><b>Speaker:</b> CMO, WMO/CREWS                         |

|               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| 15:00 – 15:30 | <b>Coffee and tea break</b>   |   |
| 15:30 – 17:00 | <p><b>Session 7: Creating leverage with other partners - technical assistance and investments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration framework with multilateral climate funds</li> <li>• SOFF Implementing Entities</li> </ul> | <p><b>Moderator:</b> IDB</p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> Projects/Programmes Leads</p> |

### Day 3

| Time          | Session   | Moderator/speaker   |
|---------------|---|---|
| 09:00 – 10:15 | <p><b>Recap of the previous session</b> - Reflections and key takeaways.</p> <p><b>Session 8: SOFF stakeholder consultations - advancing SOFF operations</b></p> <p><b>Plenary Session:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance phase design</li> <li>• Gender and Civil Society Organizations</li> <li>• Private sector</li> </ul> | <p><b>Moderator:</b> WMO</p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> SOFF Secretariat, IDB, all participants</p> |
| 10:15 – 10:30 | <b>Coffee and tea break</b>   |   |
| 10:30 – 11:30 | <b>Session 8 continued</b>  |   |
| 11:30 -12:00  | <p><b>Session 9: Wrap and conclusions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Discussion point - potential inclusion in INFCOM/WMO councils (TBC)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <p><b>Moderator:</b> SOFF Secretariat, IDB, CREWS</p>                                       |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | <b>Lunch break</b>  |   |
| 13:30 – 5:00  | Visit to met office (TBC)   |   |



#### 4. Workshop logistical details

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Dates</b>        | 5 - 7 May 2025   |
| <b>Hosts</b>        | Co-hosted by IDB, CREWS and SOFF Secretariat   |
| <b>Venue</b>        | Kingston, Jamaica  |
| <b>Format</b>       | Interactive in person workshop – limited virtual attendance<br>Language – English and Spanish  |
| <b>Participants</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOFF countries</li> <li>• SOFF Implementing Entities</li> <li>• SOFF Peer advisors</li> <li>• CREWS</li> <li>• WMO</li> <li>• UNDRR</li> <li>• CIMH</li> <li>• CMO</li> <li>• Multilateral Climate funds</li> </ul> |
| <b>Travel</b>       | 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.   |

#### 5. 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                | Undergoing Readiness phase  |
| Barbados            | Finland        | IDB                 | 129,943                | Undergoing Readiness phase  |
| Belize              | United Kingdom | IDB                 | 199,757                | Investment Funding Request approved in Nov 2023 for <b>USD 864, 543</b> |
| Cuba                | Spain          | UNDP                | 160,000                | Readiness phase completed   |
| Dominica            | Austria        | WFP                 | 135,650                | Undergoing Readiness phase  |
| Dominican Republic  | Spain          | WFP                 | 160,000                | Undergoing Readiness phase  |
| 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 |