

TIME TO SCALE UP

THE URGENCY TO CLOSE THE WEATHER & CLIMATE DATA GAP

Date: Tuesday, 11 November 2025

Time: 17:00 – 18:00

Location: UNFCCC Pavilion

Organized by: UNFCCC & SOFF Secretariat

Surface weather and climate data are the invisible ingredient of every forecast, early warning, and climate action — yet in many countries, these systems are broken. This high-level session will launch the SOFF Action Report 2025 and announce new commitments and growing international support to close the most critical weather and climate data gaps worldwide.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Nearly 90 per cent of the most critical weather and climate observations needed from the 76 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are still missing. These countries operate only one in ten of the stations required under the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) standard — mandatory for all countries. Germany alone has more reporting weather stations than the entire African continent.

Closing the GBON data gap will improve global forecasts and unlock major social and economic benefits. The World Bank estimates that closing this global data gap could generate USD 5 billion in direct annual gains and up to USD 160 billion across sectors such as agriculture, water, energy, and transport.

Better data will strengthen the world's ability to predict and respond to extreme heat, wildfires, floods, and other disasters; reduce losses in agriculture; support food and water security; and help manage the growing risks of climate-induced migration.

The Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) — a United Nations fund created in 2022 by WMO, UNDP, and UNEP at the request of 193 countries — is dedicated to closing this critical gap, focusing on the most resource-constrained LDCs and SIDS.

This session marks the next frontier of action — launching the SOFF Action Report 2025 to showcase country progress and scientific evidence, and announcing new pledges and growing global support to close the world's most critical weather and climate data gaps.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Collective recognition of weather and climate data as a global public good
Demonstrated progress through the SOFF Action Report 2025
New pledges and growing international support to close the global data gap

AGENDA

17:00 - 17:05	Welcome & Moderation Willem van de Voorde , Climate and Environment Special Envoy, Belgium Opening Remarks by Noura Hamladji , Deputy Executive Secretary, UNFCCC
17:05 - 17:10	Keynote Speech Celeste Saulo , Secretary-General, WMO
17:10 - 17:15	Science Makes the Case Inger Andersen , Executive Director, UNEP Florence Rabier , Director-General, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts
17:15 - 17:25	Countries in Action H.E. Lyonchhen Dasho Tshering Tobgay , Prime Minister, Bhutan H.E. Gustav Aitaro , Chair of AOSIS and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Palau H.E. Luisa Meque , President of National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction, Mozambique Marcos Neto , Director of Bureau of Policy and Programme Support, UNDP
17:25 - 17:30	SOFF 2025 Action Report Launch Markus Repnik , Director, SOFF
17:30 - 17:50	Together for Impact Statements of Support H.E. Sara Aagesen Muñoz , Vice-President of the Government of Spain and Minister for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, Spain H.E. Maxime Prévot , Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and International Cooperation, Belgium H.E. Neale Richmond TD , Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora, Ireland H.E. Afke van Rijn , Vice-Minister for the Environment and International Affairs, Netherlands Florence Rabier , Director-General, ECMWF, on behalf of European Meteorological Institutions
17:50 - 17:55	Scaling Up with Innovative Finance Satu Santala , Managing Director, Nordic Development Fund
17:55 - 18:00	Closing Willem van de Voorde , Climate and Environment Special Envoy, Belgium