

Report on Outcomes
Filling the Gaps in Global Data Coverage (Online Workshop 3)
14 October 2020 - 14h00 to 16h00 CET

This online workshop examined the strengths and weaknesses of WMO's approach to addressing gaps in the coverage of global observing systems, as well as emerging requirements and current approaches. Discussions centered around the following topics:

1. Technical, financial and political opportunities and obstacles.

The need for data exchange in meteorology and related Earth science disciplines is well understood and, in principle, uncontroversial. What are some of the main benefits of improving data exchange, and why isn't it happening already?

2. The Global Basic Observing System (GBON) and implications for data availability.

GBON is an example of a WMO-led initiative to improve exchange of observational data for a specific purpose. The workshop looked at the GBON background, its implications, opportunities and challenges. It also explored how Earth system monitoring and prediction is acting as a driver for expansion of the GBON approach into other domains and discipline areas.

3. The role of the private sector in addressing data requirements.

How can the private sector help to fill the gaps in global data coverage? Can rules of engagement be identified that will allow public and private providers of observational data to coexist productively and with mutual benefits?

4. Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) in developing countries, and other capacity-development issues.

How can we ensure that all 193 WMO Members will be able to benefit from improved data exchange, in terms of improved service delivery and generally strengthened expertise in Earth system monitoring and prediction?

5. Innovation and partnership for development assistance.

What are the main technical and financial challenges encountered in filling the data-coverage gap? Who pays, if there are few (or no) local resources available, and why?

Co-Chairs:

- Daouda Konate, WMO Regional President Africa, Director General of the National Meteorological Service of Côte d'Ivoire
- Erik Andersson, Programme Officer EU Policies, Copernicus Expert, European Commission

Speakers:

- Peter Thorne, Maynooth University, Ireland
- Vincent-Henri Peuch, Director of Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts
- Emma Heslop, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO and GOOS
- Anthony Rea, Director, Infrastructure Department, WMO
- Markus Repnik, Director, Development Partnerships, WMO
- Lars Peter Riishojgaard, Director, Earth Systems, WMO

Approximately 235 stakeholders participated in the discussions, including representatives from developed and developing Member governments (including National Meteorological and Hydrological Services), the research community, development agencies and the private sector.

Summary of Outcomes

The most essential data gaps that need to be filled:

- Sustainable funding beyond time-bound projects - an overarching need
- Data rescue and new observations needed in all domains

What should WMO do to fill them?

- Data policy could be transformative; also for exchange of climate data
- Sustainable, long-term finance is crucial – the SOFF (Systematic Observations Financing Facility) should:
 - Ensure financing beyond time-bound individual projects – SOFF results-based long-term support is needed to contribute to O&M costs
 - Use long-term data sharing as a measure of success
 - Focus on data sparse areas and developing countries with the largest capacity gaps
- Strong interest for expanding GBON/SOFF into marine observations, e.g. barometers on drifters

Three linked steps to improving data exchange:

- Demonstrate the value of global data exchange - to make the case for investment in all domains: private and public
- Policies, regulations and standards
- Strengthening national capability, including through sustainable finance