

Report on Outcomes

Online Workshop: Business Models and Data Policy Issues

October 7, 2020- 14h00 to 16h00 CEST

In preparation for the WMO Data Conference, this online workshop asked stakeholders from public, private and academic sectors to exchange views on business models for the generation and international exchange of data and information, and how these models are affected by data policy. This is linked to the ongoing review and update of the current WMO data policy. Discussions centred around the following topics:

1. *What are the business models in use today, and how do they link to the WMO data policy? What works and what doesn't?*
2. *How to harness more data and incentivize more sharing within the global weather enterprise? What kind of business models will ensure sustainability of the provision of the essential basic data and information?*
3. *How best to share private-sector data which are procured by the public sector: what type of licenses and other mechanisms would apply to their international exchange? What should be reflected in the updated WMO data policy?*
4. *How to stimulate innovation and uptake of rapidly growing non-traditional data from all sectors?*

The meeting was co-chaired by:

- Dr. Michael Staudinger, Director General of the Austrian Central Institute of Meteorology and Geodynamics (ZAMG), President of Regional Association VI of WMO
- Dr. Kevin R. Petty, Director, Science and Forecast Operations and Public-Private Partnerships IBM Watson Advertising and Weather, the Weather Company, an IBM Business

Speakers:

- Willi McCairns, Chief Executive ECOMET
- Jim Anderson, Senior Vice-President, Earth Networks and Chairperson of HMEI
- Kornelia Radics, President of Hungarian Meteorological Service, and PR of Hungary with WMO
- Mnikeli Ndabambi, Acting CEO, South African Weather Service (SAWS), and PR of South Africa with WMO
- Rick Anthes, former President of UCAR, and Yolande Serra, University of Washington

- Approximately 200 stakeholders participated in the topic discussions, including stakeholders from NMHSs and other government entities, private companies, universities and research institutes, and international organizations.

Summary of Outcomes

Note: These statements reflect comments made by participants, rather than consensus-based conclusions.

Current challenges and opportunities:

- Rapidly evolving data landscapes, and a need for business models and data policy to stimulate innovation.
- Need for sustainability of observing networks and data beyond the usual business cycles, for climate analysis and forecasting in particular.
- Stubborn data gaps, in the developing world and elsewhere.
- Need to build better understanding between sectors.
- Keep in mind our common end goal: to improve understanding of Earth System science to enhance our ability to predict – data is the foundation.
- Deeper understanding is required in terms of the link between open data and socio-economic value for the benefit of countries.

Views on business models:

- There is no one-size-fits-all business model for the world.
- Incentives are important for the private sector, but desired incentives/incentive structures differ among private-sector players.
- The European data landscape could soon change markedly, and more open data could be made available soon.
- The Hungarian Meteorological Service is making a very significant move toward open data policy, based on careful analysis of how value is generated.
- Public sector needs to understand better the 'weather business' and the business models that could work under different legal frameworks.

Views on what works and what doesn't in the current WMO data policy, and how it should be updated:

- The success of the weather and climate enterprise (at all levels – from global to national), including research, education and operations, has been made possible by the free and unrestricted international exchange of data under WMO Resolution 40.
- WMO's unified data policy (Resolution 42) should be an enabler and not a blocker; the expected outcome from its application should be more data available to all on a free and unrestricted basis.
- Regular review of the new annexes will keep the policy current.

- It is important to clearly define the essential data elements for free and unrestricted access.
- Discussion on free and unrestricted access to data should be linked to infrastructure sustainability.
- Data policy is only one piece of the solution. Many conditions for success in partnerships rely on other elements, such as clear legal mandates and stable funding for NMHSs, clear understanding of technical specifics, and capacity limitations.

Views on how to share private sector data which are procured by the public sector, and what type of licenses and other mechanisms should apply to their international exchange

- Create clear and enforceable data rights schemes.
- Innovate data marketplaces and other aggregation and dissemination platforms.
- The advent of commercial providers of satellite data could be a positive development, but if the data are not shared under the same free and unrestricted principle, this continued success is at risk.
- Observational data purchased from commercial sector can be treated the same way as data provided by public sector; this will allow for a fair comparison of cost, and the taxpayer is funding source in both cases.