

**WMO OMM**

World Meteorological Organization
Organisation météorologique mondiale
Organización Meteorológica Mundial
Всемирная метеорологическая организация
المنظمة العالمية للأرصاد الجوية
世界气象组织

Secrétariat

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Our ref.: 10358/2024/I/SSU/VLab

21 June 2024

Annexes: 2

Subject: 11th meeting of the WMO-CGMS Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG-11), 20-23 January 2025

Action required: To notify the WMO Secretariat whether you will be able to attend the meeting, at your earliest convenience, but not later than
30 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to inform you that the 11th meeting of the WMO-CGMS Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG-11) will be hosted by the Directorate General of Meteorology – Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in Muscat, Oman, from 20 to 23 January 2025. The meeting will be mainly conducted as a face-to-face event; however, remote access will be made available in case any participant is not able to attend in person.

The focus of the meeting will be to ensure that we are implementing the VLab strategy and that through our shared training activities, we are contributing to the protection of life and property through the application of data from the weather and environmental satellites.

A provisional agenda and working documents for the meeting will be posted on the meeting webpage: <https://coemct.met.gov.om/course/view.php?id=76>. The information pack for participants is available in [Annex I](#).

In this regard, I would like to invite you, in your capacity as Member/Partner of VLMG, to this meeting and I should be grateful if you could attend this meeting.

It is hoped that the cost of your participation will be borne by your organization or your supporting Satellite Operator. If, however, it is not possible, WMO is prepared to consider, upon request, providing financial support which may consist of travel costs (most economic air fare according to the most direct route) and/or per diem for one expert from your organization.

Regarding insurance coverage for non-staff members, may I draw your attention to the following:

"Non-staff members of WMO who are authorized to travel at the Organization's expense and/or who are receiving a DSA from WMO must ensure they are fully responsible for expenses incurred in the event of death, illness or injury during official travel and attendance at meetings on behalf of the Organization. They are, therefore, fully responsible for arranging life,

To: Members and Partner Organizations of the WMO-CGMS Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG)

Cc: Hilal Salim Al-Hajri, Oman VLab Centre of Excellence, Public Authority for Civil Aviation
email: Hilal.Alhajri@caa.gov.om

health, accident, as well as any other forms of insurance with an adequate level of coverage for the duration of such meetings and events. WMO liability is limited to the performance of services or attendance at a meeting on behalf of the Organization, is covered by an injury and illness benefit insurance which provides a limited coverage for medical, emergency and supplementary official travel expenses."

For administrative purposes I should be grateful if you could kindly notify the WMO Secretariat (Ms Zoya Andreeva, zandreeva@wmo.int) at your earliest convenience, but not later than **30 September 2024**, whether you will be able to attend the meeting and if so, whether any financial assistance will be required.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support to the activities of WMO.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ko Barrett', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Ms Ko Barrett
for the Secretary-General

**11th Meeting of the Virtual Laboratory Management Group
Muscat, Oman
20-23 January 2025**

INFORMATION PACK FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. BACKGROUND

The Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG) meets biennially to facilitate information exchange between VLab Centers of Excellence and CGMS satellite operators. These meetings ensure the ongoing implementation of the VLab strategy, supporting joint training activities that enhance the protection of life and property through exchange and utilizing of weather and environmental satellite data through end user and the stockholders.

The Directorate General of Meteorology - Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is pleased to host the 11th Meeting of the Virtual Laboratory Management Group in Muscat, Oman **from 20 to 23 January 2025**.

2. VENUE

The Civil Aviation Authority Headquarters in Muscat

Google Map Location:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/FHVdv6bZRujMHEtVA>



3. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 The meeting will be conducted in English in a hybrid format (virtual and in-person attendance). No interpretation service will be available. All documentation will be in English only.
- 3.2 Documents will be posted prior to the planning meeting at the meeting website. There will be no distribution of paper copies, in line with WMO policy of paperless meetings and the Civil Aviation Authority, Oman.

4. PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE

- 4.1 Participants are advised to bring their laptops.
- 4.2 Wireless Internet Access will be available in the meeting room. Participants will be provided with a password on the first day of the meeting.

5. VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

- 5.1 The meeting will also be hosted virtually via Zoom to ensure full participation from relevant experts and team members.
- 5.2 A link will be provided to virtual attendees in the days leading up to the meeting.

6. VISA REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 The CAA can provide an invitation letter to support visa applications upon request. Please send your request to Said Al Bahri (said.albahri@caa.gov.om) and Zoya Andreeva (zandreeva@wmo.int) at the earliest possible convenience to ensure adequate time to approve your visa.
- 6.2 If you require a visa for your travel and wish to have help from CAA team to facilitate the visa application process, we kindly request that you submit the following

documents to the focal point Yousuf Al-Aufi (y.alaufi@caa.gov.om) and Said Al Bahri (said.albahri@caa.gov.om) by the deadline of October 10th, 2024:

6.2.1 A passport-sized photo.

6.2.2 A photocopy of your passport.

7. MEALS

- 7.1 The host will provide a daily lunch at the meeting venue. Additionally, two coffee breaks will be offered each day.
- 7.2 Attendees are required to notify the organizers if they have any specific dietary needs or restrictions after confirmation of their attendance.

8. ACCOMMODATIONS

The CAA has made specific transportation arrangements for a bus to transport all participants from the hotels listed below to the CAA HQ on all meeting days.

Preliminary pick times at the hotel is as follows in section 9.2:

Hotel	Price/night
Holiday Inn Al Seeb Muscat, an IHG Hotel	35 OMR
Mövenpick Hotel & Apartments Ghala Muscat	68OMR
Mysk Al Mouj Hotel	76 OMR

9. TRANSPORTATION

9.1 From the Airport

CAA will arrange transportation from the airport to the hotel for all experts and participants. Flight details should be shared to the focal point Yousuf Al-Aufi (y.alaufi@caa.gov.om) and Said Al Bahri (said.albahri@caa.gov.om) not later than 6 January 2025. Additionally, two alternative options are available:

9.1.1 By taxi:

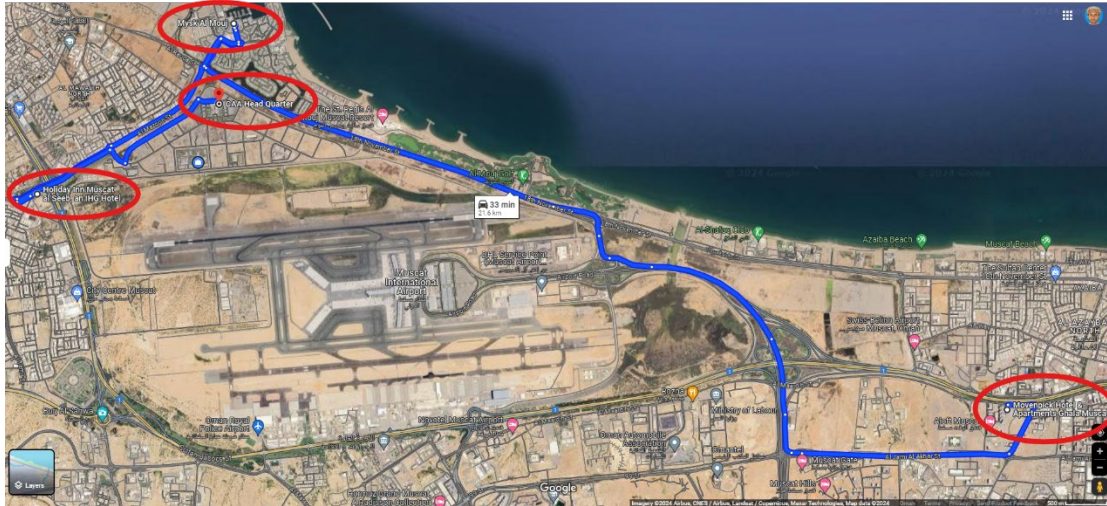
In the following table, the recommended transportation options from the airport to the hotel.

Type of transportation	Booking Time	Estimated Price	Accessibility
Mwasalat (Taxi)	Advance or Arrival	5-7 OMR	Found at the airport taxi exit gate
OTAXI (Online Application)	Advance or Arrival	4-5 OMR	*Smart Phone Apps *Found at the airport taxi exit gate

9.1.2 Several car rental companies are located near the airport's arrivals exit.

9.2 To the Meeting Venue

A daily pick-up is provided to the meeting venue, which is located at the Civil Aviation Authority, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman (only for the hotels listed above).



The arrival and departure times and the route map are provided below:

Type of transportation	Arrival (Local Time)	Departure (Local Time)
Mövenpick Hotel & Apartments Ghala Muscat	6:55	7:05
Mysk Al Mouj Hotel	7:20	7:25
Holiday Inn Al Seeb Muscat, an IHG Hotel	7:35	7:45

10. GENERAL INFORMATION

10.1 Climate

January is pleasant, with mean temperatures 20 to 23 degrees Celsius, and the relative humidity ranges between 50 and 55%. Clear sky conditions usually dominate the weather. January is considered Muscat's rainfall season, with a monthly mean of 8 mm.

10.2 Currency, Credit Cards, and Exchange

Major currencies are readily exchangeable in Oman. Muscat Airport provides money exchange services in both the Baggage Claim Area and Arrival Hall. ATMs at the airport accept international credit and debit cards, although it's advisable to review your bank's regulations for global card use.

While hotels can exchange money, an additional fee may apply. Leading businesses including car rentals, shopping malls, and hotels accept major credit and debit cards such as Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. Moreover, major credit cards find acceptance at various hotels, dining establishments, and shopping venues. Muscat boasts numerous ATMs for convenient access to funds. The official exchange rate is 1 USD = 0.39 OMR. For rates on other currencies, please refer to electronic bulletin boards displayed in banks and money exchange offices.

10.3 Time

The local time in Muscat is (4) hours ahead of UTC (UTC+4)

10.4 Electricity

Oman's electricity power supply uses a voltage of 220 volts at 60 Hertz. You may encounter the usage of two or three-pin plugs, as illustrated.



10.5 Telecommunication

There are three Telecommunication companies in Oman. The visitors can get E-SIM or physical SIM at the airport. The table below shows the Tele companies

Company name	More information
Omantel	https://www.omantel.om/
Ooredoo (Oman)	https://www.ooredoo.om/
Vodafone	https://www.vodafone.om

11. Contact Information

For inquiries and additional information, please direct your communication via email to the coordinator. In case of an emergency, please do not hesitate to contact:

WMO: Zoya Andreeva

Email: zandreeva@wmo.int

WhatsApp: +7 926 224 6072

Local Organizer: Hilal Al Hajri

Email: Hilal.Alhajri@caa.gov.om

Mobile: +968 99458001

List of invited participants

11th meeting of the WMO-CGMS Virtual Laboratory Management Group (VLMG-11),
CAA, Oman, Muscat, 20-23 January 2025

Ref.: 10358/2024-1.11 VSSU

Name	Institution	Country	Role	Email
Romina Nahir Mezher	Servicio Meteorológico Nacional (SMN)	Argentina	VLab Centre of Excellence Argentina SMN	rmezher@smn.gob.ar cc: ygarciaskabar@smn.gob.ar
Inés Leyba	Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences University of Buenos Aires (DCAO-UBA)	Argentina	VLab Centre of Excellence Argentina DCAO-UBA	ines.leyba@cima.fcen.uba.ar
Mick Pope Bodo Zeschke	Bureau of Meteorology Training Centre	Australia	VLab Centre of Excellence Australia	mick.pope@bom.gov.au Bodo.Zeschke@bom.gov.au
Kazuki Yasui	Japan Meteorological Agency	Japan	VLab Satellite Operator JMA	k_yasui@met.kishou.go.jp cc: metsat@met.kishou.go.jp
Kathy-Ann Caesar	Caribbean Institute for Meteorology & Hydrology	Barbados	VLab Centre of Excellence Barbados	kacaesar@cimh.edu.bb cc: dfarrell@cimh.edu.bb
Bernadette Connell (VLMG Co-Chair)	Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere, Colorado State University	United States	VLab Satellite Operator NOAA/NESDIS	Bernie.Connell@colostate.edu cc: kevin.scharfenberg@noaa.gov
Diego Souza	Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais	Brazil	VLab Centre of Excellence Brazil	diego.souza@inpe.br cc: renato.galante@inpe.br
Yubin YU Bo WEN (VLMG Co-Chair) Jingmian DENG	China Meteorological Organization Training Centre	China	VLab Centre of Excellence China – Beijing	yuyb@cma.gov.cn wenbobin2018@163.com dengjingmian@cma.gov.cn
Di XIAN	China Meteorological Organization, National Satellite Meteorological Centre	China	VLab Satellite Operator CMA/NSMC	xiandi@cma.gov.cn cc: liujian@cma.gov.cn liuc@cma.gov.cn
Fang CHENG Lu REN	Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology (RTC-Nanjing)	China	VLab Centre of Excellence China – Nanjing	rtc@nuist.edu.cn cc: renlu_work@126.com

Name	Institution	Country	Role	Email
Marcial Garbanzo-Salas Gabriela Morarojas	Department of Atmospheric and Planetary Physics Universidad de Costa Rica	Costa Rica	VLab TSO VLab Centre of Excellence Costa Rica	marcial.garbanzo@ucr.ac.cr gabriela.morarojas@ucr.ac.cr
Walter Nganyi Sarah Kimani	Institute for Meteorological Training & Research Kenya Meteorological Department	Kenya	VLab Centre of Excellence Kenya RAIDEG Chair	eshiunwa@gmail.com sarahwkimm@gmail.com
Mark Higgins Vesa Nietosvaara Ivan Smiljanic	European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites	EUMETSAT	VLab Satellite Operator EUMETSAT	Mark.Higgins@eumetsat.int vesa.nietosvaara@eumetsat.int ivan.smiljanic@external.eumetsat.int
Tareq SOUBAI	Direction de la Météorologie Nationale Maroc Météo	Morocco	VLab Centre of Excellence Morocco	soubai.tareq@marocmeteo.ma
Jacques Gom Aiam Diakaria Kone	L'Ecole Africaine de la Météorologie et de l'Aviation Civile (EAMAC)	Niger	Centre of Excellence Niger	gomaiamjac@asecna.org Konedia@asecna.org
Jinho Shin	Korea Meteorological Administration, National Meteorological Satellite Center	Republic of Korea	VLab Centre of Excellence Republic of Korea, VLab Satellite Operator KMA/NMSC	jshin0@korea.kr cc: natebb@korea.kr
Eduard Podgaiskii	Russian State Hydrometeorological University	Russian Federation	VLab Centre of Excellence RSHU	podgaisky@rshu.ru cc: ipkmeteorector@gmail.com
Oleg Lomakin	Advanced Training Institute (ATI) of Roshydromet	Russian Federation	VLab Centre of Excellence ATI	rector@ipkmeteo.ru
Konstantin Litovchenko	SRC Planeta, Roshydromet	Russian Federation	VLab Satellite Operator Roshydromet/SRC Planeta	litovchenko@planet.iitp.ru cc: oryzhkova@gmail.com
Jannie Stander	South African Weather Service	South Africa	VLab Centre of Excellence South Africa	Jannie.Stander@weathersa.co.za
Nelly Florida Riama Anni Arumsari Fitriany	Badan Meteorologi, Klimatologi dan Geofisika (BMKG) Training Centre	Indonesia	VLab Centre of Excellence Indonesia	nelly.florida@bmkg.go.id anni.arumsari@bmkg.go.id
Atul Varma	Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Space	India	VLab Satellite Operator ISRO	avarma@sac.isro.gov.in cc: director@sac.isro.gov.in

Name	Institution	Country	Role	Email
	Applications Centre (SAC)			
WMO Education and Training Office	WMO Education and Training Office	WMO	WMO Secretariat	pbugeac@wmo.int lveeck@wmo.int ypurwanti@wmo.int
EOTEC DevNet Secretariat	EOTEC DevNet	EOTEC DevNet	VLab Partner	nancy.d.searby@nasa.gov eemartin08@yahoo.com yakov.m.moz@nasa.gov m.stelmas@uni-jena.de sydney.e.neugebauer@nasa.gov
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Heleen ter Pelkwijk	Eumetcal, Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute	Netherlands	VLab Partner	heleen.ter.pelkwijk@knmi.nl