



Our ref.: 08506/2022/I/GCOS/FR

20 April 2022

Subject: Support to the Global Climate Observing System Programme

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) is co-sponsored by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), and the International Science Council (ISC). The role of GCOS is to guide the development of the global climate observing system, defining requirements, monitoring their implementation, and proposing future improvements.

The concept of Essential Climate Variables (ECVs) was developed by GCOS and is the widely accepted framework for organizing international observing efforts to understand the physical basis for climate change, and to underpin adaptation and mitigation efforts. GCOS requirements are valued by operators of satellites and in situ observing systems to provide a solid basis of requirements on which to plan and design their systems and networks.

Importantly, GCOS spans the entire climate system and provides a unique global mechanism to better understand the cycles of the climate system: water, energy, and carbon. It links together observations from WMO programmes with data from other domains, in particular ocean and terrestrial observations. In this way, GCOS is aligned to WMO's Earth System approach.

GCOS plays an important role in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). As part of its five-year cycle and its commitment to UNFCCC, GCOS has published a GCOS Status Report entitled "*The Global Observing System 2021*" (GCOS-240) that was presented during the UNFCCC COP26 meeting in Glasgow, November 2021. GCOS is currently working on an updated implementation plan that is expected to be published in 2022 ready for COP27 and the UNFCCC Global Stocktake in 2023.

These critical activities are supported by a small secretariat in Geneva, under the Infrastructure Department. WMO provides management and administrative support, and a significant financial contribution, but GCOS is largely reliant on external donors to the GCOS Trust Fund. To support its ongoing activities, GCOS needs to raise around US\$ 1 000 000 annually. Past contributions have, over the years, sustained the important role GCOS has played in the definition and implementation of the global observing system for climate, helping coordinate the billions of dollars spent on observations.

I would like to invite Members and partners to consider supporting the GCOS Programme through financial contributions to the GCOS Trust Fund. In-kind contributions, such as the secondment of expert staff, would also be warmly welcomed.

To: Permanent Representatives of Members with WMO

cc: Hydrological Advisers

I recognize that most organizations in our community face increasing budget constraints. It is my view, however, that contributions would greatly leverage the value of GCOS. Any contribution, regardless of size, from your agency would enable the GCOS Programme to progressively achieve its aims with all partners.

I would like to thank you for your favourable consideration of this request.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Zhang', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dr Wenjian Zhang
for the Secretary-General