



World Meteorological Organization  
Organisation météorologique mondiale

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Weather • Climate • Water  
Temps • Climat • Eau

Our ref.: OBS/OSD/IMO/ICA-Questionnaire

GENEVA, 9 October 2013

Subject: Online survey on the International Cloud Atlas

Action required: To complete and submit the online questionnaire as soon as possible, preferably not later than **21 October 2013**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The International Cloud Atlas (ICA, WMO-No. 407) was last published in 1975 (Part I) and 1987 (Part II). Although it is the international standard for the classification of cloud type, it is currently available only in hard copy. In response to the need for on-line access to information on cloud types, numerous alternative cloud atlases are emerging in digital form and becoming available on the Internet, thus there is a clear need for a digital form of the ICA to be made available via the Internet if it is to retain its role as the global standard for cloud classification.

This matter was first raised at a Meeting of the Presidents of Technical Commissions (Geneva, 7-9 February 2011), at which it was agreed that responsibility for the ICA, which was originally developed by the WMO Commission for Synoptic Meteorology, should now lie with the Commission for Instruments and Methods of Observation (CIMO). At its ninth session (Geneva, 5-8 April 2011), the CIMO Management Group proposed that a meeting be organized to discuss the way forward for the ICA.

Such a meeting was held at WMO in Geneva on 23 September 2011. The meeting recommended that CIMO form a Task Team to examine in detail the requirements for revision of the ICA, and the opportunities for expansion of its functionality.

The tenth session of the CIMO Management Group (Brussels, 19-20 October 2012) endorsed this suggestion and requested the Secretariat to support the president of CIMO in finalizing the Terms of Reference of a Task Team for this, establishing its membership and supporting its work. It is anticipated that the work of the Task Team will need to be completed before the next session of the CIMO Management Group, to be held early in 2014.

The Cloud Atlas is an annex to the WMO Technical Regulations and has not been updated since 1987. The Task Team will consider the opportunities of enhancement of the Cloud Atlas offered by electronic publication, the need to include new pictures, and whether new categories need to be introduced.

To: Permanent Representatives (or Directors of Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services) of Members of WMO (PR-6720)

cc: Hydrological Advisers to Permanent Representatives

In order to effectively carry out this task, a survey is needed to canvass the views of a wide cross-section of the meteorological population (persons working or associated with meteorology), as well as persons who have an interest in clouds.

In this regard, I kindly invite you to complete and submit the online questionnaire available on the following website: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SFMLQ9L>. The questionnaire is available in English only.

Your collaboration in this matter is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'J' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that tapers to the right.

(J. Lengoasa)  
for the Secretary-General