



Our ref.: 18509/2020/DSG/HCP

7 October 2020

Subject: Consultation on WMO Plan of Action (Hydrology)

Action required: (1) Identify important gaps that remained unexpressed; and
(2) Provide inputs by 20 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to inform you that the Hydrological Coordination Panel (HCP) is supporting the development of the Plan of Action for the eight hydrological ambitions Congress 18 (Cg-18) has set for operational hydrology ([Res. 24 Cg-18](#)):

- (a) No one is surprised by a flood;
- (b) Everyone is prepared for drought;
- (c) Hydro-climate and meteorological data support the food security agenda;
- (d) High-quality data supports science;
- (e) Science provides a sound basis for operational hydrology;
- (f) We have a thorough knowledge of the water resources of our world;
- (g) Sustainable development is supported by information covering the full hydrological cycle; and
- (h) Water quality is known.

Each of these ambitions represents an area of broad societal benefit and serves as an aspirational goal to guide WMO activities on operational hydrology.

The Plan of Action is aimed at strengthening national hydrological services and the capacity of national service providers to support Member States' efforts to achieve these long-term ambitions.

A wide and transparent consultation process is the best way to reach a comprehensive and agreed Plan of Action. In this spirit I am proposing the following:

Step 1: Gaps and priorities

As a first step, I am soliciting inputs on the gaps and needs, within the scope of operational hydrology and roles and responsibilities of national hydrological service providers, that must be addressed to make progress towards these ambitions.

I have broken the identification of gaps into five action areas that would support achievement of the eight ambitions. For each, I have identified an initial set of missing elements and current deficiencies, also based on the hydrological poll I have conducted earlier this year, and am now seeking your final input on whether these capture the gaps as you see them and get input on any things I might have missed. At the same time, sharing of your opinions, experience, and proposals for possible actions to overcome current gaps are welcomed and will be used for preparation of the Action plan.

To: Permanent Representatives of Members of WMO
Hydrological Advisers

I invite you to please visit <https://www.hydroref.com/wmo/hydrology/> to help me identifying important gaps that remained unexpressed so far. Consultation is open for your inputs **until 20 October 2020**.

Step 2: Definition of actions and implementation plan

The [Hydrological Coordination Panel](#) will use your inputs to develop a draft Plan of Action which will be further discussed with you during the first quarter of 2021 before being presented to Hydrological Assembly and Congress in June 2021.

At the same time, the Research Board will be initiating a similar process to collect inputs on a draft WMO Research Strategy for operational hydrology. While similar to the Plan of Action, the Research Strategy will not focus on programmatic activities to build the capacities and capabilities of the National Service Providers but on areas where additional scientific research would improve the tools and approaches for advancing operational hydrology and earth systems modelling.

I will keep you updated on the gaps analysis and address you again with the matrix of draft activities and research needs in due time.

I wish to thank you for your inputs and involvement.

Yours faithfully,



Prof. Petteri Taalas
Secretary-General