

World Meteorological Organization

EC-LX/Doc. 2.5

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Submitted by: Secretary-General
and Mr Sutherland,
Second Vice-President

SIXTIETH SESSION

Date: 8.V.2008

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Agenda Item: 2.5

**REPORT ON THE 2008 MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS AND REPORTS BY PRESIDENTS OF
TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS**

SUMMARY

ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED:

Role of the PTC in light of organizational changes

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

None

DECISIONS/ACTIONS REQUIRED:

- (a) Adoption of the draft text for inclusion in the general summary of EC-LX given in Appendix A;
- (b) Adoption of draft Resolution 2.5/1 (EC-LX) – Role and Terms of Reference of the PTC.

CONTENT OF DOCUMENT:

Appendices for inclusion in the final report:

- A. Draft text for inclusion in the general summary of EC-LX
- B. Draft Resolution 2.5/1 (EC-LX) – Role and Terms of Reference of the PTC

Appendix for information:

EC-LX/Rep. 2.5: Progress/Activity Report

DRAFT TEXT FOR INCLUSION IN THE GENERAL SUMMARY OF EC-LX

2.5 REPORT ON THE 2008 MEETING OF PRESIDENTS OF TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS AND REPORTS BY PRESIDENTS OF TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS (*agenda item 2.5*)

2.5.1 The Council requested that within the WMO Strategic Planning process, each technical commission should prepare a note on lessons learnt, experiences gained and prospective challenges in the course of the implementation of the current WMO Strategic Plan (SP), which would be used in the preparation of the next Plan. It agreed that technical commissions should develop Operating Plans for 2012-2015 based on the experience gained through the development of the Operating Plan for the fifteenth financial period (Ref. EC-LX/Doc. 7.2(1)). Furthermore, the Council noted that the PTC suggested that climate adaptation, service delivery and DRR, and improved quality of services through integrating and strengthening infrastructure systems could be made into strategic thrusts if merged with the existing ones. The Council recorded its conclusion on this under agenda item 7.2.

2.5.2 Noting that the PTC recognized the costs of holding technical commissions' sessions was significantly high compared to the resources available to undertake activities in the Commissions' work programmes, the Council supported efforts to identify options that may result in reduced costs of holding technical commission meetings. In doing so, the Council noted that some Commissions had reduced the length of technical commission meetings and also moved towards the use of electronic documentation, but that other cost drivers remained a significant component of the overall cost.

2.5.3 The Council advised the technical commissions with a view to their already identified DRR focal points to:

- (a) Form an inter-Commission network of the DRR focal points;
- (b) Facilitate a coordinated approach, through the network, for implementation of DRR programme activities;
- (c) Coordinate the respective Commission activities across its relevant Open Programme Area Groups (OPAG) and advise Commission members accordingly;
- (d) Brief the respective Commission's Management Group on inter- and intra-Commission activities and recommendations on the Commission's DRR related activities;
- (e) Add other items as required by the specific plans of each technical commission.

2.5.4 The Council adopted Resolution 2.5/1 (EC-LX) - Role and Terms of Reference of the PTC.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Res. 2.5/1 (EC-LX) - ROLE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE PTC

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Noting:

- (1) That there is a need for a closer coordination between the work of the WMO Technical Commissions,
- (2) That the Meetings of the Presidents of the Technical Commissions which were organized on an annual basis during the fourteenth financial period proved to be useful,

Decides:

- (1) That regular Meetings of the Presidents of the Technical Commissions should be organized:
 - (a) To provide scientific and technical advice to Congress, the Executive Council and other WMO constituent bodies as necessary;
 - (b) To exchange information on activities of the individual Commissions;
 - (c) To coordinate, as necessary, plans for the implementation of ongoing scientific and technical activities of the Commissions, in order to eliminate unnecessary overlap of actions and to arrange for mutual assistance;
 - (d) To coordinate the input from the technical commissions into the WMO cross-cutting programmes (e.g., DRR);
 - (e) To recommend to the Executive Council the establishment of Inter-Commission Task Teams (ICTT) for discussing issues of common concern, as required;
 - (f) To assess, evaluate and implement a regular review process on the usefulness and benefits to the Organization of results of conferences, seminars and training meetings (excluding those solely devoted to training) held under the scientific programmes of the Organization, and of the scientific and technical publications of the Organization;
 - (g) To review and discuss the current WMO Strategic and Operation Plans in light of recent or upcoming scientific and technical advances and contribute to the development of the next planning cycle;
 - (h) To perform any other functions that might be referred to these meetings by Congress, the Executive Council and other WMO constituent bodies;
- (2) That these meetings should be chaired annually in rotation by the Vice-Presidents of WMO;
- (3) That these meetings should not be longer than 3 to 5 days, and should be held, on an annual basis, in conjunction with the meetings of the WMO Bureau when feasible;

- (4) That volunteerism in the PTC work (nomination, performance monitoring, and recognition) should receive the required attention as portrayed in the Annex to this resolution;

Requests the Secretary-General to provide the necessary Secretariat support for these meetings.

Annex: 1

Note: This resolution replaces Resolution 18 (EC-XXXV).

Annex to draft Resolution 2.5/1 (EC-LX)

VOLUNTEERISM IN THE WORK OF TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

General

It is recognized that volunteerism plays an important role in the Technical Commissions (TCs) and Regional Associations (RAs) subsidiary bodies.

Recommendations

The following is recommended as per nominations, performance monitoring and recognition in order to improve the current situation with volunteerism, especially the declining number of volunteers:

Nominations:

- That WMO work be better advertised and promoted within NMHSs and other Weather - Climate - Water - Environment communities, in order to ensure contributions from a wide spectra of expertise, and appropriate geographic coverage;
- That in seeking nomination for membership in TC and RA subsidiary bodies, especially prior to a constituent body session, for the procedure to ensure that the commitment of the PRs and the proposed experts are confirmed, as well as the availability of the professional profile, through a brief CV of the latter, to help ascertain their specific expertise, and willingness to contribute; and that Nomination Committees are established early enough to have time to look at all experts' personal information prior to constituent body session;
- That team members should be chosen in such a way that their volunteer work corresponds to their daily activities in their home institutions;
- That the list of proposed names has been agreed at regional association level prior to submission to the Nomination Committees, when possible;
- That all candidate experts should be aware of responsibilities and commitments, especially as far as coordination and participation is concerned;
- That an indication of time commitment (e.g. in terms of minimum percentage of overall activity or time slots) might be useful for the agreement of the PR to secure the necessary time for WMO work;
- That PRs should provide complete and up-to-date expert details, especially working e-mail addresses, to facilitate establishing subsidiary bodies;
- That candidate experts not selected by Nomination Committees should be informed, thanked, and encouraged to apply again to some other WMO work.

Performance monitoring:

- That WMO Secretariat manage the organization of subsidiary body meetings as early as possible within the intersessional period, in order to finalize action plans drafted following e-mail communication or teleconferences, and that the budget is setup accordingly, and in order to have work assigned appropriately;

- That evaluation of each subsidiary body and involved experts be conducted by the appropriate Chairs according to the rules of results-based management, in particular to decide on the continuation of an entity or the membership of an expert, taking into consideration the need for a balance between continuity and new activities and experts. This evaluation is also important for experts involved, especially for the recognition of their work by their PR;
- That should an expert not contribute on the expected level, or in case of a totally silent expert, there should be a mechanism (e.g. led by Management Groups or relevant OPAGs) known to all appointed experts allowing for their replacement, e.g. after 2 years of insufficient contribution;
- That peer-reviewed reports produced should be published as soon as possible, at least at subsidiary body websites, preferably in appropriate publication series with names of contributors, for monitoring purposes and in order to recognize the work of the authors.

Recognition:

- That PRs should give recognition of conducted work for WMO activities. As in most NMHSs an individual evaluation procedure is in place for rating staff members, the contribution to WMO work should be included in the list of criteria used;
 - That other incentives are needed, such as issuing certificates or addressing letters of appreciation to experts concerned, with copy to their PR. This should be made generally at TC or RA president level, following proposals by OPAG or WG Chairs. Applicable rules should be established by WMO, and templates should be designed.
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PROGRESS/ACTIVITY REPORT

SUMMARY

Reference: EC-LX/Doc. 2.5

CONTENT OF DOCUMENT:

Appendix:

- Report of the 2008 Meeting of the Presidents of Technical Commissions

REPORT OF THE 2008 MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTS OF TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS

Report

1. The 2008 Meeting of the Presidents of Technical Commissions (PTC) was held from 18 to 20 February 2008 in the WMO Secretariat. The whole report is available at: http://www.wmo.int/pages/governance/tc/documents/Report_PTC_2008.pdf
Below are some highlights of the meeting.

Strategic planning and results based management

2. The meeting was briefed about the next WMO strategic planning process, the Secretariat Operating Plan (SOP) and the role of technical commissions in expanding the SOP in to a WMO-wide Operating Plan. The issue of the translation of documents and publications was raised, especially in relation to mandatory documents. One key output of TCs is technical guidelines and instructions, which need to be of good quality. As per resources, it was suggested to revise publication and training policies in the Internet age, favouring less hard-copying and more training in-person. The president of CHy noted for the record that it should be up to the TCs to decide what publications should be mandatory and that the availability of funding should not restrict the publication of guidance material for which substantial resources have been used both in terms of manpower and finances to develop.

3. The role of TCs in providing their inputs at the level of deliverables to be (or not to be) incorporated into the strategic planning process was discussed. Some presidents noted that the strategic plan is mainly for "customers" and thus very broad. For motivation and for operations, one needs additionally more detailed plans, for instance for WIGOS, that people can identify with.

4. The meeting agreed that all technical commissions should prepare their respective inputs to the strategic planning process, including proposals on STs and ERs, as appropriate, and in alignment with overall objectives of the Organization. The meeting further agreed that these inputs should be developed in close coordination with WMO Secretariat and the regional associations.

5. The meeting discussed reporting to EC by the presidents of technical commissions. It was noted that in 2008 the two presidents (CBS and CHy) whose sessions are coming up before EC-LXI (2009) would have the possibility to give in-depth reports, communicating the plans for the Commission and what decisions/recommendations need to be made. The other presidents would be able to make thematic interventions closely coordinated with the departments on whose sessions/items they should intervene, on the ER of main concern. As the TCs are to advise EC and Cg, they should report or make interventions on items where they seek a decision or on issues where they need guidance.

Mechanism for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programme performance in the context of result-based management

6. The meeting endorsed the draft proposal on the WMO Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System and agreed that the technical commissions should develop and coordinate with the Secretariat clear methodologies and mechanisms for collecting data and information necessary for the monitoring and evaluation of their Programmes. The meeting also stressed the need for refining the Deliverables and KPTs to ensure their measurability. This was seen as an important precondition for the implementation of the M&E System. The role of the technical commissions in this regard was highlighted in connection with the development of their own strategic plans as well as

the expansion of the SOP to a WMO Operating Plan. In doing so, the specific nature and role of the technical commissions would have to be taken adequately into account. However, in order to ensure that programme implementation in the current financial period would be monitored and evaluated as appropriate, further development of the M&E system should run in parallel with the refinement of the results framework. In this context, it was agreed that technical commissions should cooperate with the Secretariat in carrying out the mid-term programme evaluation, in good time for the Executive Council to give guidance and directives on programme implementation in the second biennium. Concerning further development of the M&E System, the meeting recommended that such development include a review of M&E tools and methodologies in a number of member countries having already extensive experience in the implementation of RBM.

7. It was also noted that for the M&E it is necessary to establish a baseline, against which M&E will be measured, which can prove to be a challenge.

8. The meeting acknowledged that the implementation of the WMO M&E System was not cost neutral, but emphasized that M&E should be considered as an investment in enhancing the future performance of the organization for the benefit of its Members. In this regard, the meeting recommended that the required investments for the M&E System be carefully considered on a step-by-step basis and that such investments be appropriately spread out throughout the first half of the financial period 2008-2011.

Implementation of the Madrid Action Plan, role of technical commissions

9. The meeting noted that technical commissions have played various important roles towards the promotion and implementation of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP). It was agreed that technical commissions should continue to take socio-economic benefits into consideration in their respective activities. Hence, there was broad agreement with the suggested MAP assignments, with a note that some technical commissions like CIMO could play a more tangible role in the delivery of the Madrid Action Plan.

10. The meeting further agreed that each technical commission would make an effort to update the Secretariat on their respective activities in connection with Madrid Action Plan, and socio-economic benefits in general. In addition it was thought that technical commissions do not need to be confined to the suggested assignments.

Technical commissions and regional associations in light of organizational changes

11. The PTC agreed to the need of improvements in their working mechanisms. The issue of interpretation and translation was discussed at length. The meeting agreed to the declaration below:

The PTC agreed that wide consultation in the development of Commission Programmes of Work was essential and part of good governance. However, the PTC noted that the costs of holding technical commissions' sessions was significantly high compared to the resources available to undertake activities in the Commission Programmes of Work. The amount of discretionary funds available to undertake activities was therefore decreasing. This has been compounded further by the reduced availability of experts to conduct work on a voluntary basis.

Role and terms of reference of the PTC

12. The president of CHy presented the draft resolution on Role and Terms of Reference of the PTC, commenting the various changes proposed to the current TORs. The amendments

proposed by the meeting were included and the new resolution was decided to be submitted to EC for adoption.

Volunteerism in the work of technical commissions and regional associations

13. The PTC agreed to include Volunteerism as an Annex to the new resolution Role and Terms of Reference of the PTC.

WMO activities related to Natural Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme

14. The meeting recalled that the cross-cutting framework of the DRR Programme is supported by focal points in technical commissions and regional DRR Working Groups of the regional associations. Furthermore, the meeting noted that focal points of all technical commissions, as well as chairpersons of the regional associations' working groups, have already participated to the development of the DRR Programme through facilitation of the DRR surveys of technical commissions and regional capacity assessment surveys, which significantly contributed to the development of the DRR Strategic Goals and implementation directions approved by Fifteenth Congress. Furthermore, during the first DRR Coordination Meeting in December 2006 involving technical commissions' focal points and chairpersons of regional associations' DRR Working Groups, there was consensus that such face-to-face meetings are critical for strengthening coordination and cooperation across Commissions and between Commissions and regional aAssociations.

The way forward toward enhanced weather, climate and earth system prediction

15. The president of CAS presented the document "The way forward toward enhanced weather, climate and earth system prediction", and referred to the paper prepared by Melvyn Shapiro and co-authors for the GEO Summit in Cape Town in November 2007. The PTC recommended that the president of CAS present a document for discussion at the EC WG on Climate and Related Water and Environmental Matters (EC WG-CWE), scheduled for 26-28 March 2008 on "An Enhanced Weather, Climate and Environmental Prediction Framework: A Way Forward".
