

## Summary IPO Conference Call d.d. 9 September 2020

Attn: Beatriz Balino (CORA), Wenchao Cao (WCRP/WWRP Secretariat), Helen Cleugh (JSC), Gwen Hamon (CLIC), Mareike Heckl (SPARC), Yookyung. Hyun (S2S) Seung-on Hwang (S2S), Rupa Kumar Kolli (ICMPO), Iréne Lake (CORDEX), Jing li (CLIVAR), Lindha Nilsson (CORDEX), Peter van Oevelen (GEWEX), Valentina Rabanal (YES), Jose Santos (CLIVAR), Anke Schluensen-Rico (CORA), Mike Sparrow (WCRP Secretariat), Narelle van der Wel (WCRP Secretariat)

Absent with notification: Michel Rixen (WCRP Secretariat)

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### Agenda

- 1) Introduction Wenchao Cao
- 2) Involvement IPOs in WCRP restructuring (*Helen Cleugh*)
  - a. Lighthouse Activities - discussion
  - b. Regional Coordination – conf. calls and consultations
  - c. Role of the core projects
- 3) Communication of JSC towards IPOs
- 4) Travel and other support / WMO financial situation (*Mike Sparrow*)
- 5) AOB

**Transcript/Summary** (*Questions and remarks are in blue, Intro and responses are in black*)

#### Ad 1) Introduction Wenchao Cao

One year ago, Wenchao started working for WWRP in the role of Junior Professional Officer. His main responsibilities are to:

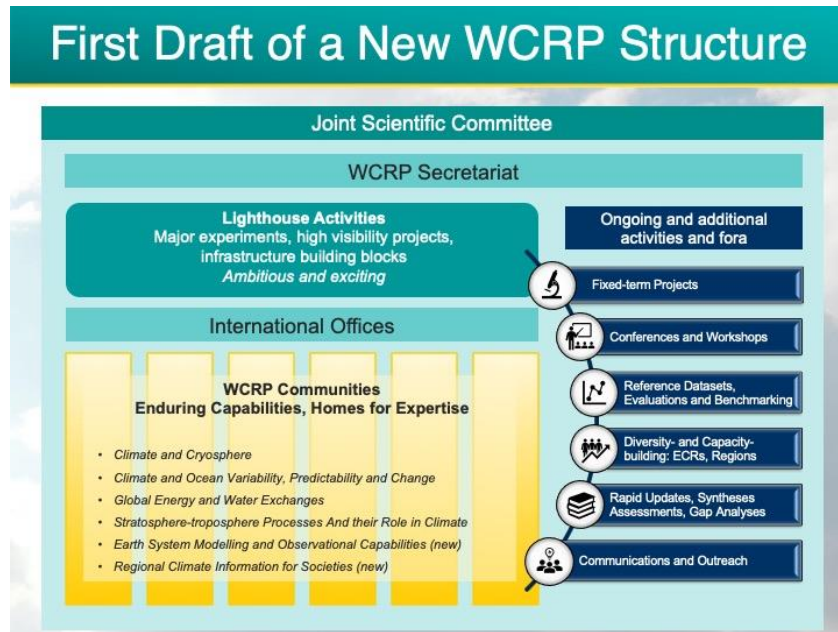
- support the Polar Prediction Project;
- support some Research and Demonstration Projects, especially AvRDP;
- engage with some activities related to the Arctic Science Ministerial;
- support the coordination between the International Coordination Office of the three WWRP core projects;
- maintain partnership with ECRs, particularly with YESS;
- support the Research Board Exscale Computing & AI Task Team;
- support the drafting team of the AI Concept Paper and,
- support the partnership with ITU on AI-related matters particularly the ITU's AI for Good flagship activities.

Highlighting the strong connection between WWRP and WCRP, Wenchao already is involved with some of WCRP activities such as the last JSC meeting in May. He has some knowledge about the WCRP's transition and restructuring process. In the coming period his tasks and responsibilities will gradually expand with activities for WCRP for up to 50% of his time. Wenchao is glad to join this group and be able to provide support.

#### Ad 2) Involvement IPO's in WCRP restructuring (*Helen Cleugh*)

The structure of WCRP needs to be fit for purpose for the future and for implementing our new strategy. At the moment we are updating the implementation plan. The Lighthouse Activities (LHA), which are part of this implementation plan, includes new science and are critically important. The coming period will be used to flesh out the science plan.

The four core projects and CORDEX<sup>1</sup> are the current “homes” where the scientific community comes together. Two extra “new homes” are needed, one for the modeling and data communities, (draft name: Earth System Modelling and Observational Capabilities) and one where regional climate information is gathered for society (draft name: Regional Information for Societies) and which forms the basis of policy to face the challenges ahead. Together we need to discuss how these new homes will look like.



Through the Regional Focal Points at Regional Consultation sessions via Virtual Townhall meetings we can inform the broader community, as it seems that they are not aware of what WCRP does.

In these challenging times, Helen, Detlef and the WCRP Secretariat are actively looking for ways to expand the funding base of WCRP and new partners to ensure success now and in the future.

*What are the deadlines for the LHA and RFP activities? Nominees need to know when we're going to start.*

The shortlists with the final nominees are still coming in. We hope we can prevail on the IPOs to support us with the organization of the Regional Consultation process. We ask of each IPO to be a primary project office for a certain region and work with Helen, secretariat and Regional Focal Points to provide logical support, knowledge of the network, etc. Helen will send out an email with more information and details.

Helen hopes to get a letter out by the end of week (First one went out this week /end of September) at least for the Regional Focal Point for the regional consultations for the three

<sup>1</sup> Currently CORDEX is a 5<sup>th</sup> CP, but in the new structure it will be part of the of the new home on regional information for societies

regions that we want to try to get started on. The ambitious deadlines were too tight and were moved back as we didn't take the summer vacation in the Northern Hemisphere into account. The Asian and Africa region now have a full set of RFPs and we're ready to kick-off with a letter to them explaining what is going to happen next and what is expected of them. We apologize for the extra time we needed to get it right.

*CORDEX was not mentioned at the extraordinary JSC-meeting, where the internal review of the core projects and the new homes were discussed. Where is CORDEX in all this?*

The CORDEX co-chairs are hopefully facilitating the discussion between the Science Advisory Team and the community on where CORDEX sees itself best sitting. Helen and Detlef think the best home would be the new home 'Regional Climate Information for Society'. CORDEX will most likely be a high-profile flagship activity that will sit in the new home and links to other parts of WCRP. It's still an open discussion and a work in progress.

*Communication between JSC and the International Project Offices (IPOs) is limited, although some discussions affect IPOs directly or indirectly. Therefore, IPOs lack a complete understanding of the overall picture and are unclear on what is asked from them. In this context it's difficult to plan our work and offer support, including giving input on the feasibility of some action items. Does the restructuring of WCRP entail changes for the IPOs?*

Going forward, the IPOs remain part of WCRP and are of critical importance to what WCRP is doing. JSC envisages seven to eight Project Offices, consisting of the existing IPOs of the four Core Projects plus CORDEX, and IPOs for the two new homes mentioned above, and a call has been sent out for an IPO for CMIP.

*In these times, the IPOs seem to be a more stable base than some of the other parts of WCRP. This needs to be recognized as it's not always clear in the communities and IPOs. This should be part of the discussion on communication.*

*It's unclear what WCRP wants to achieve with those homes. All activities of communities go across homes. That's when and where integration can take place. If there is no overlap there is no need for a WCRP; you would just have those separate activities. WCRP seems to want to artificially separate some things that should not be separated and at the same time tries to say "oh yes, it goes across several homes", like with CORDEX. If things go well a lot of activities go across homes and we have to work together on certain aspects. Can you clarify how this discussion is being done?*

Leading up to the May JSC-meeting, consultations with the Co-Chairs of core projects established principles or high-level points that guides the discussions on the new structure. One of these points, which is critical to the success of WCRP, is bringing together expertise that sits across the core projects or domains to achieve new science, model development etc. WCRP wants integration, cross pollination, collaboration and coordination across core projects to continue. The lighthouse activities are a good way to tap into this expertise. With respect to using the word "home" we think that the scientific domains need a place where they feel that their scientific community meets, e.g. atmospheric scientist could see SPARC as a place where atmospheric scientists come together. This doesn't mean those scientists don't work together with colleagues from other groups. The homes we're talking about already exist with our core projects, which will continue. What we're saying is that we think our modelling work and our regional climate information work, which currently sits across many working groups and advisory councils, is fragmented. We want to bring these together in order to give it

strength, coherency and a core vision. Of course, they will still link to activities in other areas, just as it is happening now.

For example, we all know there are some critically important barriers to predictability at the moment. We want to prioritize those issues and make sure WCRP is putting the investment into addressing some of these big challenges, which is what some of our sponsors and funders want.

We're not sure that having all those working groups and councils is serving us as well as it could if it was a more consolidated effort.

It's absolutely understood that for WCRP to succeed, integration across the core projects and new homes, is what we need. However, we do need to have some kind of structure in place that people identify with also. Activities, conferences, etc. can be done across new homes and core projects.

*How does WCRP aim to complement its work with the climate services development being coordinated as part of the new WMO Standing Committee on Climate Services? There is a critical need for research input in this context and they also have a strong focus on regions. This also relates to the internal workings of WMO and where that needs to be improved as this feels very much siloed.*

The fourth point of our high-level strategic objectives in our strategic plan is “bridging climate science and society”. We want to make sure that we have got that underpinning-science and developing the model system, the data and the information that society needs. We can't deliver on climate services on our own, partnership is key.

We have a number of different projects and activities that link to WMO, one of our sponsors. We should be thinking through what mechanism we need to have in place to strengthen the ties with WMO.

The WCRP Secretariat, especially Mike, works closely with Jürg Luterbacher, Director of Science & Innovation at WMO and Detlef sits on the Research Board. There are multiple ways that link us to WMO.

### Ad 3) Communication of JSC towards IPOs

*Looking forward, important is “how do the above-mentioned things best come to realization in conjunction with the IPO-activities”. One aspect is funding, another aspect is being informed timely about what is being expected, the deliverables and what is hoped for. IPOs work closely and communicate with a larger part of their respective scientific communities and have an overview of what is happening in the other core projects and CORDEX.*

*Knowledge of structural issues that communities might have tried to organize in the past, might have reached the respective IPOs only and not the Co-Chairs. Additionally, IPO staff has significant scientific knowledge and expertise and are not only administrators.*

*There were many occasions where the input of IPOs could have had a positive influence on the implementation process, making it more efficient. At the moment communication is more of a three-way street: JSC with Core Program Co-Chairs and Co-Chairs with IPO director and back and forth. Another layer in the communication between JSC - core projects - IPOs is the WCRP Secretariat staff representation. Establishing clear communication lines within the new structure and depending on who of the WCRP Secretariat staff will be available might help the communication.*

*We hope the JSC learns from the past. A lot of things are already being done by the IPO's that is probably not seen or realized by the JSC.*

*We should be careful not to keep on restructuring or restructure for the sake of restructuring and finally end up with old structures that didn't work optimal.*

When we start to roll out the initiatives, especially with the regional consultations, we will consult the IPOs and tap into your knowledge, information and detailed understanding. The changes we at WCRP are bringing about, will help WCRP meet what it wants to do and what is expected of them by the community and it will attract additional funding. The current funding difficulties and limited WCRP Secretariat limits what we can do. The amount of time interacting with the IPOs and the level of support is not the same as it used to be. However, it would do well if we would use the input from IPOs more and draw on the expertise and corporate memory we've got. We need to think of ways how we can improve this.

A suggestion to keep in touch might be that Detlef/Helen joins the regular conference calls between the IPOs once or twice a year. Another suggestion is to at least co-copy directors of IPOs in relevant emails even if they don't need to take immediate action<sup>2</sup>.

*At the IPOs, we're concerned about WCRP. We see the uncertainties and the pressure the JSC and WCRP secretariat are under. We have expressed often enough that we are there to help and we want to help. This means we have to be involved in another way, e.g. have open access to notes of meetings so we know what is being discussed. This will establish trust, which needs to be treasured especially moving forward in this time of change and uncertainty. We are in the same boat under the flag of WCRP and we should show a united front.*

Requirements for the November meeting have been discussed with the co-chairs. Helen will send out an action item directly, or through Mike, with the communication we have had with the co-chairs and a copy of things to help you prepare.

*Helen participating in this conference call meeting has been helpful and appreciated. IPOs are looking for more interaction with the JSC. One way forward may be by IPOs jointly creating a platform using a google doc where we can put down ideas on how we can improve communication and which topics we would like to discuss. If the JSC and WCRP Secretariat could do this as well, we can compare notes and see where things are matching or not. We as IPO's need to be more pro-active of what we want and where we want to be involved either individually or as a group.*

I hear a range of things we can do, like how we organize email communications, have an information platform where key documents are housed, and have engagements like this meeting where we can have a conversation. I agree with Peters suggestion on how to move forward. Mike, Detlef and I can start a discussion with the secretariat on what we think might improve communications. After which we can get together again to discuss both lists. We need a communication strategy internally and externally also.

#### Ad 4) Travel and other support / WMO financial situation (Mike Sparrow)

*Sponsorship and funding are critical elements in particularly if you look at the Lighthouse activities and the financial problems the WCRP Secretariat has at the moment.*

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<sup>2</sup> Note Helen: the point about communication being "the 3-way" was clearly heard at the meeting by the Secretariat and Helen; and thence Detlef (he has been debriefed on the meeting). We are working already on operational changes that will improve this.

*Additionally, sometimes it's unclear 'why' we are doing things. Generic terms like "integration, etc" keep on being used. It doesn't explain what WCRP is about. In this context, the same applies to the WCRP Science plan, which also seems to use high generic terms. It doesn't highlight what we are aiming for, and the places where we expect to get the funding going. Funding is not a given and is complicated trying to do this on a global scale, especially with everything going on in the UN for instance. How is WCRP going to deal with that?*

*Suggestions for expanding sources of funding: target international funds with a specific aim, e.g. risk disaster mitigation, etc.*

In the JSC it's often said that the niche or value proposition of WCRP is about the climate science that no single nation or no single program can do. We can only do it as a global community coming together to do that science.

We are concerned about the funding situation and some of the changes. We are working very hard to develop new ideas for new funding. We acknowledge that the strategy is high-level and nothing specific. That's the reason we honed down on those Lighthouse activities this year, which got sponsors and the community excited already. It also explains why we're pushing hard to get those science plans developed. We have come down from high-level strategy and focused down to more tangible questions and science activities that we want to do. We identified a couple of priorities which WCRP wants to achieve in the next decade. We're looking for funding in several places and on multiple levels, e.g. we put in a substantial proposal at USGCRP and there has been discussion with the European Commission about how to more closely integrate with their funding streams in Horizon 2020 and other initiatives. Our co-sponsors IOC, WMO, ISC are constructive and helpful as we start to try growing our funding base, e.g. approaching additional countries to gauge their interest, resulting in a fair amount of feedback, although in most cases it's not financial feedback. The new kind of lighthouse activities and the fact that we are looking at reorganizing ourselves to be more efficient has generated a degree of excitement amongst the US-community and others as well.

IOC provides some funds with no strings attached and which is also not specified. However, the amount of funds each year has dropped as their funding base has decreased particularly from the US. They are focused on UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Apart from their irregular annual funds, they sometimes have additional funds for a specific activity.

ISC doesn't provide funding directly but through its members (National Academies of Science) and will provide a significant portion of our funds.

The WMO funding situation is difficult at the moment. Some countries haven't paid their membership fees yet. The biggest gap is with the US-contribution. In all probability, we won't know more until after the US-elections in November 2020. That's why a recruitment freeze in WMO as a whole is in place and explains why we weren't able to recruit the different positions for the WCRP secretariat. We appreciate the assistance we received from everybody to make sure we could move forward with everything.

The Regional Consultation is in part motivated by the opportunity to engage with sponsors, partners, funders, etc. in the regions and the nations. To ensure we are addressing their needs, we want to find out what their questions are and what the things are they want to know about. This is where we need the wisdom and intelligence from our IPOs and Regional Focal Points.

Ad 5) Any other business

Marijke: New to the director seat. It would help to be clear on the simple things, e.g. who is responsible for what, who is expected to participate and be clear on deadlines and deliverables, etc.

Anke: communication is important, and we need to solve this.

Beatriz: CORA has been invited to help with the administration and coordination of the Regional Consultations together with Narelle. In this context we will assist IPO's

StoS office:-

Wen chau: -

Jing lee: -

Narelle: happy with the level of enthusiasm; a lot of things happened at the same time during the summer. We need your help and work together to get everything ready for the next big JSC meeting.

Valentina: -

Mike: thanks everyone for the support given to WCRP secretariat.

Linda: -

Jose: I'm in Ecuador at the moment for the next couple of months.

Irene: We enjoy working with Mike and Narelle. The discussion concerns the need for improved communication between IPOs and the JSC. Looking forward to the discussion on how to share and communicate.

Gwen: Helen thank you for joining us at this meeting.

Kumar: Useful conversation. All of us are called IPOs. However, we are unique individuals and we have unique context and unique strengths and opportunities we can contribute. There should be a level of common communication and a level of individual communication. The JSC should be able to differentiate between these levels and recognize the individual context of the IPOs and communicate what is expected from them in clear terms.

Peter: personally, if I'm critical and have issues this means I'm involved, and this goes for many of us probably. We also need to realize we all have different background and cultures and we express our interest in different ways. We need to make sure, that we have a platform in such a way that everybody feels comfortable making their points.

Helen: All what is said is powerful and positive. Thank you for being honest and open with me and therefore with Detlef and the JSC. We do come from a diverse background and we do have a common goal together. I'm pleased that we have a platform where people feel comfortable to express what they think respectfully. I valued hearing from you and thank you for that. I'm leaving this meeting feeling positive that we all are looking to help the WCRP to succeed.

IGPO will send out doodle for the next meeting shortly. The notes from this meeting will take a bit more time as we are traveling at the moment.